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CLIMATE ACTIVISTS: WE'LL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES

Environmentalists kick off three days of protests at G7 summit to warn leaders: We're heading for a climate catastrophe

by Bethany Rielly

THOUSANDS of activists descended on Cornwall yesterday to kick off three days of protests against G7 leaders' inaction on the climate emergency.

Environmental activists marched through the small village of St Ives, near Carbis Bay where the summit is being held, to demand the leaders of global capitalism act immediately to avert the impending climate catastrophe.

World leaders from Britain, Japan, Canada, the US, Italy, Germany and France began G7 talks yesterday, focusing primarily on the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change.

In his opening speech to the summit, PM Boris Johnson said: "As G7 we are united in ... our vision for a cleaner, greener world, a solution to the problems of climate change, and in those ideas, in those technologies which we're all addressing together ... there is the potential to generate many, many millions of high-wage, high-skill jobs."

But campaigners, trade unionists

and economists called out his government for breaking climate pledges, delays, backing new fossil fuel projects and failing to invest enough in green industries and recovery.

Dozens of marches, theatrical protests and events were staged to demand world leaders put the climate top of the agenda.

Extinction Rebellion co-founder Gail Bradbrook said: "We know we can't trust the leaders of the world. They have already failed us in Paris.

"They are part of a broken system, but humanity isn't broken. We're gathering in Cornwall in solidarity with communities on the front line across the world.

"For the countries and people most vulnerable to rising temperatures, climate change is not something for the future: it is happening right now."

Ahead of the summit, all leaders affirmed their commitment to holding temperature rises to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels – the lower limit set out in the 2015 Paris agreement.

But Greenpeace UK's senior climate campaigner Ariana Densham

said bold commitments must also be delivered.

"The G7 cannot be another target-setting exercise resulting only in wasted time, political chest-thumping and more empty promises that might as well be written in the sand of Carbis Bay beach," she said.

The climate group staged Britain's largest ever "drone show" using 300 illuminated unmanned vehicles to form 3D animals and shapes above Cornwall's idyllic landscape.

The TUC called for British leaders to adopt a more ambitious plan for investing in green industries, warning that failure to do so risks leaving the country behind.

General secretary Frances O'Grady said greater investment would provide a "chance to replace the jobs lost in the pandemic and level up the UK."

Last week more than 350 organisations from 58 countries signed a letter calling on G7 leaders to stop funding fossil fuels, cancel debt payments in Covid-hit global South countries and help them pay for climate adaptations.

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ONWARDS AND UPWARDS: Climate champions descend on Cornwall's beaches

■ SCOTLAND HEALTHCARE

Watchdog probity concerns raised

by Niall Christie
Scotland editor

SCOTTISH Labour has raised concerns about a “conflict of interest” within the remit of Public Health Scotland (PHS), after it emerged one of its duties is to protect the interests of Scottish ministers.

Documents revealed on Friday show PHS, the public agency which investigated Scotland’s Covid-19 care home deaths and reported on the mass discharge of patients into care settings, has to check whether research criticises government policy.

Freedom of Information (FOI) responses published in The Times show the body’s remit includes a duty to protect the reputation of SNP ministers.

The document shows PHS has an agreed communications framework with the government in Holyrood and representatives from Scottish councils.

The public body is instructed to manage risk when communicating information, with the FOI adding: “Risk management in relation to communications will primarily relate to reducing the potential impact of the risk on the

reputation and credibility of the organisations, which may also impact the wider NHS and local authorities.”

A ranking system is also set out to evaluate the risk of “sustained or widespread criticism of the Scottish government.”

Opposition politicians have raised questions about the independence of PHS and its duties in informing the public.

Scottish Labour health spokesperson Jackie Baillie said: “Scots believed PHS was an independent voice subjecting life or death decisions during the pandemic to serious scrutiny.

“But these reports raise serious questions about a conflict of interest that need to be resolved.

“It is just another example of the micromanagement and control freakery which defines the SNP.”

A PHS spokeswoman said the group “discharges its duties with integrity and is committed to work that is both open and transparent.

“A risk assessment for all publications is undertaken only to inform the supporting communications approach, and for the awareness of sponsors. It does not change the substance, content or independence of those publications.”

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■ CORONAVIRUS

Covid unlocking delay likely as top figures voice fears

By Derek Kotz

A DELAY in the final lifting of Covid-19 restrictions looked increasingly likely yesterday as cases of the highly transmissible Delta variant reached nearly 30,000 in a week.

Public Health England revealed that 42,323 cases of the Delta variant first identified in India have been confirmed in the UK, up by 29,892 on the previous week – more than double, and accounting for 90 per cent of all cases.

Reports that the government was considering putting back June 21’s scheduled reopening date by four weeks were welcomed by Jim McManus, vice-president of the Association of Directors of Public Health.

Acknowledging that it was a “fiendishly difficult decision,” Mr McManus told Radio 4’s Today programme: “I think we should strongly welcome

the fact that they have given a very strong indication they will be driven by the data.”

Mr McManus warned that increased infection rates would lead to more hospitalisations, a significant rise in long Covid and an increase in the number of variants, including the risk of a strain “that evades the vaccine completely.”

He added that “investing a bit of time is really important to enable the vaccine programme to finish and do its job.”

With Boris Johnson expected to make an announcement on Monday, vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi hinted at a delay as he toured the studios yesterday, stressing: “We don’t want to squander those hard-fought gains that we have made through the vaccination programme.”

Mr Zahawi said the government was “on track” to meet a target of all over 50s being offered their second jab by June 21, and he appealed to those

who had not yet had a first dose to come forward.

The Delta variant is believed to carry around a 60 per cent increased risk of household transmission compared with the Alpha (Kent) variant, with transmission-doubling times varying regionally from 11.5 days to just 4.5.

Cases have more than doubled among largely unvaccinated 20- to 29-year-olds, up from 54 per 100,000 people in the week ending May 30 to 121 per 100,000 in the following seven days.

Shadow home secretary Nick Thomas Symonds put responsibility for the sharp rise in Delta cases and the likely delay in lifting restrictions firmly at the government’s door.

He said: “The blame for this lies with the Prime Minister and his reckless refusal to act on Labour’s repeated warnings to secure our borders against Covid and its variants.”

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by Bethany Rielly

■ IRISH SEA

Nuclear waste stockpiles are ‘sloshing around’ in Irish Sea

RADIOACTIVE materials are “moving around the Irish Sea” while the government fails to safely dispose of waste from Britain’s nuclear power plants, a new report has revealed.

The UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities group (NFLA) says that for 50 years waste from Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant in Cumbria has been discharged into the Irish Sea where it settles on the sea bed but can be disturbed by storms, waves and seismic activity.

The report also says that the government’s failure to dispose of highly radioactive waste has caused creation of stockpiles of waste plutonium and uranium which will cost taxpayers billions of pounds to store for the next century.

NFLA steering committee chair Cllr David Blackburn said the report “outlines one of the most embarrassing and perplexing elements of UK nuclear policy – what to do with its world record plutonium stockpile.”

■ BREWING

Union backs staff letter hitting out at Brewdog

TRADE unionists have offered their support to BrewDog workers after complaints of a “toxic work environment” at the “punk” brewery emerged this week.

Representatives from Unite Hospitality praised the courageous members who released an open letter criticising BrewDog management earlier this week.

Punks With Purpose, a group of former staff, allege widespread fear among employees and a toxic attitude towards workers.

This workplace atmosphere, the former staff said, had led to mental health problems.

BrewDog founder James Watt apologised following the letter, promising to learn and act, adding his company is “committed to doing better.”

Unite Hospitality says it is supporting members, calling for an independent probe into management behaviour and the implementation of policies such as a proactive, anti-sexual harassment policy.

Organiser Bryan Simpson said: “The owners of BrewDog need to start taking responsibility for the toxic culture they have created.”



MAKING THE POINT: Protesters gather in Leeds yesterday to mark the beginning of G7 with a climate message
Pic: Neil Terry

■ FRONT PAGE

Climate activists: We will fight them on the beaches

FROM PI: More than 100 economists from around the world also urged G7 leaders to extend pledges to end coal finance by the end of 2021 to oil and gas.

However others suggested that there was little point in putting any faith in the leaders of global capitalism to make positive change.

Economic anthropologist Jason Hickel said: “The thing about the G7 is that they are basically a mafia of imperialist powers who dominate global arms sales, habitually [stage] coups [against] progressive

[governments] in the South, prop up right-wing dictatorships, and are responsible for 77 per cent of excess emissions. It doesn’t exactly inspire trust.”

Anti-G7 protests are expected to continue throughout the weekend. On Saturday, Extinction Rebellion will stage a demo in Falmouth calling out government greenwashing.

Sunday’s protests will see the focus switch to opposing state repression and surveillance, focusing on the government’s policing Bill.

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G7 PROTESTERS are facing an “intensive policing operation” this weekend, campaigners have warned, with officers arresting seven people before demonstrations had even begun.

Police have been accused of harassing and intimidating campaigners in the run-up to the meeting of world leaders in Cornwall on Friday.

Officers arrested seven members of Animal Rebellion, an animal rights branch of Extinction Rebellion, on Thursday after stopping and searching their vehicles.

Devon and Cornwall Police said it had found paint and flares during the search, and made arrests on suspicion of possessing items to commit criminal damage and conspiracy to commit public nuisance.

Plain-clothed police were also sent to the campsite where protesters are staying on Thursday. Resist G7 coalition reported that officers had been waiting in a car outside the campsite in shifts.

It comes after Ocean Rebellion co-founder Ron Higgs, who is involved in climate action protests against the summit, had his home in Cornwall raided by 15 officers last month.

Police monitoring group Netpol says this is being done to intimidate those suspected to be involved in three days of action planned against the summit and accused forces of failing to uphold their duty to protect the right to protest.

Patrick Sarsfield Gallagher

Died 8th June 2021

Communist, reader and supporter of the Morning Star.

Will be sadly missed.

Andy, Barbara, Saoirse, Will and Hegarty



■ G7 IN CORNWALL

PROTESTERS FACE COP CRACKDOWN IN CORNWALL MEET

ARRESTS: Seven animal rights activists already detained 'on suspicion'



Around 6,500 officers have been drafted from across the country to Cornwall, closing off the area surrounding Carbis Bay and erecting metal fences.

While police have said they support the right to protest, forces have vowed to take a tough line on campaigners who cause "disruption," and have allocated four locations far from the summit for pro-

testers to gather, the furthest a staggering 106 miles away.

Netpol co-ordinator Kevin Blowe said the recent crackdown "seems to be pointing towards a pretty intensive policing operation against protesters over the weekend."

"Devon and Cornwall Police ... have taken the view that essentially they've allowed protest so long as they don't

cause any disruption which is ludicrous because of course all protests cause disruption," he told the Morning Star.

"As local campaigners in Cornwall have quite rightly said, any disruption caused by protest is far less than the disruption caused by the enormous policing and security operation to basically allow G7 leaders to have a picturesque background for their gathering.

"The idea that you can somehow have a sanitised version of protest far away from where it might actually be heard by people with no impact whatsoever ... is a failure to understand what the policing duty is."

A force spokesman said in response to the Thursday arrests: "We continue to support the facilitation of safe and legal protest but criminal activity and public disorder will not be tolerated."

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 ▶ Star comment: p10

■ POLITICS

'Labour in exile' set to form CLP shadows

LABOUR Party activists appalled at witch-hunts, suspensions and expulsions by the party's bureaucracy are planning to form "shadow" constituency Labour parties (CLPs) "to continue the good work of the left."

The Labour In Exile Network is launching workshops to help members set up shadow CLPs after staging a successful alternative inquiry to the official Forde inquiry into alleged corruption and witch-hunts against the left.

The group said 500 people took part in the online inquiry, and 1,000 followed it on Facebook.

Terry Deans, one of the workshop organisers, said: "I see setting up shadow constituency Labour parties as a key way of both defending members and fighting back against such attacks."

The workshops will include current and excluded members of the party, and "will aim to shape Labour Party policy, carry out direct action and support community projects."

"We want members of different shadow CLPs to share and benefit from each other's experiences. Vital, also, is the need for these groups to link up - there is strength in unity," he said.

The first Shadow CLP workshop will be on June 12 at 5pm. Register at [facebook.com/event_invite/1s62kEm4I/](https://www.facebook.com/event_invite/1s62kEm4I/)



DON'T BANK ON THE BOMB: Yorkshire CND highlight Natwest's damaging support for nuke manufacture in a Leeds protest
 Pic: Neil Terry

■ HEALTH

Care workers are 'literally worried sick' over low pay

by Peter Lazenby

WORKERS in the care sector in north-west England have been literally worried sick by underpayment of wages.

Public-sector union Unison said workers at Lifeways Group in Bolton, Greater Manchester, were suffering ill health through worries over paying their bills.

Lifeways operates nationwide providing care services for adults with learning disabilities, autism and brain injuries, including for Bolton Council.

Unison investigated complaints from members about underpayment of wages and found "routine and habitual incorrect payment."

The union said that in a survey 72 per cent of the workforce said they had been underpaid in the last six months.

One worker said: "I absolutely love my job and the people I am working with, but I'm absolutely

fed up having to chase Lifeways nearly every month for my correct wages. Pay day is so stressful and I dread having to look at my payslip.

"Every month the underpayment has an impact on me. I barely afford to pay the bills because I am owed outstanding wages and for the past few months, I have had to borrow money from my family."

Unison North West regional organiser Dan Smith said: "Lifeways need to take action now to ensure staff are paid properly.

"Care workers employed directly by local councils or the NHS do not suffer the indignity of having to plead with their employers to be paid correctly. "This is yet more evidence of the failings of the private social care sector."

A Lifeways spokesperson said: "The figures quoted bear no relation to the information we have. We take very seriously our obligations with regard to pay."

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RALLY & VIGIL against Israel's UK arms supplier Instro-Elbit to remember its victims

Saturday June 12th
 Sandwich, Kent



Instro Precision, part of arms giant **Elbit**, makes targeting equipment that enables Israel's military to massacre Palestinian people and destroy clinics, homes, schools & media offices.

Instro's landlord **Discovery Park** is complicit too, knowingly profiting indirectly from Israel's atrocities by accepting Instro's tainted rent money for the arms factory in its science park.

- Gather 12.15pm at Guildhall, New Street, Sandwich, Kent (10min from station) then meet 1.15pm at Discovery Park, Ramsgate Rd (20min walk).
- Bring banners, placards, letters/cards to Discovery Park's CEO demanding Instro's eviction.
- Use #ShutElbitDown and #EvictInstro on social media.
- Please mask and social distance.



■ EXTRADITION CASE

MPs write to Biden seeking end to Assange prosecution

By Derek Kotz

A CROSS-PARTY group of British parliamentarians has written to President Joe Biden asking him to drop the US prosecution of whistle-blowing journalist Julian Assange.

Mr Assange, who faces a jail sentence of up to 175 years if convicted of espionage in a US court, remains on remand in London's Belmarsh Prison, despite winning an initial court battle against extradition.

The letter, co-ordinated by Labour MP Richard Burgon, notes that as president Barack Obama's vice-president, Mr Biden "played an important role in the decision not to prosecute Julian Assange over publications relating to the Afghan and Iraq wars and conditions in Guantanamo Bay."

It points out that the prosecution carrying a 175-year sentence was brought under ex-president Donald Trump, and that the case has been condemned by civil liberties groups and senior media figures.



STILL AT RISK: Julian Assange leaves Westminster magistrates' court in January last year

The letter also notes that, despite Westminster magistrates' court refusing the US application for extradition, "unfortunately the US Department of Justice is still pursu-

ing this case, leaving Julian Assange facing a third year of incarceration in Belmarsh high-security prison."

Pointing out "the contradiction of advocating for press freedom abroad while holding Mr Assange for years in the UK's most notorious prison at the request of the US government," it concludes that dropping the case "would be a clarion call for freedom that would echo around the globe."

The letter has been signed by members of the Labour, SNP, Conservative, Green and Alba parties.

MPs Diane Abbott, Tahir Ali, Apsana Begum, Richard Burgon, Ian Byrne, Joanna Cherry, Jeremy Corbyn, David Davis, Neale Hanvey, Ian Lavery, Caroline Lucas, Kenny MacAskill, John McDonnell, Grahame Morris, Kate Osborne, Bell Ribeiro-Addy, Tommy Sheppard, Sarah Sultana, Jon Trickett, Claudia Webbe and Mick Whitley signed the letter, as have Baroness Christine Blower, Lord John Henty and Lord Prem Sikka.

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ENVIRONMENT: Sea eagles have appeared on Loch Lomond for the first time in more than a century.

A pair of white-tailed eagles, commonly known as sea eagles, were first spotted at Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve in early March.

They have since been seen "nest prospecting" – searching for suitable nest sites – suggesting they intend to stay.

Nature bodies are working together to protect the birds and minimise disturbance, with an exclusion zone put in place around the area where they have been seen.

It is believed that this is the first time sea eagles have settled at Loch Lomond since their extinction in Britain in the early 20th century due to persecution and habitat changes.



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★ Morning Star

SOUTHAMPTON READERS GROUP

PUBLIC MEETING
Wednesday June 16

Kill the Bill! Jail the Spycops!
With Star reporter Bethany Rielly

All welcome

Zoom: mstar.link/RSG-KTB
Meeting ID: 899 5192 1626

Login and view countdown material
from 6.50 for event start at 7pm



■ HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Kent won't take any more unaccompanied refugee children

by Bethany Rielly

KENT County Council is refusing to accept any more unaccompanied asylum-seeker children, warning that its services have reached breaking point for a second time in a year.

Council leaders said that the number already in its care had returned to "unsafe levels," despite repeated warnings to the government that local services were struggling to cope.

They spoke out after threatening to take legal action against the Home Office over the "extreme pressure" on the council's services.

The local authority is currently looking after more than 400 unaccompanied child asylum-seekers – almost double the recommended maximum number – up from 274 since the start of the year.

The maximum recommended by the government is 231, the council said.

Council leader Roger Gough said that he was saddened to be

in this "unthinkable position" again just 10 months after the last time that the local authority was overwhelmed.

He warned that, from June 14, the council will not take in new children until "sufficient transfers have been made outside of Kent, bringing our numbers back to safe levels."

Mr Gough expressed disappointment that Home Secretary Priti Patel has refused to use her existing powers to force other councils to take their fair share of unaccompanied asylum-seeker children under the national transfer scheme for such youngsters.

"As we have experienced over the past few years, there is absolutely no evidence that a voluntary national transfer scheme has kept pace with the ever-escalating new arrivals on our shores," he said.

"If every other local authority in the UK were to take two or three under 18-year-old [unaccompanied asylum-seeker children] who arrive at Dover into their care, Kent's numbers

would reduce to the council's safe allocation immediately."

The council's proposal for a judicial review asks Ms Patel to direct other councils other than Kent to take in their fair share of unaccompanied minors.

A Home Office spokesman said it has provided the council with "substantial operational support, including transferring those in need of support to other local authorities in the UK."

The department was also urged to fix its broken financial support scheme for asylum-seekers, which is leaving whole families to go hungry.

Last month, thousands of asylum-seekers were left without their weekly stipend after a botched contract transfer stopped their Aspen cards from working.

In a letter to Ms Patel reported by the Independent yesterday, more than 50 refugee and asylum organisations said the situation was "one of the worst asylum crises we've ever experienced."

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■ EDUCATION

NEW SNP MINISTER TRUMPETS PLAN TO CUT TEACHING TIME

WARNING: Union AGM backs walkouts if talks on classroom hours fail

by Niall Christie
Scotland editor

SCOTLAND'S new Education Secretary has claimed she wants progress in cutting the amount of time teachers spend in the classroom "as soon as possible" as members of Scotland's largest teaching union backed calls for a strike ballot.

SNP minister Shirley-Anne Somerville told the Educational Institute of Scotland's (EIS) annual general meeting (AGM) on Friday that her party's promises to reduce the amount of time teachers spend with youngsters by 90 minutes a week would reduce stress for workers and create 2,000 new jobs.

On Thursday, EIS members backed calls for a strike ballot if a deal is not reached in the next 15 months to cut both class sizes and teachers' class contact time.

The EIS wants a nine-year plan to be put in place by September 2022, with members at the AGM passing a motion saying they could ballot for "industrial action up to and including strike action" if this is not achieved.

Ms Somerville reiterated her



PROMISES: Scottish Education Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville

party's commitment, adding she wants local councils to do more to take on teaching staff on permanent contracts, insisting the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery needs to use "every teaching resource that we have available."

EIS general secretary Larry Flanagan thanked members for

their devotion to the profession through the coronavirus crisis, calling for an education-led recovery where politicians stop using education as a political football.

Mr Flanagan also said there must be an end to temporary and zero-hours contracts within schools and a vastly improved pay offer for teachers in the coming weeks.

"Education should be, requires to be, a national effort focused on the health and well-being of children providing the resource need across the whole education sector," he said.

"We need a greater vision from the Scottish Parliament and we need greater commitment because what has been discussed so far is barely in the foothills of what is really required to address the needs of Scotland's young people.

"We do need to challenge the Scottish government and the Parliament, I believe, to deliver on their manifesto promises."

The calls come amid warnings that Scotland is facing a second year of exam crisis unless the First Minister listens to pupils and campaigners.

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■ AGRICULTURE

Unite calls for government action to raise pay on farms

A SHORTAGE of seasonal agricultural workers could be dealt with by decisive action to end chronic low pay in the sector, farm workers' union Unite said yesterday.

As agricultural bosses lamented that a "massive hole" in the number of people coming to Britain to pick fruit had left some growers "on the brink," the union called on ministers to intervene to encourage good employment practices.

Unite national officer Bev Clarkson told the Morning Star: "If pay, terms and conditions were right in agriculture then there would be UK workers available as well as migrant workers."

"That's the big problem - there's massive issues because workers are extremely low paid, they don't have any job security and are often treated badly."

"To prevent chronic labour shortages requires not only individual employers to up their game, but for the government to implement sector-wide reforms and assistance, including reinstating the Agricultural Wages Board."

"Not being part of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy should also mean government making the allocation of farming subsidies conditional on the creation of decent, secure jobs."

■ AIDING PALESTINE

Protesters vow to keep up factory occupation

PRODUCTION at an arms factory which helps make weapons for Israel remained at a standstill yesterday as Palestine supporters staging an occupation on the building's roof vowed "to stay as long as we can to disrupt the factory."

Palestine Action supporters climbed onto the roof of the APPH factory in Runcorn, Cheshire, in the early hours of Thursday and protesters gathered at the factory gates yesterday to support the occupiers.

Huda Ammori, a co-founder of the group, said: "APPH is one of the key suppliers to Elbit which provides drones to Israel."

"This is one of many actions targeting companies linked to Elbit Systems, such as suppliers and landlords who enable Elbit to supply weapons to kill Palestinians."

Nationwide protests take place today in support of Palestine, including a demonstration assembling at Leeds town hall at 2pm and action in Manchester, where people will meet in Piccadilly Gardens at noon to protest outside banks which invest in firms supplying the Israeli army. In London, protesters will gather at Downing Street at 1pm.



■ TRANSPORT

Rail workers to strike in four separate Scottish disputes

by Niall Christie
Scotland editor

RAIL union RMT announced yesterday that strikes are set to go ahead in four separate disputes on Scotland's railways as industrial relations hit a new low.

Transport workers across Scotland will walk out over the next week, with concerns raised over pay for staff being offered by private contractors running the country's railways.

On Sunday, ScotRail workers will take action in their long-running fight for pay justice for all grades and another dispute over enhancements for rest-day working.

RMT members on the Serco Caledonian Sleeper are prepar-

ing for 11 days of strikes from Tuesday over a pay freeze, while railway maintenance staff in Perth will also be taking strike action on Tuesday and Wednesday over a breach of dignity and respect policy.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch warned that Scotland's railways are set for a long hot summer of disputes.

"The fact that we now have four disputes running in Scotland shows just how badly privateers like Abellio and Serco run their operations and treat their workers," he said.

"If the companies will not sit round the table and engage in serious talks aimed at resolving each of these disputes then the politicians responsible for issuing the franchises need to inter-

vene and force their hand." ScotRail reiterated its demands that the RMT call off its strike action, underlining that its position on worker pay will not change.

Operations director David Simpson said: "Railway jobs are being put at risk by the reckless actions of the RMT and we are urging union bosses to call off these divisive strikes."

Serco's Kathryn Darbandi said the strike action is both unjustified and very disappointing, adding: "We have also been clear that we fully intend to resume pay talks next year, once the business is in a stronger position." It was "one of the worst asylum crises we've ever experienced."

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Unite Croydon Retired Members Branch

Regret to announce the death of

Zsuzsi Yardley

(January 9 1940 – June 3 2021) and sends deep sympathy to her family.



She was the branch's Equalities Officer, a stalwart of the trade union movement, an internationalist and supporter

of all progressive causes. She will be greatly missed by her many friends and comrades.

Len Freeman

North Devon CPGB secretary, AUEW convenor, anti-racist and community activist died 12 June 1981 age 47.

Remembered fondly by Gerrard Sables and Margaret McGuinness.



NORTHERN IRELAND: CUBA solidarity activists unfurled the biggest Cuban flag on Earth overlooking Belfast yesterday. Members of the Cuba Solidarity Forum Ireland (Belfast) climbed the Black Mountain to display the huge flag in protest against the ongoing US blockade of Cuba while US President Joe Biden is at the G7 in Cornwall. Solidarity activists from all parts of Belfast took part. A world day of action will take place next Saturday June 19 in opposition to the illegal blockade. Cavalcades against the blockade will take place in London, Manchester and Sheffield

■ SIX COUNTIES

Sinister parade of masked men causes huge concern

by Our Foreign Desk

THE appearance of masked men leading an illegal loyalist parade through Belfast on Thursday night was “sinister and concerning,” a Sinn Fein MP said yesterday.

Loyalists gathered in the Woodvale district on Thursday evening before marching down the Shankill Road in protest against the Northern Ireland Protocol, a key part of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Brexit agreement with the European Union that some loyalists believe undermines their Britishness.

Footage posted on social media showed the burning of a united Ireland banner that had

been displayed on the nationalist side of the local peace wall earlier this year.

West Belfast MP Paul Maskey criticised the gathering, saying that the burning of the Irish flag was a deliberate attempt to provoke and raise tensions.

“We have witnessed the recent violence on the streets where property was destroyed, police officers injured and people left terrified in their homes. Those scenes cannot be repeated.

“The PSNI [Police Service of Northern Ireland] now need to address this illegal parade and the actions associated with it.

“Those within positions of leadership in political unionism also need to come out and condemn the scenes

witnessed tonight, including masked men standing outside a DUP constituency office and others holding sinister banners targeting US President Joe Biden.

“Hooded men on our streets or calls to provoke instability have no place in our society and those in positions of leadership need to make that clear.”

Police have estimated that more than 3,000 people took part in the parade, which is more than the number allowed to gather in public under coronavirus regulations.

Chief Inspector Darren Fox said yesterday that the footage gathered would be examined for suspected breaches of public health rules.

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■ LEBANON

Palestinian refugees call for activists to increase resistance

by Steve Sweeney
in Bourj el-Barajneh
refugee camp, Lebanon

PALESTINIAN refugees at the largest camp outside the occupied territories urged supporters around the world to keep up demonstrations and increase pressure on their governments to isolate Israel as an apartheid state.

At Bourj el-Barajneh on the southern outskirts of the Lebanese capital Beirut, student Amina H told the Morning Star ahead of today’s march in that she was “proud to see the numbers on the streets.

“Something has changed. People aren’t afraid any more,” she added, saying that the Palestinian people gain strength from the global demonstrations, which they see as part of “a united struggle against injustice.”

The camp she calls home was established during the 1948 Nakba, in which thousands of Palestinians were forced out of their homes and driven from their land by Zionist forces.

It was besieged by Israeli troops and Lebanese Christian

Phalangists in 1982, a period which also saw the massacre of thousands of Palestinian refugees at the nearby Sabra and Shatila camps during the Lebanese civil war.

Between 1984 and 1987, Bourj el-Barajneh was surrounded by the now-disarmed Amal militia during a battle for control of west Beirut.

Today, conditions at the camp are squalid. Some 50,000 people are crammed into just one square kilometre blighted by air pollution and a lack of natural sunlight.

Narrow streets are inaccessible to ambulances and health-care is at a bare minimum, with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) and NGOs including Doctors Without Borders (MSF) providing only limited services.

Posters encourage take-up of the Covid-19 vaccine, promising that it is safe, while others warn: “Drug dealers are Mossad agents” – an indication that, perhaps unsurprisingly, narcotic use is a problem.

Electricity cables are dangerously intertwined with water pipes, which has led to the fatal electrocution of at least 80 peo-

ple in recent years, according to camp officials.

One wall painting depicts a young man “martyred” in such a way in 2018.

The Lebanese authorities have turned their backs on the residents, refusing to provide clean water and banning construction work, which is desperately needed to improve living conditions in the camp.

“This is not a life. Nobody cares if you die,” Amina said, adding that all the residents want is the right to return to the homes and land that they were driven from 72 years ago.

Fellow refugee Abu Omar agrees, saying that he holds the British government responsible for their plight since it “shamefully” gave their land away with the 1917 Balfour Declaration and is “continuing to support the oppressors of the Palestinian people.”

“Britain must take a fierce stand in fighting injustice and oppression,” he said.

“We ask the people to stand by the Palestinians and help make our dream to return to our homeland become a reality.”

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■ REFUGEE CRISIS

‘Paradise’ garden honours the drowned

THE director-general of the UN’s cultural agency Unesco, Audrey Azoula, inaugurated a garden in the coastal Tunisian town of Zarzis this week commemorating refugees who drowned while attempting to cross the Mediterranean.

The Garden of Africa (Le Jardin d’Afrique) is the concept of Algerian-French artist Rachid Koraichi, whose exhibition at the October Gallery in London was reviewed in the Star.

A Unesco plaque at the

site pays homage to the shipwrecked who lost their lives in search of a better life “and in recognition of the commitment of artist Rachid Koraichi to fight indifference and give them a dignified final resting place.”

The Garden is both a symbol and an actual burial place for the refugees who perish along the perilous sea routes of the Mediterranean in search of a better life. Their countless remains are returned to the shores by the

currents, only to be tossed onto the rubbish heaps of north Africa’s coastal towns.

Koraichi says the garden, a place of solemn rest as much as solace and reflection, is an Islamic idea of a cemetery as a restful place.

It is a non-denominational space to be “filled with the sound of water and teeming with plants – jasmine, hibiscus, bougainvillea, cypress, oranges and scented herbs – like a true garden of paradise.”



INDIA: Indian National Congress activists demonstrate against the rise in fuel prices in New Delhi, India, yesterday

■ PERU

Congratulations pour in for Castillo's vote victory

LEFT-WING figures across Latin America began congratulating Peru's Pedro Castillo on Thursday after the final votes in the country's presidential election appeared to show he had won.

Mr Castillo gained 50.2 per cent of the votes against right-winger Keiko Fujimori's 49.8 per cent.

But Peru's electoral tribunal, expected to take a week or more to officially declare the winner, is evaluating 631 tally sheets following unsubstantiated accusations of voter fraud from Ms Fujimori's campaign.

Brazil's Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva said: "The result of the Peruvian polls is symbolic and represents another advance

in the popular struggle in our dear Latin America."

Argentinian President Alberto Fernandez tweeted Mr Castillo on Thursday, saying that he hopes "we join forces in favour of Latin America. We are deeply twinned nations." Bolivian leader Luis Arce said that his country "joins the celebration of the Peruvian people, a country with which we share history and culture."

Former Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa said: "Congratulations to Pedro Castillo and to all the Peruvian people. A simple pencil beat the [millionaires] and its corrupt press. The road is very difficult, but Peru will get ahead. Ever onward to victory!"

■ MEXICO

Corpus Christi massacre remembered

MEXICO marked the 50th anniversary of the 1971 Corpus Christi massacre on Thursday.

On June 10, the day of Corpus Christi festival that year, students took to Mexico City's streets to demand democratic reform of the country.

It was the first large-scale protest since hundreds of demonstrators were killed in the Tlatelolco massacre in 1968.

The students didn't get more than a few streets before they were set upon by plain-clothed, government-backed paramilitaries, who killed around 120 people.

At a commemoration on Thursday, assistant interior secretary Alejandro Encinas vowed that the massacre would not be forgotten.

"It is the Mexican government's irrevocable commitment,

and the will and orders of President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, that these ominous events in Mexican history do not remain in silence," Mr Encinas said.

The killings were just part of what has become known as the Dirty War, a conflict between the US-backed PRI government and left-wing opposition groups, students and guerillas across Mexico in the 1960s and '70s.



■ GREECE

COURT REFUSES TO LET OBSERVERS ATTEND TRIAL

by Our Foreign Desk

A GREEK court refused to allow independent legal observers and journalists to attend the trial of four Afghan teenagers yesterday accused of burning down an overcrowded refugee camp last year.

The infamous Moria refugee camp on the Greek island of Chios burnt down last September, leaving about 12,000 people without help from the authorities for days until a new camp was built on what was later revealed to be a former military weapons testing ground.

Six teenagers have since been accused of starting the fire, but 70 refugee support groups signed an open letter last week warning that the teenagers' right to a fair trial was at risk and that they

were to be made scapegoats for the EU's inhumane migration policy.

"From the moment of their arrest and before any due process of law, they have been presented to the public as the culprits," the open letter reads.

"Rather than seeing the fire as an inevitable disaster in a deadly camp infrastructure, the Greek state arrested six young Afghan migrants and presented them as the culprits and sole cause of the fire, attempting to stifle further public debate on the living conditions inside the camp and political responsibility."

Waiting outside the court after members of the public were refused entry due to space restrictions, members of Legal Centre Lesbos said yesterday morning that the defence lawyers' applications to have three of the defendants' cases heard before a

juvenile court, owing to the fact that they were minors at the time of their arrest, was rejected.

Two of the Moria Six, as they are referred to by activists disputing the Greek authorities' version of events, were jailed for five years after a six-hour trial in March.

The case against the four boys was ongoing as the Star went to press.

Elsewhere at Fortress Europe's edges, the EU-supported Libyan Coastguard intercepted and returned over 450 people attempting to escape the war-torn country on Thursday night.

Doctors Without Borders (MSF) also warned that its rescuers with its ship Geo Barents had also been threatened by the Libyans during a rescue mission in the central Mediterranean on Thursday.

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■ SRI LANKA

Waters by sinking cargo ship tested for leaking oil

by Our Foreign Desk

SRI LANKAN authorities have begun testing the waters around a sinking cargo ship to try to determine whether oil is leaking from it, officials said yesterday as microplastics continue to wash up on its shores.

Results of the tests taken on Thursday by the Marine Environment Protection Authority are still pending, the country's Environment Minister said.

The tests were prompted by satellite images which showed a substance that could be oil in the water near the Singapore-flagged MV X-Press Pearl, which was devastated by a nearly two-week fire before it started sinking last week.

The fire destroyed most of the ship's cargo, which included 25 tons of nitric acid and other chemicals.

But debris, including burnt fibreglass and tons of plastic pellets, have already polluted nearby beaches and there are concerns that a spill of remain-

ing chemicals and oil on the ship could devastate marine life.

The ship's operator, X-Press Feeders, said in a statement on Thursday night that "a grey sheen has been observed emanating from the vessel, and water samples are currently being tested."

The fire erupted on May 20 when the ship was anchored at about 9.5 nautical miles north-west of Colombo and waiting to enter Sri Lanka's main port. The navy believes that the blaze was caused by its chemical cargo.

The fire burnt for 12 days before being extinguished last week. It then started sinking and attempts to tow it into deeper waters failed when the ship's stern sank to the seabed.

Commenting on the environmental disaster last week, Greenpeace said: "Plastic is not just an ocean and waste problem. From the beginning of its lifecycle all the way to its end, plastic is a climate, health and social justice issue."

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 in brief

Bachelet signals rights concerns

MYANMAR: UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet warned yesterday of a military build-up in parts of the country, with the army using heavy weapons against armed groups as well as civilian targets.

Ms Bachelet said more than 108,000 people have fled their homes in eastern Kayah state in the last three weeks, and her office cited "credible reports" that security forces have shelled civilian homes and blocked access for humanitarian aid.

The military ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February.

Marin's first test as voters head to polls

FINLAND: Local elections go ahead on Sunday in a first test for Social Democratic Party leader Sanna Marin, who took office shortly before the global outbreak of Covid-19.

The 35-year-old Ms Marin, who became Europe's youngest government leader in December 2019, has won international praise for her handling of the pandemic but her party has failed to attract young voters.

The conservative National Coalition Party and the far-right Finns Party are in the lead in the polls.

Orban prepares homophobic Bill

HUNGARY: Prime Minister Viktor Orban has prepared new legislation that bans showing content encouraging homosexuality or gender transition to under-18s under the guise of banning pornography.

LGBT rights activists denounced the bills as discriminatory, with some comparing the proposed legislation to a 2013 Russian law banning gay "propaganda."

"These proposals, which have dark echoes of Russia's anti-gay propaganda law, will further stigmatise LGBTI people, exposing them to greater discrimination in what is already a hostile environment," Amnesty International Hungary director David Vig said.

Struggle on the Streets

the best photos from the week's protests around the world



ABOVE: Actor and activist Jane Fonda joins a rally at the headwaters of the Mississippi in in Solway, Minnesota, against a Canadian's firm plan to replace an aging pipeline carrying crude oil from Alberta to Wisconsin
LEFT: No Big Ships activists protest as first cruise ship leaves Venice since the start of the pandemic, demanding that such huge vessels be rerouted out of the fragile lagoon due to environmental and safety risks



ABOVE: A Colombian police officer attacks an anti-government protester in Bogota during the latest of weeks of demonstrations triggered by proposed tax increases



ABOVE: Staff and supporters of the Aids Healthcare Foundation march in front of the federal building in central Los Angeles as they call for the United States to share its surplus Covid-19 vaccine supplies with hard-hit, poor countries around the globe
LEFT: Anti-government protesters in Beirut hit a member of Lebanon's police intelligence as he tries to flee on a traffic officer's motorcycle. They had spotted the police spy taking pictures of the demonstrators





Diane Abbott

shadow home secretary

Out of step and out of touch

DIANE ABBOTT looks at the retrograde policies of a Tory government exposed by the G7 summit

INTERNATIONAL politics and domestic politics are bound up with each other. Countries pursuing an isolationist agenda, however they dress it up, always find that the world does not stop, and no, you cannot get off. This proposition was brought sharply into focus at the G7, where the British government's reactionary and authoritarian agenda bumped up against the real world.

The G7 meeting has the capacity to address some of the world's most pressing problems and make a significant contribution to resolving them, in cooperation with the global South.

Yet this Tory government is generally playing a far from constructive role in international affairs, and is actually a blockage to progress on many issues.

Ahead of the G7 summit itself, the finance ministers' meeting hatched a global plan to increase the tax on some very large corporations.

If effective, this is a welcome development. It is a US-led break from a central neoliberal idea that lower taxes means more investment and better allocation of resources.

The economic toll of the Covid crisis is very large in the G7 countries because in general they let the virus freely circulate. It is imperative that workers and the poor are not faced with picking up the bill.

The tax plan still faces many hurdles, but it is clear that the British government's role was in watering down the original Biden proposal for a common 21 per cent minimum rate, yet it had the gall to claim credit for the entire deal.

We have also subsequently learnt that Chancellor Rishi Sunak has put a great deal of effort into exempting the big banks from the tax plan, in order to preserve the City of London's untaxed profits.

On the Covid crisis itself the Prime Minister's claim that he wanted to lead in "vaccinating the world" also rings completely hollow. His government is one of the many rich Western countries with Big Pharma companies and who have blocked vaccine patent waivers at the WTO.

President Joe Biden has belatedly supported the waiver. This would allow rapid and large-scale production of generic doses. But the UK is blocking it, and the only conceivable reason is to benefit the Big Pharma companies.

The promise of 500 million doses from the US and 100 million from the UK government should be understood in this context. Waiving patents means vaccines can be supplied to the



world's poorest countries as production can be increased massively.

Blocking the waiver, as the US did and the UK and other G7 members continue to do, means that inevitably many, many people in the world's poorer countries will needlessly die.

Pledges of vaccines, which are explicitly a response to the positive work of China's and Russia's "vaccine diplomacy," are clearly less effective even

if they materialise.

Probably the biggest challenge of all for the G7 is on the issue of climate change. Yet we learnt recently that, while the government has ambitious targets for reduction of emissions, it has no concrete plan to achieve these at all. For all our sakes they need to formulate a robust plan ahead of COP26 later this year.

Britain's long process of de-industrialisation and the

run-down in North Sea oil production both mean it has had a relatively easy ride in reducing CO2 emissions. But the effect of these is not going to be as substantial in the future.

Huge and rapid action is required simply to continue those trends, but we are yet to see any evidence of that.

The government's very negative international role and how it is entwined with domestic politics has been highlighted

through attempts in the Commons to restore cuts in the international aid budget.

Ministers seem to have no awareness that any claim to moral authority in leading the G7 is disastrously undermined by these cuts.

The government mantra that "there is no money left" for desperately needed aid is clearly hypocritical as it wastes the far greater sum of £37 billion on a failed private-sector test and trace system.

However, the dispute over the Northern Ireland Protocol shows the reactionary nature of this English nationalist government at its most stark. Talks with the EU are close to collapse and they are taking the UK government to court.

The US ambassador has issued a demarche, which The Times tells us "is a formal diplomatic communication or protest lodged with a government, more commonly an adversary than a close ally."

Perhaps most important of all the British government's efforts to tear up the treaty it signed flouts the will of the Irish people, North and South, who opposed Brexit and support both the Protocol and the Good Friday Agreement.

Biden is certainly no socialist, but this British government which Donald Trump helped to create is significantly to the right of the US president.

This is true on taxation, on

public spending, on the vaccine waiver and on upholding the Good Friday Agreement. It is said that Biden wants to reduce nuclear weapons multilaterally. The UK is increasing them unilaterally.

Socialists and the wider labour movement, and other progressive forces, should understand the importance of these issues.

It is often falsely claimed that we should "stick to bread and butter issues."

But we lost the last two elections with the best leader Labour has ever had and we were offering bread, butter and jam in our manifestos.

But the Tories literally Trumped us with wild accusations on international and related issues that have traction with some of the population. We need answers to these questions.

At the same time Boris Johnson says he rejects the term "special relationship" because it implies subservience.

The truth is that ever since Suez British governments have been completely politically subservient to the US, a reflection of the even longer-standing economic inferiority.

Johnson's English nationalism also rejects Bidenism, and is a vain attempt to "Make Britain great again" echoing his friend Trump.

This is causing him great difficulties internationally. It is long overdue that we cause him similar difficulties at home.



[Johnson's] government is one of the many rich Western countries with Big Pharma companies which have blocked vaccine patent waivers at the WTO



PROFOUND IRONY: The over-40s are being vaccinated with Sputnik V and Sinopharm in the gym of the American Institute school in La Paz, Bolivia, last Friday



It is said that Biden wants to reduce nuclear weapons multilaterally. The UK is increasing them unilaterally

■ Diane Abbott MP is a Labour Party Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington.

★ Star comment

The G7 summit is a renewed projection of US imperial power

YESTERDAY the US president and the British premier gave their ice-cream cones a last lick, took a lingering look at the West Country beach and got down to business with the other five leaders of the biggest capitalist states.

One question they need to resolve, or at least bear in mind, as they sort out their constantly shifting alignments, is to what extent they exercise decisive leadership over economic, trade and geopolitical questions when the global balance of power is changing.

Russia and China are not included in this discussion and won't appear in the grinning line-up at the conclusion of the G7.

But a combination of their military and economic weight and the shifting tectonic plates of global power-broking, which entails factors such as volatile political change in Latin America and new economic and political relationships on the Asian landmass, makes this summit less decisive than in earlier times.

Joe Biden wants to restore the centrality of US economic, political and military power as the glue for a restored regime of "multilateralism."

This is a term that must be read as code for the renewed projection of US imperial power and a restoration of the alliances that Donald Trump's erratic presidency undermined.



Boris Johnson's enthusiastic glad-handing and forced intimacy with the US president is his recognition that Britain's "special relationship" with the US is in danger of being downgraded even further unless he can convince Biden's masters that even outside the EU Britain can still be a springboard for the projection of US power on our continent.

Much of the media comment is focused on the Northern Ireland Protocol. The bit-player role of two of the EU's many "presidents" – European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and European Council president Charles Michel – is to echo French President Emmanuel Macron in insisting that the protocol is sacrosanct.

In this very effort they confirm that it is indeed infinitely renegotiable. No amount of witless posturing by unionists will stand in the way of really big business.

Britain is no longer part of the institutional superstructure of the European Union but the essential features of our country's integration into, and conformity with, the neoliberal regime that the EU has developed over the last decades has been renegotiated.



Trade in services and goods continue to be substantially tariff-free. State aid to industry and public ownership remain highly regulated while the competitive tendering regime which has laid waste to public services remains.

The British government anticipated the UK-EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement with a late December 2020 UK Internal Market Act which gave effect to a mini-me single market that cloned the EU's regulatory regime.

The main structural features of the British economy – a much-reduced industrial and manufacturing sector and collapsing investment combined with an overblown financial sector with an overdependence on services – presents the government with special problems.

The 2008 financial crisis revealed the dangers of exposure to the US speculative housing market that comes bundled in with the inflated size of the finance sector.

Much of the Johnson government's centralising efforts are directed at resolving the contradiction between the traditional Tory focus on controlling expenditure and the need to sustain confidence and secure a minimum level of demand in the economy as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.

We can anticipate further constraints on public spending, increased taxes on working people and a managed inflation to erode wages.

Far from demonstrating that Britain has an equal relationship with the US, this summit reveals Britain as a junior partner, privileged in some ways above others, but subordinate and subaltern.



CHEERING FOR CLARA: Supporters of Morena's candidate in the Iztapalapa borough of Mexico City Clara Brugada

Victory for the left in Mexico

DAVID RABY analyses the mid-term elections where the Morena party held and even increased its representation

MEXICO'S mid-term elections produced a clear victory for Amlo's Morena party, although with setbacks in the major cities.

The Mexican and international media have predictably invented a "defeat" for Amlo and his 4T Transformation of the country to benefit workers and the poor, so let's begin with the basic facts.

All 500 seats in the lower house of Congress (Chamber of Deputies) were being renewed (but not the Senate); 300 by first past the post and 200 proportionally.

Morena won 198 seats compared with 191 in the previous such elections of July 2018; with two allied parties its coalition won 280, so a clear majority.

The media claim that before the elections Morena had 253 seats and thus lost 55, but they do not explain that this situation only arose because during the previous two-and-a-half years many deputies "crossed the floor" from other parties to join Morena.

Comparing like with like – Morena's electoral tally in 2021 compared to 2018 – the party actually gained seven seats.

The media also claim that Morena previously had the two-thirds majority necessary to pass constitutional amendments and has now lost this, but again this is false: the only constitutional amendments Amlo and Morena succeeded in passing were achieved by negotiating with a section of the opposition, and this will still be the case if they want to pass any more such amendments.

Fifteen of Mexico's 32 states

had elections for governor; all but one of these positions were held by opposition parties until last Sunday.

Morena won 11 of the 15, and a 12th state (San Luis Potosi) was won by its allies.

State legislatures were being elected in 30 of 32 states; Morena and its allies won majorities in 19 of the 30.

There were also elections for mayors and councillors in over 1,900 municipalities, with very varied results.

The one clear setback for Morena and the left was in local elections in Mexico City and the neighbouring State of Mexico (Edomex) which includes many of the outer suburbs: opposition parties took many of these positions from Morena.

It should also be recognised that Jalisco state (home to the country's second city, Guada-

lajara, population five million) and Nuevo Leon (with the third city, Monterrey, population 3.5 million) remain right-wing strongholds.

Jalisco has a right-wing governor who still has three years of his term remaining, but Morena hoped to make gains in local elections there and failed.

The right again won the governorship of Nuevo Leon (as it has done for decades), and Morena also failed to make gains in local elections there.

In both of these states local right-wing elites have successfully played on regional sentiment to exclude the left.

The setbacks in Mexico City and its suburbs are more surprising, and do suggest a political problem for Amlo and Morena.

In part, as Amlo has said, this is no doubt due to the vicious campaign of lies and distortions by the media which have greater influence in the capital city.

The tragic accident on Line 12 of the city's metro system just over a month ago, in which 24 people died, was used by the media against the government and may have influenced the vote.

Another factor to be taken into account is that where previously Morena was competing with two major opponents, PAN and PRI, that often competed with one another, producing a three-way race (and minor parties also), now the opposition united in many of the elections in two- or three-party alliances against Morena.

To an extent this scenario was deliberately created by Amlo in a high-stakes strategy: for over a year he has been saying that the real choice is

between his 4T Transformation and its opponents, and that it would be better to recognise this simple division.

In some areas this strategy worked. In particular Morena's decisive victories in gubernatorial elections in the north-west region, with unprecedented wins in Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora, Sinaloa and Nayarit, is a vindication of this.

But opposition alliances, or tactical anti-Morena voting, worked against Amlo's party in greater Mexico City and in some states like Chihuahua.

A more fundamental issue concerns the character of Morena itself and the long-term viability of Amlo's project.

Morena means "National Renewal Movement," and it aims to be a broad grassroots movement for popular democracy and social justice rather than just a political party.

As with similar movements elsewhere, electoral logic forces it to behave as a conventional political party and to engage in partisan manoeuvres and horse-trading, but this weakens its radical potential.

None of this, however, should detract from the main story which is that Amlo and Morena have just won a remarkable victory.

In Mexico as elsewhere, mid-term elections normally lead to substantial losses by the governing party: instead, Morena has held and even increased its representation at various levels of government.

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The setbacks in Mexico City and its suburbs are more surprising, and do suggest a political problem for Amlo and Morena

The G7 in the era of the US's new cold war on China

THE G7 meet in Cornwall. The United States is back. The world's richest nations are once again to take the lead.

The humanitarian disasters that are their responses to Covid are brushed aside; the last 20 years of failed wars and financial crises, forgotten.

Billed as the most consequential G7 summit in 20 years, this is the platform for Joe Biden's global launch of his new cold war on China.

The G7 group – France, Italy, Japan, Britain, the United States, Germany and Canada – came together on an informal basis to manage the global economy against challenges, for example from the 1970s Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) oil shocks.

These advanced industrialised countries, though only 10 per cent of the world's population, made up 80 per cent of world GDP.

However as developing economies grew, concessions had to be made: Russia was admitted (on a limited basis only) in 1997 to form the G8; then some countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America were invited to attend the summits and the G20 including China, India and other large developing countries was formed in 1999.

However, when the 2008 financial crisis broke and the world economy faced meltdown, the G7 ducked out, handing over responsibility to the larger grouping – and especially China – to get out of the mess.

Since then, with the G7 dwindling to a 40 per cent share of world GDP, its legitimacy and credibility have been increasingly challenged by the G20, representing 80 per cent of global GDP and two-thirds of the world's population.

The US was to find it difficult to corral the other G20 members against China's economic "manipulations."

The G7 then began to big itself up as an ideological community, defending democracy and upholding human rights.

However its summits were notable for little other than the expulsion of Russia over the Ukraine in 2014.

Even to Western eyes, the grouping appeared a "hopeless relic of a bygone era."

In 2020, president Donald Trump called it a "very outdated group of countries."

Now suddenly the G7 is back. So what changed?

Within weeks of assuming

Biden is making a last-ditch effort to shore up the hierarchical power structure of the world with the US at its head, warns **JENNY CLEGG**



SPOILING FOR A FIGHT: USS Theodore Roosevelt marauding around the eastern Pacific

Pic: Kaylianna Genier, US Navy/Creative Commons

his presidency, Biden was to state categorically, regarding predictions of Chinese world leadership: "That's not going to happen on my watch ... If the West doesn't unite to make the rules for the 21st century, China will."

Where Trump succeeded in bringing China in from the margins to the centre of US security concerns, Biden is making it his mission to shift opinion among US allies and friends to view China as an existential threat to the entire world.

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Biden is making it his mission to shift opinion among US allies and friends to view China as an existential threat to the entire world

The G7 now is to form the heart of a collective effort to stop China's rise at the behest of Boris Johnson who, to earn his stripes as Washington's most special ally, has invited "like-minded" democracies – India, South Korea, South Africa and Australia – to join the summit.

That anyone could believe the purported aims of the meeting – recovery from the Covid pandemic and preparedness against future pandemics; trade and world economic recovery; and climate change – would be properly addressed without the inclusion of China beggars belief.

Rather, the intent of Western leaders is to show they can do "far better than the autocrats in Russia and China."

However their headline-grabbing gestures promise more than they deliver – a pledge of a billion vaccines for developing countries whilst still blocking the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (Trips) waiver; a global corporation tax that is full of exemptions and loopholes for the financially savvy to exploit; a ban on international funding for coal-fired power stations but no sign of ending subsidies to the fossil fuel industries.

New proposals to support high-quality infrastructure investment look to outshine China's contributions to global development through the Belt and Road Initiative, while the

"Wuhan lab theory" is floated to manipulate discussion of the pandemic.

The cold war mission of the summit came clear at a meeting of G7 foreign ministers in May which expressed concerns over tensions in the Taiwan Strait as well as "the negative pattern of Russia's irresponsible and destabilising behaviour."

The Cornwall meeting is in fact the start of a process to redesign the way the world is run to fit the future of "great power competition."

This, according to the US cold warriors, demands not just the co-ordination of policy but proactive measures in particular to address the challenges posed by China.

Drawing in other democracies in a flexible way, the G7 is to be recast as such a mechanism to manage the rules-based international order to hold China "accountable for violations of international law," and to restrict its economic and technological engagement with others.

Much of the work of the summit takes place in private conversations and sideline meetings with invitees.

It is here that the pressure is piled on to find China guilty of human rights abuses (Xinjiang) and violations of democratic freedoms (Hong Kong).

But to really be effective

such a "steering mechanism" requires a military component.

And most significantly Johnson's selection of invitees to Cornwall provides the opportunity to bring the Indo-Pacific Quad – Australia, India, Japan and the US – together with the major Nato allies.

The Biden roadshow will then bowl on to Brussels for the Nato summit followed by the US-EU summit to extend the "major power" revamp into the world's largest military alliance as well as the transatlantic relationship.

From this, Biden intends to bring as much pressure as possible to bear on Vladimir Putin so as to weaken the Russia-China partnership.

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Much of the work of the summit takes place in private conversations and sideline meetings with invitees

The precedent for this restyling of Western world leadership lies in the "coalition of the willing" that launched the war on Iraq in 2003, circumventing the UN.

Likewise, a new grouping of "like-minded democracies," set up to serve as judge, jury and executioner in co-ordinated policies and actions to deal with China, will surely sideline the UN altogether.

But Russia and China are making a stand. Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has countered the West's goal to develop its own rules "in closed, non-inclusive formats, [to then be] imposed on everyone else," pointing out: "The United Nations must serve as the key platform for co-ordinating efforts: it is the backbone of the modern global order, where all independent states are represented."

At the same time, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, calling for the need to pursue equity and justice, not bullying or hegemony, stated: "International rules must be based on international law, and must be written by all. They are not a patent or a privilege of a few. They must be applicable to all countries, and there should be no room for exceptionalism or double standards."

As with past G7 summits, the Cornwall gathering is an opportunity for protest over global inequality, climate justice and war spending.

Certainly, the richest nations should bear the largest share of the costs in tackling the world's problems.

But this is no longer simply about the global North versus the global South.

Why is it that, when faced with problems of the utmost urgency, the G7, instead of taking concrete action around a unifying agenda to boost the global recovery, seeks to deepen dividing lines and disrupt international relations?

Biden is making a last-ditch all-out effort to shore up the hierarchical power structure of the world with the US at its head.

It is by no means certain that other democracies are so like-minded about this race for global supremacy.

Protests should question the fundamental legitimacy of the G7. The route to global equality lies through the UN – that is the place where decisions that affect the whole world should be made.

An open letter from representative Chinese professionals in the UK to

WE ARE a collective of professionals of Chinese ethnic origin residing in the United Kingdom.

We wish to express the community's hope that leaders at the 2021 G7 will take all necessary step to defuse the current hostility towards China and the Chinese people.

Many of us had lived experience in China, and extensive relationships with the country and people. We implore the leaders of the G7 to regard China as a friend and not as an enemy.

We are glad that the Covid-19 pandemic is the main agenda for the 2021 G7 conference.

However, we are anxious that this forum should not be abused as a platform to propagate anti-China Covid-19-related myths.

As the April 7 2020 Nature publication rightly warned: "Continuing to associate a virus and the disease it causes with a specific place is irresponsible and needs to stop."

As infectious disease epidemiologist Adam Kucharski reminds us in his timely book *The Rules of Contagion*, history tells us that pandemics lead to communities being stigmatised, which is why we all need to exercise more care.

The international rule-based system has designated the WHO as the competent body to deal with such a pandemic.

Hence, all political accusations about the virus that are not science-based are unhelpful and a distraction to making the world safe from the pandemic.

A member of this collective, Dr Michael Ng, a community leader and a university professor in the UK, is involved in combating pandemic-related hate crimes against the Chinese community.

He wishes to remind the G7 that any attempt to politicise the Covid-19 issue against China would fan the flame of hate crimes against the community.

That would undo all the excellent efforts of the local councils, civic groups, police force and community leaders who had helped defuse the spread of hate crimes.

Dr Ping Hua, a research scientist, is concerned that the rise of hate crimes and daily demonising of China has created such a hostile environment for Chinese scientists that it could stymie the scientific and intellectual exchanges between the West and the world's fastest-growing economy.



TENSIONS RISING: A child passes by a poster with the slogan 'Receive Covid-19 vaccination, jointly build an Immunity Great Wall' in Beijing and (right) A Royal Navy Merlin helicopter lands on the HMS Queen Elizabeth which has been deployed in a provocative move to the Philippine Sea



We note with concern the United States' anxiety over the economic rise of China.

China's per capita GDP is only one-fifth of the United States, with only one military base abroad compared to 800 of the United States.

It is not a threat to the West. China's rise is complementary to Western interests.

A more prosperous China could only benefit working people in the West through higher demands for Western goods and services.

Treating China's rise as a threat to the United States or the West is based on fiction.

China is not a utopia, but it is undoubtedly not a dystopia

as Western critics and media visualise.

The Chinese people are aware of the ideological differences between the West and China.

Yet over 90 per cent support the government in Beijing. This is the finding from a 13-year long survey carried out by the Ash Centre of Harvard University.

They found that the majority of the population surveyed feels that today is better than yesterday. They expect tomorrow to be better than today.

The millions of Chinese who vote with their feet to return home after their travel and studies in the West corroborate with the Ash Centre findings.

China's governance is different from the West. That does not necessarily mean that the Communist Party of China (CPC) can defy the wishes of its citizens. This is the conclusion of the survey.

According to Edward Cunningham, who co-authored the research from 2003-2016, the "CPC isn't immune to shifts

“

All political accusations about the virus that are not science-based are unhelpful and a distraction to making the world safe from the pandemic

[in] public opinion, especially in areas like corruption, environmental degradation, health, and overall standards of living."

When considering whether China is a friend and partner, or enemy, G7 should consider the independent findings of the Ash Centre.

We are concerned that current hostilities towards China in the West are manufactured and ratcheted up in the United States to serve the interest of the military-industrial complex and the electoral needs of both the Democrats and the Republicans.

The alleged genocide in Xinjiang and the threat of invasion of Taiwan are the two most important examples.

On genocide in Xinjiang

We believe that the claim of genocide in Xinjiang is untenable as the Uighur population has increased from five million to 13 million since the 1950s.

If China does enslave a million Uighurs, the CIA enhanced aerial surveillance technology could

es of G7 leaders

easily prove the allegation with video images of prisoners in the yards. They have not done so.

Critics of China have studiously ignored a World Bank statement of November 11 2019 that dealt with the allegation that skills and learning institutions associated with the bank were de facto prisons.

"In line with standard practice, immediately after receiving a series of serious allegations in August 2019 in connection with the Xinjiang Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project, the Bank launched a fact-finding review, and World Bank senior managers travelled to Xinjiang to gather information directly ... the review did not substantiate the allegations."

Mr Bitu Bhalla, a member of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn and international arbitrator, and Mr Wah-Piow Tan, a Balliol-educated human rights solicitor, were unimpressed by the various legal opinions supporting the claim of genocide against China.

"China and the World Bank's \$100 million education and training program in Xinjiang," they observed, "is cast-iron evidence that China has no specific intention to kill a part or whole of the Uighur population. Without specific intention, there cannot be any genocide."

"What genocide regime would spend \$100 million to educate and train the people you plan to kill?"

They are also disappointed that the issues of proportionality were not adequately addressed, or addressed at all by those barristers criticising China's response to the threats of terrorism.

"Unlike Britain or the United States, China confronts an al-Qaida and Isis-inspired insurgency seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate in Xinjiang and central Asia."

On the China threat to Taiwan

According to the Economist, Taiwan has become the most dangerous place globally because of the risk of military conflict between the United States and China. There is enough nuclear weaponry between them to destroy the planet.

What the United States perceives as China's threat to Taiwan is viewed differently by the Chinese people.

At an International Affairs Fellowship forum, a US think tank, a panellist reported that 100 per cent of overseas Chinese students in the United States considered Taiwan a province of China.

"The possible validity of Chinese claims" over Taiwan,

remarked historian Max Hastings in a recent opinion piece in Bloomberg, was not even considered by the China experts advising the US administration.

Hastings had raised a valid question. The overwhelming majority of countries worldwide recognise the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China and pursue the one-China policy.

This is de facto recognition of China's sovereignty over Taiwan. To China, it is an unfinished reunification process.

The United States has its own hidden agenda to embolden the Taiwanese separatists, in the same vein as encouraging Uighur or Hong Kong separatists.

We hope the G7 should advise the United States to refrain from redefining its one-China policy, thereby destroying any likelihood of an amicable arrangement for reunification.

The impending war

We are particularly concerned that Britain's aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth II, the third-largest globally, is speeding towards Taiwan to flex its muscles at China.

Instead of supporting the hawkish approach of the United States towards China, the G7 should review the futility of wars launched since the September 11 2001 attack.

The wars in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Libya had caused 800,000 deaths, displaced 21 million people, wasted \$6.4 trillion. These wars created failed states, not democracies.

The current propaganda war complementing the military adventures against China are efforts to retain US hegemony.

The flawed policy has more dire consequences than those of the last two decades.

The G7 should review the previous 20 years of war launched by the US before contemplating to support Biden's military-led Indo Pacific Tilt, which is the code word for China-bashing in the South China Seas area.

The stakes are so high that the advice of Bruce Kent, the veteran peace campaigner, ought to be taken seriously: "We can learn to live harmoniously as neighbours ... we have to learn to live as partners."

TAN WAH PIOW

(Universal Common Sense) on behalf of the Collective of Chinese Professionals

■ Tan Wah Piow is a Balliol-educated human rights solicitor, practising in London and director Universal Common Sense. For background to Bruce Kent's comments watch War No More a DVD production available at www.abolishwar.org.uk.

DENIS ROGATYUK welcomes the election of Pedro Castillo in the face of a fearmongering campaign conducted by his right-wing electoral opponent, Keiko Fujimori

PEDRO CASTILLO, a rural teacher and union leader, has won the Peruvian elections with 50.179 per cent and a margin of approximately 60,000 votes (0.4 per cent).

Keiko Fujimori, the candidate of the far-right and the daughter of ex-dictator Alberto Fujimori, has cried fraud and commenced a legal battle to overturn the result by demanding the annulment of over 200,000 votes across Peru's rural regions.

And while the current presidents of Argentina, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Venezuela have congratulated Castillo as the president-elect, Fujimori appears to be determined to seize power through a process similar to the coup that took place in Bolivia in November 2019.

When analysing the campaign of both sides, the drastic differences between the two candidates are not only ideological, but also cultural and societal.

Castillo's image as a humble rural teacher from the northern region of Cajamarca and a union leader who led a successful national teachers' strike in 2017 resonated so strongly among the rural and urban populations of the country's interior that the final vote tally was over 80 per cent in many of them.

Castillo completely obliterated Fujimori in the regions of Puno (89 per cent), Huancavelica (85 per cent), Cusco (83 per cent), Apurimac (81 per cent) and Ayacucho (81 per cent).

This "deep Peru" also has a profoundly indigenous character (especially Cusco), which strongly rejected the rule by the Lima-based oligarchy.

Castillo and Peru Libre used a similar campaign formula that handed them the first-round victory – campaign meetings, rallies and gatherings throughout Peru's south, centre and the north.

These are the regions that bore the brunt of Fujimori's neoliberal policies and repression in the '90s.

Castillo's first-round campaign was also considered remarkable for mostly ignoring social media (Castillo did not have a Twitter or an Instagram account until after the first-round victory) and instead embracing traditional face-to-face campaigning throughout the country.

Throughout the mass meetings that he held in the country, he spoke of the need to end the vicious cycle of corruption within Peru's neoliberal state, recover and renationalise the key industries, utilities (especially water) and Peru's natural resources.

Castillo also embraced the popular demand for a new constitution and the creation of a

A new chapter in the history of Peru



constituent assembly, like the one recently founded in Chile.

He also promised immediate action on the Covid-19 pandemic through mass importation of the Sputnik-V vaccine from Russia and continual co-operation with China.

During his campaign, he also opposed the US intervention in Venezuela and promised that the country would leave the "Lima Group" comprised of the region's key right-wing governments that have been pushing for the overthrow of the government of Nicolas Maduro.

On the other hand, Fujimori's campaign was a blend of fearmongering, pork-barrel populism and huge investment in publicity in all of Peru's private media.

This was especially profound in Lima and its metropolitan area, as well as the country's coastal regions.

Throughout the campaign, massive billboards projected text and images such as "Yes to Democracy! No to Communism!" and "We don't want to be another Venezuela!"

The desperation of the part of Fujimori's campaign was notable.

One of the most ridiculed

promises of her campaign was the proposed "water bonus" to assist in the cost of utilities throughout Peru's central and northern regions.

It was pointed out many times that it was her father, Alberto Fujimori, who was responsible for the privatisation of water utilities in the first place.

The legacy of Alberto, Keiko's own role in his government and the current investigations against her on charges of bribery and corruption also weighed heavily on her campaign.

The disappearances and assassinations of social campaigners and trade union activists, the forced sterilisation of more than 250,000 indigenous women, the privatisation of state industries and the theft of hundreds of millions of dollars under the rule of Fujimori is still fresh in the country's memory.

In the end, this vision of a repeat of the 1990s under Keiko's presidency pushed the country to embrace a radical social change

personified by an individual of humble origins who never held a political office but sought to fulfil the popular demands of the majority that have been forgotten and neglected for decades.

In this manner, his victory echoes those achieved by Hugo Chavez, Lula da Silva, Evo Morales and Rafael Correa.

Castillo is poised to write a new chapter in the history of Peru and the wave of popular left-wing governments.



WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY
 Tomorrow will be mostly dry and with sunshine for many. Some showers may linger in the far north however, and north-western areas will become cloudy with a few spells of light rain possible.

NEXT FEW DAYS
 Sunday will be hot, dry and sunny but a band of rain pushing into far northwestern areas. The north-west will stay cloudy with spots of rain on Monday, with sunshine and warm temperatures elsewhere.

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Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

18 days left

YOU'VE RAISED: **£7,566** WE NEED: **£10,434**



THAT'S us a third of the way through the month with 42 per cent of the fund safely in the coffers thanks to £320 today.

Contributions arrived from Wakefield and Solihull which sent £1s, Hove, Norwich, and London £5s, Leeds and Kent for £10s and London £20.

Some judicious investigation means I think I should be thanking folk from Clayton,

Forest Hill, Hampshire, Bletchley and possibly Ellesmere Port.

Grosse Pointe Park is in the US and the £25 that arrived from there came with a tale. "I'm a relatively new digital subscriber to the Morning Star and have just read the story on Chile in June 3 edition.

"I was surprised and happy to see the account of the dispute between me and a union official

who quashed a story on the oppression of teachers under the Pinochet dictatorship. It even quotes from memos I wrote more than 40 years ago." I love it when readers write the column!

That's as much as I know of today's contributors but I've still to say thanks for the following that arrived earlier in the week. Cheques for £25 and £5 from Sheffield, a £5 postal order

from Brampton, Darlington CPB £10, £30 from Wolverhampton in thanks for the coverage on Kurdistan and Palestine.

From Tooting £20 is in the memory of David Dushman – the last surviving Red Army liberator of Auschwitz. He taught future generations why it must be "Never Again."

Enjoy the weekend but remember the fund.

Give by BACS...

Sort code 08-90-33, account 50505115, name PPF

online...

morningstaronline.co.uk/page/support-us

by phone...

9am - 4pm, 0778 0220 391

...or by post

Cheques to PPF, 52 Beachy Rd, Bow, London E3 2NS

Commie Chef

Asparagus and new potato salad

ASPARAGUS isn't cheap, but this is the time of year when it should be affordable for we members of the subordinate classes.

When I lived in Huddersfield, there was a clump in our tiny garden.

Our elderly neighbours told us that it had become popular in the 1920s but, tragically

enough given the high levels of unemployment that hit in the thirties, nobody knew you could eat it! It was grown purely as an ornamental plant.

So, if you can afford it, here is a very simple recipe. If not, try replacing the asparagus with green beans.

Frozen are best when they're out of season.

Ingredients

- 450g/1 lb new potatoes, scrubbed and chopped into bite-sized pieces
- about 200g/8 ozs green asparagus
- about 200g/8 ozs broad beans
- tbsp white wine vinegar
- tsp mild mustard
- 2 tbsps olive or rapeseed oil



What to do

Drop the asparagus and broad beans into boiling water with a little salt added.

Boil for 15 mins, then remove.

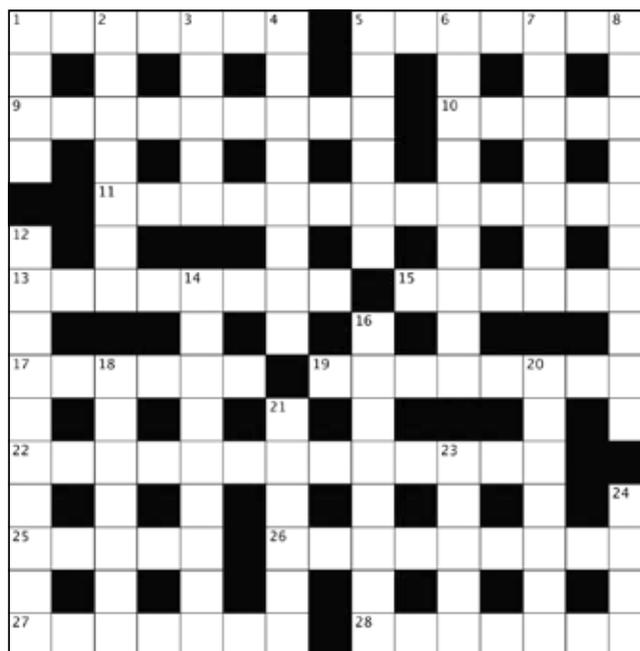
Leave the vegetables to cool to room temperature while the spuds are cooking.

Don't drain the boiling water – cook the potatoes in it for 20 minutes or until soft enough to poke through with a fork.

Mix the rest of the ingredients together to form a dressing and pour this over the veg.

I like this served with an omelette or other egg dish.

CROSSWORD 1,XXX set by Alamet



ACROSS

1. Doctor provided soak returned to vagrant (7)
5. Beat the starter with odd outburst (7)
9. Long ago perhaps press for clean back (9)
10. Force 5 across on president (5)
11. Selecting the best pricy ring? Heck, that's outrageous (6-7)
13. Travesty of justice is a bit of a blow I admitted (8)
15. Took what they say you'll find at Wimbledon (6)
17. Body of soldiers that is not discontented going east (6)
19. Bad habit – half of capital does winter sport (8)
22. Box? Unlikely – it's violent, see (10,3)
25. Dark close to junction (5)
26. Subject to strain and stress (9)
27. Mised, was first returning to turn to half-hearted document (7)
28. Untreated timber rip-off (3,4)

DOWN

1. 24. No clappers use this for exercise (4-4)
2. Prompts church to be engulfed by river (7)
3. Jazz with constant dealing (5)
4. Turning up predella's reverend members (8)
5. Flowers' edges support organised workers (6)
6. I can get on uneasily with wine seller (9)
7. University study (7)
8. Appeasing soldier going up to college seeing top removed (10)
12. Setter's left nude model besieged (10)
14. Fixed up tax-free grass outside (9)
16. "Red or Dead" is creating chaos (8)
18. Bad wind raising bottom is not allowed (7)
20. Dry ice starting to be found in material network (7)
21. Switch disuse put out (6)
23. Guard propeller (5)
24. see 1 down

Solution on Monday...

QUIZMASTER with William Sitwell

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

1. In London, what does LEZ stand for?
2. Two eagle specimens were rescued by some kayakers on the Danube recently. Were they steppe eagles, white-tailed eagles or golden eagles?
3. True or false: Edward Elgar wrote an opera based on the story of Rama and Sita.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

1. Did Aristophanes write comedies or tragedies? **Comedies.**
2. How many legs does a cockatrice have? **Two – like a wyvern, with a cock's head.**
3. Edmonton and St John's are both Canadian provincial capitals and suburbs of which English city? **London.**

DAILY SUDOKU (pretty tough)

	7	4						2
8					4			5
		5	3	6				
	8				6			5
	5	7		4		2	8	
4			5					3
				1	3	5		
	9		2					4
	4					1	7	

Solution on Monday...

Birmingham revives Co-op film tradition

NICK MATTHEWS welcomes the return of the Co-op films – a movement that has given us fantastic cinema over decades

AS A child raised on Saturday morning club at my local fleapit, I have always had a love for cinema. A medium that, by just turning down the lights, can silence hundreds of children does it for me.

As a co-operator it is heartening that there is a very long relationship between the movement and cinema. Back in 1914 in a rallying call the Co-operative News asked: "The cinema: should it be used for co-operative purposes?"

Seeing that cinema had the means of "attracting the masses – young and old – in a way that would enable them to obtain knowledge, and at the same time be vastly entertained."

Many societies across the country took up this gauntlet as the local Co-op Hall provided a convenient location for showing films. It was also popular with Co-op members who could get their divi on their tickets.

Many cinema pioneers had begun using co-op halls for cinema exhibition before the first world war, but it really blossomed between the wars with some societies opening purpose-built cinemas.

Much to the annoyance of



THE BIG, FLOATING, SCREEN:
 An audience watches a film at the The Openaire Float in London

commercial cinema operators whose business model was threatened. There was genuine fear among the exhibitors that the Co-op was going to open a cinema circuit.

The Co-op had seen cinema as an advertising medium, using especially produced short films distributed to over a thousand cinemas each season to promote co-op products such as The Cup that Cheers, a cel-

ebration of Co-op tea, in 1930.

It was not just in the showing and distribution of films that the Co-op became involved; they began commissioning and making them.

The best examples of these films include Advance Democracy (1938), a remarkable short made during the People's Front Movement of the late '30s promoted by the four London Co-operative Societies.

It shows how a housewife galvanises her husband through the co-operative movement and ends with them joining the May Day march of that year accompanied by rousing music by Benjamin Britten.

The film's director Ralph Bond, co-founder of the London Workers Film Society, believed in "putting the worker on the screen as a positive and vitally important aspect of life as a whole."

This uplifting short can still be caught free on the BFI website.

Probably the pinnacle of Co-op film in this period was The Men of Rochdale (1944), a remarkable film promoted by the Scottish CWS to mark the centenary of the formation of the first co-op shop in Rochdale.

No expense was spared in its production, directed by Compton Bennet, script by Reg Groves and music by no less than the London Symphony Orchestra. There is a terrific role for John Lawrie as a businessman threatened by the new co-op.

Post-war was of course a new world with rising consumerism and the arrival of television, but the movement never forgot its early foray into cinema.

For many years, the Co-operative Group was the sponsor of the of British Youth Film Academy. The BYFA was itself a co-operative of colleges and universities which gave young people hands-on experience of filmmaking. Many of the participants in their summer schools went onto careers in the industry.

One of the films they produced was The Rochdale Pioneers, released in 2012 and inspired by the 1944 Men of Rochdale. Many of the cast and crew were recruited from the BYFA and worked alongside established actors like John Henshaw and John McArdle. It received its TV premier on Channel 4.

This year for Co-operatives Fortnight that spirit of engagement between co-operation and cinema is being revived with the Just Film festival to be held between the June 18 and July 4. This online festival is being prompted by Birmingham Co-operative Film Society supported by Central England Co-op and the Co-op News. (www.justfilm.coop)

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Many cinema pioneers had begun using co-op halls for cinema exhibition before the first world war, but it really blossomed between the wars with some societies opening purpose-built cinemas

The festival involves feature films, shorts and an exciting category of brand new five-minute films in three categories, telling co-op stories, social justice drama and social justice documentary. For several weeks submissions in this category have been coming in and I am looking forward to seeing the best of them.

The culmination of the festival will be an in-person awards ceremony on the afternoon of July 4 at the Warehouse Cafe in Digbeth, Birmingham. It is time to attract a new mass of film-lovers to educate and entertain. Check it out. I am already as excited as I was when I was that small child on my way to Saturday morning club.

TV Weekend preview

with Neil Jenkin



ROUSING:
 Can a fit and in form again Gareth Bale lift Wales one more time?

Saturday

Football: Wales v Switzerland, 1.15pm BBC1

The belated 2020 European championships begin for the home nations with this awkward-looking encounter with the Alp-dwellers (kick-off 2pm).

Can Gareth Bale inspire Wales to reach the dizzy heights of 2016? Wise old heads

Joe Allen, Aaron Ramsey and Bale himself are going to need the youthful legs of the likes of Harry Wilson and Dan James to do the running for them.

BBC1 also screens England v Croatia on Sunday (kick-off 2pm), while the Tartan Army must wait till Monday for Scotland's Hampden clash with the quite good Czech Republic (kick-off 2pm on BBC1).

Film

Saturday

Oklahoma, 1.15pm BBC2

Classic 1955 Rodgers & Hammerstein musical about two young cowboys' attempts to woo their sweethearts.

Hidden Figures, 8pm Channel 4

2016 fact-based drama about three African-American women whose genius in mathematics and engineering made a significant contribution to the space race.

Deadfall, 8.25pm Talking Pictures

1968 Bryan Forbes-directed drama: "Michael Caine plunges into the world of the adulterous... the treacherous... and the perverse!" screams the publicity poster. How can we resist?

Sunday

Flushed Away, 11.35am E4

Aardman's first film made entirely in computer animation rather than stop motion, an adventure comedy about the rats of London voiced by a splendid cast led by Hugh Jackman, Kate Winslet and Ian McKellen.

Summer Holiday, 1.50pm BBC2

Not-so-classic 1963 musical. Don (Cliff Richard) and his chums persuade their employer to lend them a double-decker for a continental trip. Compare and contrast with the following, featuring the US's, ahem, pale imitation of Cliff.

King Creole, 3.45pm Talking Pictures

1958. musical drama directed by Michael Curtiz, starring Elvis Presley, Carolyn Jones and Walter Matthau. A rebellious young man takes a job at a nightclub, attracting the attention of a local crime boss.

Hush, Hush, Sweet Charlotte, 10pm Talking Pictures

Robert Aldrich-directed 1964 southern-gothic psycho-thriller with Bette Davis, Olivia de Havilland and Joseph Cotton. "The guignol is about as grand as it gets," quipped critic Judith Crist.

Documentary

Sunday

Brian Cox's Adventures in Space and Time, 9pm BBC2

The prof takes a fresh look at the concept of gravity, revealing it to be far more than just the force that makes things fall to the ground.

Drama

Sunday

Time, 9pm BBC1

Episode two of the Jimmy McGovern-written prison-set three-part drama with Sean Bean as guilt-riddled teacher Mark, a first-timer jailed for

killing a man while driving drunk, and Stephen Graham, an officer compromised by family circumstances. Gripping.

Fargo, midnight Channel 4

The fourth series of the Coen brothers-inspired black-comedy crime anthology continues. Italian and black gangs fight it out for domination in Kansas City, November 1950. Chris Rock heads an excellent cast.

Yesterday's sudoku

5	7	9	8	1	3	2	4	6
2	6	8	7	9	4	3	5	1
1	3	4	5	2	6	9	7	8
8	2	7	3	4	1	5	6	9
9	4	6	2	7	5	8	1	3
3	5	1	6	8	9	4	2	7
4	9	2	1	3	7	6	8	5
7	8	5	9	6	2	1	3	4
6	1	3	4	5	8	7	9	2

ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER | DIARY



The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's announcement that there'll be visa-free touring for musicians in some European countries is beyond a joke

Thanks, but no thanks Oliver Dowden

AS A musician and poet accustomed to doing a substantial part of my work in mainland Europe, I'd like to congratulate Oliver Dowden on his much longed-for breakthrough agreement allowing us to tour there visa-free once more.

I don't want to sound churlish in his moment of triumph but it behoves me to observe that it does, however, miss a few countries out.

Rather a lot, if truth be told. Basically, nearly everywhere, actually.

And that is not to denigrate the many cultural opportunities offered by Norway, Lichtenstein and Iceland. I've visited all three. I've performed a lot in the first, once in the second – albeit only for a few minutes – and would definitely have done

a gig in the third if I had had more than two hours' notice of my overnight stay.

Allow me to reminisce. I love Norway. I have toured there enough times to release an album – imaginatively titled *Live in Norway* – and am especially fond of Trondheim, where my wife Robina and I have always been very well looked after by our friends Torgeir Lund, her favourite host anywhere, and Niko.

Torgeir runs Crispin Glover Records, the independent label which released my CD, and Niko an independent craft-beer bar covered, and no, I'm not imagining this, in Brighton & Hove Albion memorabilia.

Norway does an IPA called Nogne 0 (Naked 0) which is simultaneously the loveliest

and most expensive beer I have ever drunk. And I've never had to pay for it 'cos it's always been on my rider. You can see why I'm fond of the place now.

I have been to Lichtenstein, which is an achievement, because it is very small and difficult to find: a lot of people don't know where it is at all. I do, although I have to confess I found it by accident. It nestles proudly at the top of, and in between, the enveloping folds of Switzerland and Austria.

I'd love to say it is cherished as a wonderful hidden jewel and a seat of unimaginable pleasure but it isn't. It's really, really dull. So dull, even Cold-play have never played there.

I was gigging in Austria and Switzerland with my band some years ago and we bumped into

it. So we chugged in, parted the tumbleweed, somehow found a bar which reminded me of Eastbourne in the 1970s and, realising we were unlikely to ever be invited to rock the place, I did a short poem. Purely so I can now say, I have performed in Lichtenstein.

Thanks, Oliver.

Iceland is a fascinating country with a proud indie music history. I've performed in all the other Nordic countries many times and have always hoped for an invite.

I've never had one, though, and since I'm in the wonderfully privileged position of being able to combine holidays and gigs I had more or less abandoned the idea of going there.

Then we booked an Icelan-

dair flight to the US via Reykjavik which arrived too late for the connecting flight, allowing us an overnight stay there at the airline's expense.

We marvelled at the treelessness, the steam coming out of the ground, the linguistic connections to Old English and the fact that a bottle of Heineken and a glass of wine cost about 30 quid. And we'd love to go back.

But actually, if and when the pandemic is finally over, what I really want to do is play for my friends and supporters in cities I have visited for decades like Berlin, Hamburg, Hannover, Amsterdam, Brussels,

Stockholm, Helsinki, Bern and Vienna.

That's Vienna, not Vaduz. Where's Vaduz? Guess. Bollocks to Brexit.



Pic: DirkVE/Creative Commons

BOOKS | THE SIX-POINTED STAR

BY MANUEL TIAGO | INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS, £20.54

Six-pointed symbol of a fascist system

DENNIS BROE recommends an account of life in one of Portugal's most notorious prisons during the Salazar dictatorship



THE SIX-POINTED STAR is the nickname given to Lisbon's fortress-like prison with a surveillance centre and cells radiating out from it.

During the Salazar dictator-

ship, which ran parallel to Franco's rule in Spain, the fortress housed prisoners guilty of "crimes" large and small.

Among them was political activist Alvaro Cunhal, pictured left, general secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party from 1961 to 1992. He wrote fiction under the name of Manuel Tiago and his book advances the case for in-depth reform of the penal system in what is a fictionalised version of his own prison experience.

The arbitrary nature of this system became ever more evident as the dictatorship reached its apogee in the 1950s and the author is struck, in getting to know the inmates, by the fact that the prison is filled with "killers who are neither worse nor better than one[s] who have never killed and never would ... many who committed crimes could well have spent their whole lives without doing them."

There is a striking contrast in the motives and circumstances of those locked up. Silvino, convicted of robberies and break-ins and fascinated by his explorations of the animal kingdom, is recognised as "a good man" by guards and prisoners.

Augusto retaliated when a big landowner robbed his family, seduced his sister



and then threw them off their land. In anger at this injustice, he shoots the landowner, a crime for which the prisoners forgive him. Garino stole food, distributed

it to his fellow villagers and for this was locked up for 12 years.

These crimes, the product of a ruthlessly unequal society, are differentiated from the doctor who drugged his patients and then raped them. He treats the other prisoners disdainfully, as if he should not be among them. Instead of showing actual remorse, he makes a spectacle of prayer – designed to get him an early release – in front of guards and prison officials.

And there is woman-traffic-ficker Argentino who, in a fit, killed his partner with "the crime revealing the kind of man he was in the end."

Prison labour is revealed to be a scam, with inmates earning a pittance for the most taxing work while having to use two-thirds of their wages to pay for the upkeep of their cells, food, clothes and laundry.

The novel's heartbreaking vignettes are aided by Eric A Gordon's translation, which respects the time frame but updates the language where this is crucial to an understanding by a contemporary reader.



ACT OF SUPREME TREACHERY: General Gomes da Costa, sabre in hand, and his troops after the May 28 1926 coup d'etat that ushered in the fascist dictatorship of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar

Pic: Joshua Benoliel/Creative Commons

PREVIEW

'Meticulous and precise yet bursting with life'

CJ Stone looks forward to a retrospective of printmaker **BEN SANDS'S** work

BEN SANDS is one of those artists you've probably never heard of, but should have. He worked in woodcuts and linocuts as well as being an expert typesetter and accomplished painter.

I first became aware of him when his son Matt started putting photographs of his prints on Facebook.

Even with this less than ideal presentation, I could see straight away that this work was something special. It is meticulous and precise and yet bursting with life at the same time.

Sands was born in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, in 1920. He was the youngest child of parents who had emigrated from Poland in 1913.

He was left-handed but, in the convention of the time, forced to write with his right hand. However he was allowed to paint and draw using his left hand, which probably goes a long way towards explaining the quality of his work.

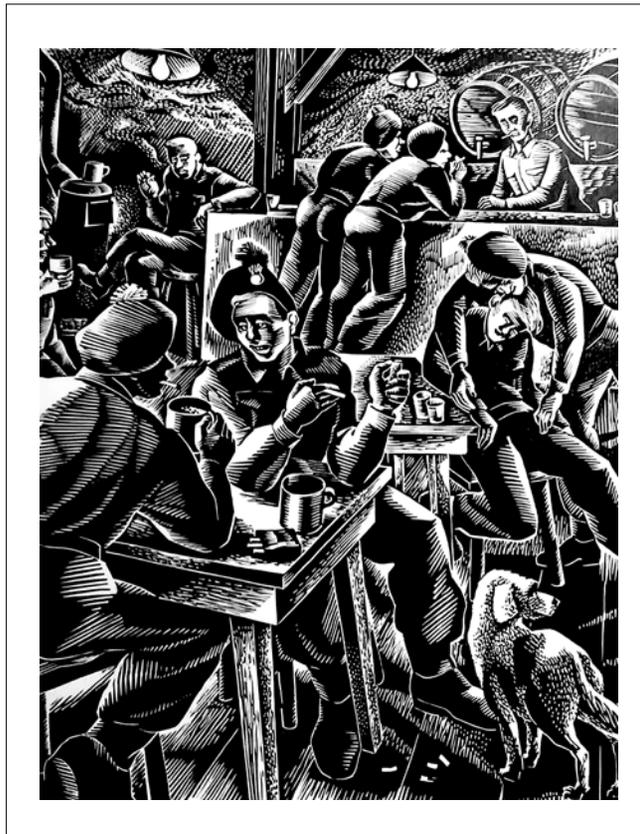
He gave a fascinating insight into the act of cutting into a block of wood in a 2003 interview: "...automatically, with practice, your mind sees that block as a field of solid black ... when you start cutting you start letting the light into the block and revealing the world which ultimately you are going to present to the public.

"Because you are letting light in all the time, every cut you make lets another streak of light in..."

If he was restricted by his right hand, he was unconstrained and powerfully gifted with his left. He developed skills that won him a scholarship to the Willesden College of Art in 1934.

In 1943, he was conscripted into an Irish army regiment, the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, and spent his war in Italy.

He was stationed in Austria for over a year after it ended, and the image *The Regimental*



tal *Wet Canteen* is based upon drawings he made in Austria at this time, although the linocut wasn't completed until 1990.

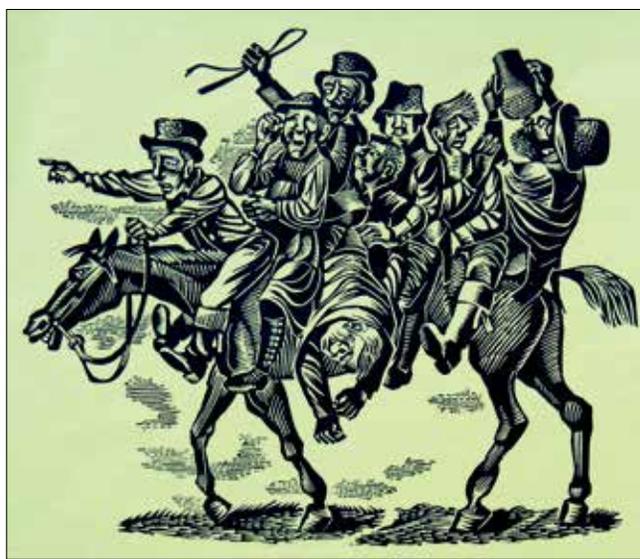
After leaving the army, Sands refused to collect his service medals, saying that surviving the war intact was enough.

He enrolled at the Central School of Art in London, then worked as a commercial artist in various studios, practising skills in typography and illustration.

The image of the rag-and-bone men wolf-whistling a passing woman, with scenes of bomb damage in the background, dates from this post-war period.

In the 1950s he met and married the love of his life, Bonna, with whom he had two children, Matt and David.

The family moved to the then sleepy seaside town of Whitstable in Kent in 1960 and it was from here that he produced his most characteristic work.



Although he worked as a typographic designer and had to commute up to London for work, in his spare time he produced a string of broadsheets and hand-printed books under the imprint of the Shoestring Press.

The commute to London was, as today, a slow torture that he endured for the sake of the family and the print *Commuters* is a product of this time.

It is a view from an elevated position, just under the roof of the carriage and he achieved it, in those pre-selfie-stick days, using only his imagination.

He was a life-long socialist and, although he never joined the Labour Party, he contributed to it for many years.

He stopped his direct debit in 1994 after Blair went to see Murdoch following his ascension to the leadership of the party. Sands sent a letter to Labour

Party headquarters to explain. "If you've got Rupert Murdoch's money behind you, you don't need mine," he wrote.

You can see his socialism in his work too – a celebration of the lives of ordinary people depicted with simple, unaffected warmth.

He never lost his eye for

“
He refused to collect his service medals, saying that surviving the war intact was enough

ORDINARY LIVES: (Left to right from above) *Regimental Wet Canteen*; *Commuters*; *Widdicombe Fair*; *London*; *Whitmarket Stalls*

these scenes of everyday life, captured in the moment and preserved through the medium of print, the mainstay of his work.

Most of it is set in and around Whitstable. People wait at a bus stop or stroll along the seafront and there are mothers with babies in push chairs and kids playing in a play ground, Whitstable market stalls on a Thursday morning and Morris dancers on May Day.

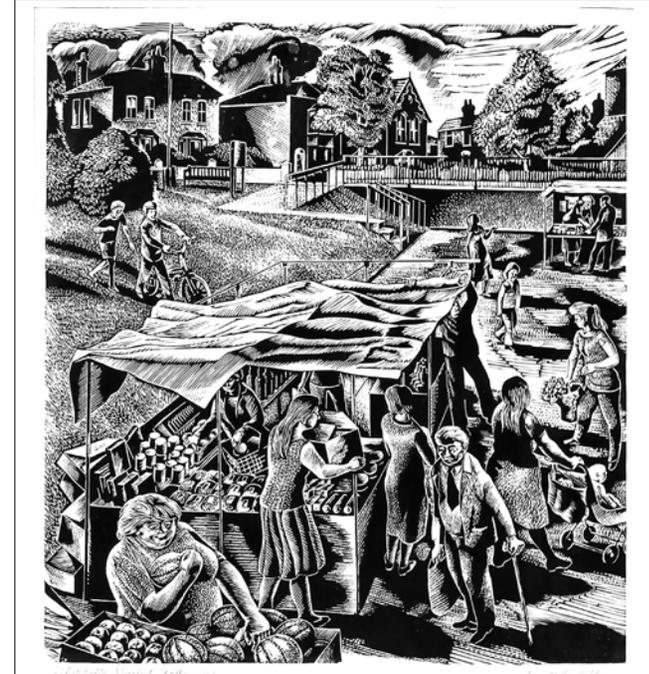
There is such richness of texture, vibrancy and depth here. His skies, particularly, are luminous and vivid, showing

a mastery of technique that is sometimes astonishing.

They come alive, as do his characters and, although you can pinpoint the era in which these scenes take place by the dress, there is a timeless quality to them.

Sands would have been 100 last year and we had originally planned to mark it in 2020 but the pandemic got in the way.

So we're celebrating his 101st this year with an exhibition of his work at the Horsebridge Arts Centre, 11 Horsebridge Road, Whitstable from June 18 to July 4, details: thehorsebridge.org.uk.



CLIMATE

Nothing good with nuclear reactors

WILL PODMORE admits he is on the side of the government and the industry in supporting nuclear power, but feels that is justified.

What he fails to mention is that this is not support from the government which arises from concern about provision of electricity but rather because the military (for Trident nuclear-armed submarines and nuclear-powered submarines) is dependent on civil nuclear-specific skills.

This has been shown clearly with research carried out by Professor Andy Stirling and Dr Phil Johnstone at the University of Sussex.

Furthermore Will ignores the huge problems and dangers of nuclear power.

There is the radioactive waste which will be toxic for thousands of years and which will also come with the small modular reactors. There is no solution to the existing pile, other than deeply buried storage which is proving difficult to find, let alone for more. There is the cost of nuclear power which is astronomical; the "strike price" for nuclear far exceeds that of electricity from offshore

wind which continues to come down in price.

There is also the cost of decommissioning nuclear sites. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's most recent estimate is that it will cost £132 billion to decommission the civil nuclear sites. It is said that nuclear power is an answer to climate change. But if the whole cycle of nuclear energy is taken into account, then it is not low carbon.

A recent analysis by Mark Jacobson of Stanford University in the USA demonstrates that nuclear power's emissions are between 10 and 18 times greater than those from renewable energy technologies.

The question of jobs is important but renewable energy is already providing more jobs than the nuclear energy sector. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) data for 2014 indicated 15,500 direct jobs in nuclear compared with 43,500 in renewables.

Recent updates show the disparity increasing. The Chernobyl disaster should have been a wake-up call.

A growing body of evidence

supports a grim reality: that living in radioactively contaminated areas over multiple years results in harmful health impacts.

The current plans for new nuclear reactors in England are at Sizewell and Bradwell on the east coast. This coast with climate change is at increased risk of flooding and tidal surges, endangering the reactors.

If a suicide bomber were to attack an array of solar panels or wind structures, it could be difficult with the power going down, but that's nothing compared with an attack on a nuclear reactor which would spread radioactivity for miles, the equivalent of a nuclear warhead exploding. Finally, as I have said before, there are the human costs which start with the mining of uranium. As socialists we would surely want to stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers the indigent people of the world who have had generations of suffering from cancers, ill health and untimely death from the uranium mining on their land?

RAE STREET

Littleborough

PALESTINE

Two-state solution is not the answer for Palestinians

I FELT unhappy with Nick Wright's claim that a two-state solution to the problem of Israel/Palestine is the only way forward (M Star June 10).

It is 73 years since this solution was canvassed in the UN 181 Resolution and 30 years since the Oslo Accord.

After all this time we seem to be nowhere near to the fulfillment of this policy with certainly no land and no peace for the Palestinians.

Politically the involved groups seem to be further apart than they ever were yet economically the Israelis and Palestinians and other groups are closer than they ever were.

We seem to be a long way from the days of the Jewish settlers labouring on the land to make the desert bloom and the settler boycott of Arab labour.

Modern Israel seems to depend quite a lot on Palestinian labour, including building work.

The two communities are inextricably involved with each other whether they like it or not so the theme should not be separation but equality for those who are living side by side.

I am unhappy with Nick's comments because I fear a two-state solution might institute apartheid practices like in



NEW STATE? A rally in Gaza organised by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

South Africa and that the non contiguous bits of the Palestine Authority look like the Bantustans where an army of subservient labour can be corralled.

I don't think things should develop so a Palestinian state should in some way be the mirror image of a Zionist state where "two houses both alike in dignity, from ancient grudge break to new mutiny."

Nor do I believe they need to. I do not think all the Jewish people living in Israel really are ardent Zionists and all Arab people living in Palestine are ardent Fatah and Hamas.

Some minds might be open to new ideas, and it might be possible to create new rela-

tionships based on common interest.

The Israeli working class can have no interest in having large numbers of Palestinian workers treated as cheap labour.

Certainly, proponents of either two or one state should resist apartheid measures especially where they are made to look like progress towards the two-state solution.

In the long run it is essential that some Israelis feel it is possible to live securely under a Palestinian authority of some sort.

Nick Wright might say I am a dreamer but I am not the only one.

CHRIS GOULD

Norwich

The Red List

June 12-19

SATURDAY 12

Socialist Solutions to the Crisis

11am online
A day-long event with Labour MPs such as Diane Abbott, Richard Burgon and John McDonnell, plus Cat Hobbs of We Own It, Murad Qureshi of the Stop the War Coalition, Morning Star editor Ben Chacko and many more. Register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/149305726447. Organised by Arise: A Festival of Labour's Left Ideas.

Resist G7 Day of Action: Cornwall

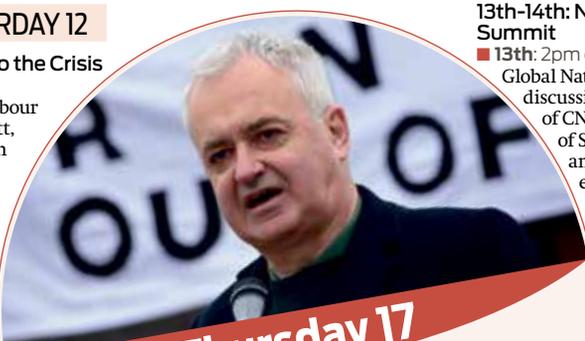
12.30pm on the South Quay (behind Asda), Hayle
Protest against G7 summit of the world's top leaders, who are committed to maintaining and advancing the capitalist system despite all the inequality, injustice and suffering that it causes. Organised by the Resist G7 Coalition.

Justice for Palestine protest

1pm opposite Downing Street, London SW1
Demand that G7 governments end their complicity in Israeli apartheid. Find out more at facebook.com/events/176320647751554. Organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign as part of the Resist G7 Day of Action for International Justice.

Red Letters: Life and Death of a Small Radical Project

2pm online
A talk by Professor David Margolies, who was a member of the collective responsible for the journal Red



Thursday 17
Britain's Global Role
7pm online

Andrew Murray (pictured) and others discuss Johnson's plans to expand Britain's global military role.

13th-14th: No to Nato Counter-Summit

13th: 2pm online
Global Nato: a Threat to Peace, a discussion with Kate Hudson of CND, Lindsey German of Stop the War Coalition and international speakers. Register at mstar.link/no2nato1.

14th: 12pm online
Dissolution of Nato: For Solidarity, sustainability and Disarmament, a webinar with Kate Hudson and international speakers. Register at mstar.link/no2nato2.

14th: 4pm online
Anti-Nato protest voices from around the world. Register at mstar.link/no2nato3.

MONDAY 14

Book event: Free To Be Me, Free to Be Me – Refugee Stories from the Lesbian Immigration Support Group

7pm online
Jane Traies, the editor of this collection of interviews with lesbian and bi women asylum-seekers and the campaigners working with them, is joined by women from the Manchester-based group and its Nottingham equivalent, Kairos. Register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/154068293413. Hosted by Five Leaves Bookshop, Nottingham.

Scotland and Slavery

7pm online
A lecture by historian Tony Cox. Join the Zoom meeting at mstar.link/scotsslavery; meeting ID: 368

109 1622. Organised by the George Mealmaker branch of the Scottish Republican Socialist Movement.

WEDNESDAY 16

What is Big Flame?: Exploring a Revolutionary Socialist Feminist Organisation 1970-84

2pm online
Kerrie McGivern shares the results of her research on Big Flame. For more details, go to wcml.org.uk. Organised by the Working Class Movement Library.

Kill the Bill and Jail the Spycops!

6.50pm online
A talk by Morning Star reporter Bethany Rielly. Zoom meeting ID: 899 5192 1626. Organised by Southampton Morning Star Supporters.

Transgender Marxism

7pm online
Jules Joanne Gleeson, Elle O'Rourke and Nat Raha, with Shon Faye in the chair, discuss the pressures, oppression and state persecution faced by trans people in capitalist societies and how they survive them. For tickets, priced £3, with book £16.99, students and unwaged free, go to housmans.com/events.

THURSDAY 17

Disrupting Online Arms Fairs

2pm online
Campaign Against Arms Trade local outreach co-ordinator Kirsten Bayes offers an introduction to the tactics need to disrupt arms trade events when they are held online. Book at eventbrite.co.uk/e/154865415627.

Denial and Distortion of the

Holocaust and the Genocide Against the Tutsi

6.30pm online
Genocide scholars Lonzen Rugira and Philip Spencer, investigative journalist Linda Melvern, and Hope not Hate head of research Joe Mulhall discuss how the Holocaust and the Tutsi genocide have been falsified and misrepresented. Register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/156875002355. Organised by the Wiener Holocaust Library.

Britain's Global Role: No Return to Blair's Wars

7pm online
Lindsey German, Andrew Murray of the Stop the War Coalition and National Education Union executive member Jon Reddiford discuss how Boris Johnson's plans to expand Britain's global military role will make the world a less safe place and how to stop him. Register at mstar.link/globalrole. Organised by Bristol Stop the War Coalition.

State Power, Transitions and Social Revolution

7pm online
In the third and final lecture of the series, Professor Vijay Prashad examines the transition from capitalism to socialism. Find out more and register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/155027233629. Organised by the Marx Memorial Library.

June 17-July 22: Love, Sex and Feminism in Victorian London

7pm online every Thursday for six weeks
Historian Dr Louise Raw teaches this course on how women fought to gain control over their lives, loves, and sexualities throughout the 19th century. For enrolment, £95, concessions £71, and more courses, go to bishopsgate.org.uk/

whats-on. Hosted by the Bishopsgate Institute.

FRIDAY 18

Camouflaging Culture: Soft Power and the Forever Wars

10am online
A conference on how to challenge the militarisation of culture, featuring Malak Mayet of Campaign Against Arms Trade, Peace New editor Milan Rai and academics. Find out more and register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/154727412857. Organised by University of Portsmouth culture and conflict research group.

SATURDAY 19

Caravans for the World Day of Action Against the Blockade

12pm (meet at 11.50am) at Embankment Tube, London WC2, to walk or cycle to Trafalgar Square
12pm in Morrison's car park, Mottram Road, Hyde, Greater Manchester, for a car cavalcade to the Sportsman
Protest at the US blockade of Cuba. Find out more at mstar.link/caravanblock. Organised by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

■ NORTHERN IRELAND

Unification only possible with loyalist agreement

WHILE I would find no fault in most of Ken Livingstone's article (M Star May 22), when it comes to the issue of the border poll he, like others, makes no reference to what might be called the elephant in the room: the unionist/loyalist community.

As regards to the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), a very interesting piece appeared in the Belfast-based Irish News, on June 4.

In this piece, the writer referred to a conversation that he had with a member of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in 1998 who stated that the vote in the GFA referendum did not reflect a victory for David Trimble.

He advised the author of the article to "count the pro-agreement and anti-agreement unionist votes at the next election. That will tell you all you need to know."

This was duly done with the result that we were told 201,500 voted for pro-agreement unionists but 207,869 voted for anti-agreement unionist parties.

Even within the pro-GFA



Pic: Dom0803/CC

FRAGILE PEACE: Some unionists are happy to let the Northern Ireland Assembly close down

parties there were some who were against it. As we know the DUP became the biggest unionist party.

It is a belief that a majority of unionist/loyalists not only oppose the GFA but are not both-

ered if the assembly closes down, especially if the Northern Ireland Protocol remains in place.

This is the situation we are faced with and until a significant number of unionists/loyalists see their future in a united

Ireland, something not on the cards at the moment, a border poll now in the manner that Mr Livingstone writes will just be a sectarian headcount.

ERNEST WALKER
North Belfast

■ STUDENTS

Debt levels are higher than some may think

THANK YOU to Alan Wheatley for raising the issue of student nurses' debt (M Star June 10), but I fear that £60,000 may be wide of the mark for some.

Nursing is a four-year university course which generally incurs annual fees of £9,250. On top of that there may be the need for a student maintenance loan.

My grandson is in the third year of a four-year chemistry degree (the first year being a foundation course).

His private accommodation fees are almost £2,000 per term which he has paid from the start because the university has no halls of residence.

He has taken the maximum maintenance loan, to which he is entitled based on his mother's income. But this gets worse.

He has not been able complete this year's study because of depression caused by his father's death last year and over four years of distressing family breakup.

This will mean a repeat of the third year. He will leave with no clear career path and over £100,000 of debt.

My heart bleeds for him and his mother's agony which is made worse by their financial situation.

NAME & ADDRESS SUPPLIED

■ VACCINES

G7 nations must suspend C-19 patents

JONAS SALK once said: "You cannot patent the sun" when he refused to do as such with the newly discovered Polio vaccine.

The G7 nations must agree to suspend all Covid-19 vaccine patents as first proposed by India and South Africa, so as to enable less developed nations to purchase life-saving drugs and prevent any

potential new variants that could be resistant to existing vaccines from emerging.

This is in all our best interests and should be demanded by all. Please contact MPs and pressurise the British government to do what is right by all of humanity.

PHIL BRAND
London SW17

■ SCOTLAND

Federalism is just a step towards independence

I'M DELIGHTED to agree with Dougie Harrison when he writes (M Star June 10) that "federalism is a dead duck." It is indeed.

This is because federalism is just a stepping stone to separation, and separation is now – and has been for seven years – a dead duck. The working class in Scotland spoke in 2014 and they voted for unity. The people spoke. That settled the question.

Those who try to resurrect the corpse of separatism disrespect democracy. They are trying to split the

British working class.

By doing so they play into the hands of the capitalist class. The question now has nothing to do with Boris Johnson, the Tories or the Labour Party: it is about class – unite our class against capitalism, or divide it on false national lines.

It is not that the union that is to blame for the many failings in our society, not the English, it is capitalism. We all need to unite against capitalism.

WILL PODMORE
London E12



■ THEORY

Capitalism brutal & inhumane

IT'S clear to so many that despite the centuries of struggle against it, capitalism continues to wreck the world. Governments respond to the crises of capitalism by applying more of the same, more rigorously.

Andrew Maybury states that "work in a capitalist system is not allocated or carried out according to what needs to be done, but is rather based on whether it is profitable for

capitalists to employ people to do it" (M Star June 8).

He says that much work that could be carried out for the benefit of society as a whole, is not being done.

In the area of waged work this is absolutely correct. In fact, much necessary work for society such as caring work and raising the next generation, is being done, but it's unwaged. And under capitalism it's not governments which help peo-

ple, but non-governmental organisations and many carers.

It is a brutal, inhumane system caused entirely by the misdirection of money.

Either the world must develop and vote for the concept of sharing, or the use of money must disappear altogether, if we and the planet are to survive. What other course is there?

MARILYN WARBIS
Plymouth

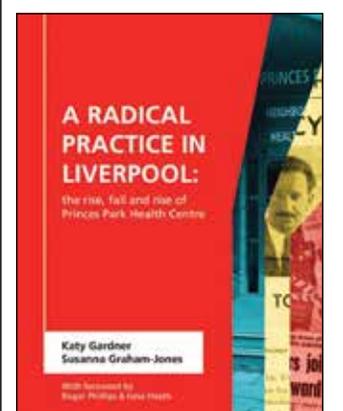
■ HEALTH

Star was welcome at left medical practice

I AM one of the two authors of the book *A Radical Practice in Liverpool: the Rise and Fall of Princes Park Health Centre* which Sylvia Hikins reviewed so positively (M Star June 7).

Princes Park Health Centre was one of the only practices in Britain to have the Morning Star in the waiting room for patients to read for many years. Not only that, but I wrote regularly for the Morning Star as Rosa Hudson on health-related issues. The Morning Star is referred to and referenced in our book and I hope readers will enjoy this.

KATY GARDNER
Liverpool





Racing Guide

with Farrington

■ YORK, CHESTER AND GOWRAN PARK

It's all about quantity over quality this weekend



WITH Royal Ascot around the corner and the Epsom Derby meeting just behind us, this afternoon's racing is more about quantity than quality with Sandown, Chester and York leading the way and as a result the size of the fields, even for the more valuable handicaps, have predictably suffered.

The most interesting race in that arena is probably the class four handicap that back-ends the York card at 5.40 over six furlongs.

Despite picking up a penalty for winning last time out at Doncaster, Roundhay Park remains a well-weighted animal near the top of the handicap having taken in better races last season and he is likely to go off favourite here alongside the hat-trick seeking Mr Wagyu.

But for a value wager I am going to invest in one of the rank outsiders **Koropick**.

Formerly with Hugo Palmer,

this very lightly raced seven-year-old gelding was a really smart two-year-old, finishing a four-length fifth in the Middle Park Stakes and then as a three-year-old beaten only a length and a quarter by the mighty Battaash on the Scurry Stakes at Sandown.

He then sustained a serious injury at the back end of his second season in training and following a final run in a Listed contest at Newbury he was gelded and spent some 1,093 days on the sidelines before being transferred to Colin Teague.

It is fair to say that his two runs back have been moderate, beaten 68 lengths when last of 24 in the Ayr Gold Cup and then 24 lengths last of 16 in a class three handicap at Newcastle in October.

However, this is massively easier, he has been dropped from a mark of 98 to 79 and I am sure Colin would not have kept him in training unless he thought that he could win a race of this ilk.

My best bet of the day runs in the opening Queen Mother's Cup (a handicap over a mile and a half for lady amateur riders at 2.00) with the nine-year-old **Nicholas T** looking the pick.

This versatile middle distance handicapper was rated as high as 100 last summer and although naturally he has been in decline since for a horse of his age, he remains capable of winning at this level off a rating of 91 with the capable Amie Waugh on top.

His last run confirmed that the fire still burns bright when he was far from disgraced in the Zetland Gold Cup at Redcar, beaten just three lengths by Good Birthday into seventh spot.

Set to race off the same mark here, he should get a nice tow into this contest with plenty of pace up top and can outstay the likes of Viaduct and Carlos Felix down the long home stretch.

Later on at the Knavesmire, **Ostillo** can defy top-weight in the JCB Handicap over seven furlongs at 2.35, while

Makawee can make the most of the weight he is set to receive from his three rivals by taking the Listed Ebor Grand Cup at 3.35.

Across the Pennines at Chester, **Brain the Snail** is one of no less than five entries in a field of 14 for local owner Dr Marwan Koukash in the six furlong handicap sprint at 2.10. The assessor has given him a real chance off a mark of 87 here following two moderate runs in significantly higher class at Haydock Park and York.

Beautifully drawn in box No 3, as long as he can hold his place early on I think he will prove too strong for the likes of the front running Lincoln Park and the frustrating but in form Music Society.

The feature Nationalracehorseweek.uk Handicap at 3.20 for three-year-olds looks a cracking contest with several upwardly mobile young horses set to line up in the field of seven.

With Classic Lord better served by some give in the

ground and Side Shot disappointing last time out, the nod goes to **Oman** hailing from the in-form yard of Ralph Beckett.

He was well behind the aforementioned Classic Lord last time out at Haydock, but seemed to hate the ground that day and with a pull in the weights combined with the return to a faster surface, I expect him to exact revenge on his rival in this valuable contest.

The one mile, all-aged handicap at Sandown Park (3.50) looks a really open affair, but I am quite sweet on the claims of **Alexander James** trained by Mick Appleby.

The four-year-old has been offered a real chance by the handicapper here having dropped from a mark of 91 to 88 following his British debut at Chester and on bits and pieces of his old French form he is entitled to go very close here.

Finally, at Bath have a second look at Redcar winner **Greek Kodiak**.

He won that seller in authori-

tative style and can take this rise in grade in his stride with the assistance of the brilliant Hollie Doyle.



WEEKEND TIPS

Farrington's Doubles

Saturday

NICHOLAS T
York 2:00 (nap)

BRIAN THE SNAIL
Chester 2:10

Sunday

BATON ROGUE
Gowran Park 4:30 (nap)

BLUE SKYLINE
Doncaster 1:45

Houseman's Choice

Saturday

ATALIS BAY
Sandown 2:15

Sunday

KHADEEM
Salisbury 3:38

Layth's take

with Layth Yousif

EURO 2020 is finally here. The competition that was delayed by a year thanks to the Covid pandemic is now upon us. Am I looking forward to it?

Yes and no.

Stretching from central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, the idea was to take in as much of the continent as possible in a celebration of cultures and countries. Which is great in theory. Especially if you're a Uefa bigwig being flown first class from Russia to Romania, Azerbaijan to the Allianz Arena and everywhere in between.

The notion was Michel Platini's brainchild. The now-disgraced administrator Platini. No wonder I prefer to recall the glorious French attacking midfielder Platini. The man who notched a record nine goals in five games during Les Bleus' unforgettable march to the 1984 European Championship.

The logistics of attempting to navigate Europe as a fan would have been difficult for many thousands of loyal supporters without factoring in airline companies' rapacious algorithms. Squeezing fans' budgets by ramping up prices for popular flights seconds after the final whistle, that could send a team 4,000 miles away on the kick of a ball, depending on group stage results.

Thankfully, that won't happen. Well, when I say thankfully, a pandemic disrupting a major international tournament, not to mention our lives for the last 16 months, is nothing to be grateful for. Nor is the fact that fans are being told not to travel.

Even the Tartan Army are forbidden from congregating in Trafalgar Square, prior to the derby with England at Wembley next Friday.

Stadiums will be less than half full, with many hard-pressed fans complaining that Uefa has cancelled their tickets – after holding onto their hard-earned cash for nearly two years.

That would be contentious in itself, only for many to highlight their tickets are now back on sale to the corporate crowd for prices 10-times as much. And that's without mentioning the "secondary market." Or greedy touts as they're normally called.

And yet.

Who isn't exited about the prospect of this tournament on the pitch at least?

The format presents a lineup arguably stronger than the World Cup. Reigning global champs France, led by the most decorated water carrier in history Didier Des-

champs and now bolstered by the return of Karim Benzema, breezed Euro qualifying topping Group H with eight wins, a draw and a single defeat, with only six goals conceded.

A resurgent Italy under former Manchester City boss Roberto Mancini, who haven't lost a game since 2018, are part of the group of frontrunners that also include a storied Belgium side ranked No 1 in the Fifa rankings.

Led by Roberto Martinez, they are masters of the 3-4-3 with an embarrassment of riches in their attacking options including Romelu Lukaku, Kevin De Bruyne, Eden Hazard and Youri Tielemans – with even Crystal Palace journeyman Michy Batshuayi sparkling when pulling on the Red Devils shirt, notching an impressive 22 goals in only 33 appearances – even if the backline are far too old to become trophy winners.

Don't forget hardy perennials Germany, whose miserable form – including a 6-0 thrashing by fellow hopefuls Spain – was forgotten following their 7-1 rout of a sorry Latvia side this week.

What of England? Tomorrow's clash with Croatia will reveal all, after two stodgy 1-0 friendly victories over underwhelming opponents in Austria and Romania.

Zlatko Dalic's side that reached the 2018 World Cup final are aiming for one final hurrah with 13 of that squad still present – and could surprise Gareth Southgate's side at the English national stadium.

Dalic is a canny operator who favours a 4-2-3-1 formation that can easily morph into a fluid 4-3-3. Luca Modric, even at 35, is still their lynchpin in midfield, while defensive pairing Dejan Lovren and Besiktas's Domagoj Vida still dominate the backline.

Their attacking trident of Modric, Ivan Rakitic and Marcelo Brozovic that worked so well in Russia still contains two of the three, with Serie A winners Inter Milan boasting the outstanding Nikola Vlasic – who replaces the fading 33-year-old Sevilla star Rakitic – alongside club side teammate Brozovic. It promises to be an exciting tournament. On the pitch at least.

PS: Here's a message for those who boo the knee: Do you feel uncomfortable about people taking the knee? Good. Now stop booing and educate yourself as to why people are doing it. Because, if you boo the knee, you're a racist. It's as simple as that.

And if you claim it's about "protesting against the creep

The highs and lows of what will be Euro 2020



of Marxism" or any other arrant nonsense used to disguise your disgusting prejudice you're utterly wrong. Taking the knee is about raising awareness of discrimination and trying to combat racism. If you're against that then I don't want you near me because you're a racist, however you

dress up your pathetic lies and arguments.

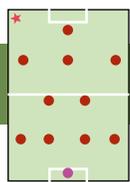
What I'm (re)reading: Football Against The Enemy. Seeing as Euro 2020 is a continent-wide spectacle, Simon Kuper's outstanding football travelogue from 1994 covers 22 countries to explore how our game has shaped national politics and

culture. Quite simply one of the finest books ever written on sport, let alone football.

What I'm listening to: It's Record Store Day on Saturday, with a raft of decent rereleases whatever your tastes. In honour of RSD 2021 I've been listening to New Order's 1982 John Peel sessions, which dropped last

summer for RSD 2020.

What I'm watching: England vs New Zealand. It's been a long year for all of us and I'll be catching up with an old pal at Edgbaston to watch the second Test as a punter for the first time in two summers. As someone who lives for live sport I simply can't wait.



The left wing

with James Nalton

THE 2021 Copa America kicks off on tomorrow night when the South American nations join this summer's feel-good festival of international football, but it does so in controversial circumstances.

Players, especially those of last-minute hosts Brazil, have spoken out against holding the tournament amid the ongoing threat posed by the coronavirus.

It was decided last month that original hosts Argentina and Colombia would not be able to hold the tournament in their respective nations due to a surge of Covid cases in the former and the ongoing uprising against the country's right-wing government in the latter.

Instead, the tournament will be held in a country where both these situations exist, and the hosting of a football tournament will likely mean they intensify.

As with the Euros, this edition of the Copa America was originally due to take place last summer but was postponed due to coronavirus.

The tournament in its current format is supposed to be quadrennial but had the 2020 edition gone ahead as planned, it would have been the fourth tournament in six years.

This is due to a special centenary Copa America being held in the United States in 2016, and a move by Conmebol – South American football's governing body – to align the tournament with the Euros, hence the additional edition planned for 2020.

With the Euros already under way following last night's opener between Turkey and Italy, on the other side of the world, the South American equivalent kicks off tomorrow night when Brazil host Venezuela in the opening game.

The new hosts of the tournament were only confirmed on Thursday after three injunctions, presented by trade unions and opposition parties, were rejected by Brazil's Supreme Court, meaning the tournament goes ahead in Brazil despite the obvious issues.

"It falls to state governors and mayors to set the appropriate health protocols and ensure they are respected in order to avoid a 'Copavirus,' with new infections and the emergence of new variants," Justice Carmen Lucia wrote in her ruling.

The cavalier attitude of Brazil's right-wing president Jair Bolsonaro towards coronavirus has seen the country become one of the worst-hit in the world, and he's now backed the hosting of the Copa America.

A number of Brazilian footballers have declared support for Bolsonaro in the past but in an open letter to their fans,

Brazil will compete in the controversial Copa America amid the backdrop of protests and Covid 19

The tournament was taken away from Argentina due to coronavirus and Colombia due to protests, then awarded to a country that have both

released on Wednesday, they condemned the decision to go ahead with the tournament, though they will not boycott it.

"For many reasons, be they humanitarian or professional, we are not satisfied with the conduct shown by Conmebol relating to the Copa America," they said.

"All recent facts lead us to believe it has been an inadequate process. It is important to emphasise that at no time did we want to make this a political discussion.

"We are aware of the importance of our position. We follow what is published by the media and are present on social media.

"We also try to avoid fake news bearing our names being circulated without the true facts.

"Finally, we remember that we are workers – professional footballers. We have a mission to carry out wearing the historic yellow and green jersey of the five-time world champions.

"We are against the way this Copa America has been organised, but we will never say no to the Brazilian national team."

As the statement signifies, Brazil are a close-knit and emotionally united group under the leadership of their manager, Tite, and this served them well when they won the Copa America in 2019.

Though the players say their stance is not political, it clearly is, and their decision to speak out could begin to highlight to other Bolsonaro supporters that their president isn't working in their best interests.

Even though matches are being played behind closed doors, protests in the country could increase using the football matches as a vehicle.

The Copa will be played in venues in Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba, Goiania and the capital Brasilia, while the Brazilian domestic season continues across the country alongside it.

"Everyone knows our position in the Copa America in Brazil," vice-captain Casemiro said following a World Cup qualifier against Ecuador last Friday.

"It's not just me, not just the players who play in Europe. It's everyone, including Tite. All together."

Holding the tournament in Brazil at this time was certainly a bad idea, but were the players to boycott it, the anger of many would be directed towards them rather than their negligent president.

Their decision to use their involvement in the Copa America as a protest in itself could help highlight Bolsonaro's disastrous handling of the coronavirus, and may even go some way towards turning the tide against him.

The Brazil players are playing in this tournament "for the more than 200 million fans" to whom they addressed that open letter.

They have made it abundantly clear they are not playing it for Conmebol and, even though they didn't mention his name in their statement, they are certainly not playing it for Bolsonaro.



SPORT ON TV

Saturday

■ **BASEBALL:** MLB, New York Mets v San Diego Padres – BT Sport 3 12am (Sun).
 ■ **BASKETBALL:** NBA play-offs, Utah Jazz v LA Clippers – Sky Sports Main Event 2am (Sun).
 ■ **BOXING:** Lewis Ritson v Jeremias Ponce – Sky Sports Action 7pm, Sky Sports Main Event 10pm.
 ■ **CRICKET:** Second Test, England v New Zealand – Sky Sports Cricket 10.15am, Sky Sports Main Event 10.30am; First Test, West Indies v South Africa – BT Sport 2 2.45pm; T20 Blast, Sussex v Hampshire – Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Cricket 6.55pm.
 ■ **FOOTBALL:** Euro 8.20pm, Wales v Switzerland – BBC One and S4C 1.15pm, Denmark v Finland – BBC One 4.45pm, Belgium v Russia – ITV 7pm; National League play-off semi-final, Torquay v Notts County – BT Sport 2 11.30am.
 ■ **GOLF:** European Tour, The Scandinavian Mixed – Sky Sports Golf 12.30pm; PGA Tour, The Palmetto Championship – Sky Sports Golf 5pm.
 ■ **HORSE RACING:** Live from York – ITV and STV North, STV Central 1.25pm.
 ■ **MMA:** UFC, Israel Adesanya v Marvin Vettori – BT Sport 1 3am (Sun).
 ■ **MOTOR CYCLING:** World Superbikes from Italy – Eurosport 2 8.30am and 12.30pm; Le Mans – Eurosport 2 10.45am and 2pm.
 ■ **RUGBY UNION:** Gallagher Premiership, Bath v Northampton – BT Sport Extra 3pm, Bristol v London Irish – BT Sport Extra 3pm, Exeter v Sale – BT Sport 3 3pm, Harlequins v Newcastle – BT Sport Extra 3pm, Wasps v Leicester Tigers – BT Sport 1 2.30pm; PRO14 Rainbow Cup, Sharks v Bulls – eir Sport 1 5.10pm, Cardiff v Benetton – S4C 7.30pm, Ospreys v Benetton – eir Sport 1 7.30pm.
 ■ **TENNIS:** French Open – Eurosport 11.30pm, ITV4 1.30pm.

Sunday

■ **BASEBALL:** MLB, New York Mets v San Diego Padres – BT Sport 1 6pm, Chicago Cubs v St Louis Cardinals – BT Sport/ESPN 12am (Mon).
 ■ **BASKETBALL:** NBA play-offs, Phoenix Suns v Denver Nuggets – Sky Sports Main Event 12.30am (Mon).
 ■ **CRICKET:** Second Test, England v New Zealand – Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Cricket 10.15am; First Test, West Indies v South Africa – BT Sport 2 2.45pm.
 ■ **FOOTBALL:** Euro 8.20pm, England v Croatia – BBC One 1pm, Austria v North Macedonia – ITV 4.15pm, Holland v Ukraine – ITV 7.10pm; National League play-off semi-final, Stockport v Hartlepool – BT Sport 1 11.30am.
 ■ **GOLF:** European Tour, The Scandinavian Mixed – Sky Sports Golf 12.30pm; PGA Tour, The Palmetto Championship – Sky Sports Golf 5pm, Sky Sports Main Event 7pm.
 ■ **MOTOR CYCLING:** Le Mans – Eurosport 2 6am; World Superbikes from Italy – Eurosport 2 11.30am.
 ■ **TENNIS:** French Open – Eurosport 1 10.25am, 1.30pm, ITV3 1.30pm.

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

Groves drops out of Olympic trials due to 'misogynistic perverts'

by Our Sports Desk

AUSTRALIAN swimmer Maddie Groves has withdrawn from the upcoming Olympic trials following a series of social media posts condemning "misogynistic perverts" in the sport.

Groves didn't detail her allegations, which initially surfaced last year, and Swimming Australia president Kieren Perkins said yesterday that he was trying to contact the two-time Olympic silver medallist.

"We have had an ongoing dialogue that has been generated by Maddie through social media.

"We reached out with her in December 2020 to try to engage with her on these concerns she has," Perkins told the Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"We have done it again now, and unfortunately at this point we have not been able to have a direct conversation with Maddie to understand exactly what her concerns are, who the people involved are, so that we can investigate it and deal with it."

Groves, who won silver med-

als in the 200-metre butterfly and a relay at the 2016 Olympics, said she planned to delete her Twitter app after posting: "You can no longer exploit young women and girls, body shame or medically gaslight them and then expect them to represent you so you can earn your annual bonus.

"Time's UP."

She posted later on Instagram to say her decision to withdraw from Olympic selection was not based on a "singular incident."

"It's partly because there's a pandemic on, but mostly it's the culmination of years of witnessing and 'benefiting' from a culture that relies on people ignoring bad behaviour to thrive. I need a break."

The Olympics, set to open on July 23, have already been postponed for 12 months because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"If starting this conversation will save just one young girl from something like being told to lose weight or diet, not going to the Olympics will have been worth it," Groves added.

Groves tweeted last year that

she'd complained about a swimming worker and the way "they stare at me in my" swimsuit, and also expressed concerns about the anti-doping process and the treatment of athletes with long-term illnesses.

Perkins, a two-time Olympic 1,500-metre gold medallist, told ABC television that swimming in Australia was a "proud blended sport" and administrators had done a lot of work in recent years to build a framework to deal with any issues of abuse by making "sure that we have all the right processes for whistleblower investigations, and ensure police matters are dealt with as they need to be.

"There's always going to be historical things that we need to acknowledge and work towards resolving," Perkins said. "But I and everyone in our sport would certainly be quite challenged by the assertion that there's a misogynistic culture."

Veteran swimmer Mitch Larkin, who has been teammates with Groves, said the complaints "broke my heart a little bit."



"I certainly want to find out and get to the bottom of it if she does have some issues," Larkin said in Adelaide, South Australia, where the Olympic trials start today. "We have got an athlete integrity officer and

a wellbeing officer and she can certainly talk to them as well as sports psychs and really try and dig to the bottom of those issues. "And if there is a culture issue, we would absolutely love to change it."

MEN'S RUGBY UNION

Watson: Let players combat racism how they want

by Our Sports Desk



ANTHONY WATSON believes it is crucial for sportsmen and women to continue using their platform to take the knee in protest against racial injustice.

Watson was among the England players to perform the symbolic gesture before matches during last year's autumn campaign and the recent Six Nations, with individuals given the choice of whether or not to act.

And the Bath wing will be involved when the British and Irish Lions squad begin discussions over what approach should be adopted in South Africa when a pre-tour training camp begins in Jersey next week.

England's football team were booed by some fans for taking a knee before their Euro 2020 warm-up games against Australia and Romania – a response Watson finds frustratingly predictable.

Four months ago the 27-year-old called out critics on social media who objected to Eddie Jones's team showing their support in the fight against racism. "Am I disappointed by

the reaction? I don't know. I expected it a little bit if I'm honest," Watson said.

"You see so many people on social media platforms who have got so much to say with so little real substance behind their reasoning. Only six months ago I said I knew this would continue to happen.

"I don't think anybody should be forced to do anything. People should do what they feel is right. If I'm asked when I'm with the Lions and if it's universally discussed, then I'll throw my opinion into the hat in terms of what I would do.

"I want to continue to raise awareness around some of the racial inequalities that I believe are still prevalent in this country and worldwide.

"The racial abuse that footballers and sports people get is unacceptable, whether it's online or wherever.

"While that continues to happen, especially at the frequency and magnitude at which it's happening, it's important to continue to raise awareness.

"I do think it's an important message, the footballers are doing a great job and I'm glad that conversations are still

being had as a result of people taking the knee because that's very important.

"I'm starting to see more and more people discuss it in the right kind of context and understand more why athletes are taking a knee."

Watson, whose mother Vivian is Nigerian, disagrees that sport should be separated from causes such as anti-racism and also rejects the link made between taking the knee and Black Lives Matter as a political movement.

"Kneeling has been around well before this politicised agenda that people have thrown around and in my opinion they use this as an excuse to mask some of their own issues.

"If you do any research – and anyone who is booing the kneeling should do their own research before they boo something – it shows that kneeling has been around since ... the first example I can think of is Martin Luther King in 1965.

"But it goes back even before that to the slave trade. To draw that link between kneeling and a political organisation is absurd and in my opinion that's an excuse to fit their agenda."



MEN'S FOOTBALL

MISHRA: THERE'S STILL A LOT OF WORK TO DO

Charlton's coach says there's 'no reason' for lack South Asians in football

by Our Sports Desk

CHARLTON assistant boss Riteesh Mishra says while there is "still a lot of work to do" he feels optimistic in terms of South Asian representation in English football, and has stressed the importance of role models and visibility.

Last month the FA published an update on its Asian inclusion strategy, which noted the 2011 census showed Asian communities accounting for 7.8 per cent of England's population.

The report said Asian participation within grassroots football for over 16s was at 10.7 per cent male and 13.5 per cent female, while the number of Asian coaches, volunteers and referees was around 2 per cent.

It said there were a "small number" of professional players of Asian heritage in the men's and women's games, and that around 1 per cent of both Premier League and EFL apprentices were of Asian heritage.

Mishra, who is British Indian, was in Nottingham Forest's academy from the age of 13. He stopped playing after breaking his leg aged 18 and his subsequent coaching journey has seen him working at Charlton since 2014.

The 30-year-old, the most

senior South Asian coach in English women's football, said: "I think there's no one reason why there's a lack of representation. Quite clearly there's a lack of representation within professional football.

"I was at a club in Forest who I think gave me lots of good opportunities and really supported me. I got the sense they were just looking at me as a player and didn't put any other barriers in the way that perhaps others from ethnic minorities may have faced.

"But I don't think clubs are necessarily entirely set up to allow for South Asian footballers to succeed.

"What I mean by that is there isn't necessarily the coaching structure where young South Asians can see role models or people they can engage with when they go into the training ground that will make them feel really comfortable.

"When you feel really comfortable and you know there's maybe somebody there who understands the journey you're going through, you'll have more confidence and be able to play better.

"I never felt that, so you never have that security of thinking there's people out there who know perhaps the cultural challenges you face,

how difficult sometimes it is within South Asian cultures to make the sacrifices you need to to be a professional footballer.

"I think there's still a lot of work to do, but I'd say you can see from the players in professional leagues now, it's getting better, there is more representation. I see more kids, boys and girls, from South Asian communities within academies.

"I think what we need to really do now is focus on when we get players in, can we create a structure that keeps them in for as long as possible. I think the way to do that is having coaches and [other staff] visible at the training grounds."

He added: "Right the way through the pyramid, wherever there's decisions being made on players' or coaches' futures or hiring decisions, there need to be people who come from diverse backgrounds, so they just have more of a rounded understanding."

Mishra also emphasised the importance of "massively educating the South Asian community about what is required to become a professional athlete or coach."

Speaking about his communications with aspiring coaches and young players, Mishra said: "I feel the [role model] responsibility, but on



the other hand, I think there is a responsibility on others to try to uplift people who are in roles, so it's less about self-promotion and more about being visible, and others unlocking doors to be visible."

As well as the Asian inclusion strategy, the FA's diversity work includes the Football Leadership Diversity Code launched in October.

Mishra said: "I feel optimistic. I think the FA are doing a really good job of trying to promote programmes, show they want to create opportunities, share role models. I think it's a very good starting point.

"We're starting to see a bit of a movement. It's going to take time. I'd say South Asian representation is massively behind

black heritage representation for example in professional football.

"There's still a long way to go for it to be truly representative."

Mishra says as a player he faced "some direct racism" from opposition players and parents, and felt some stereotyping regarding physique – he also says as a coach he feels "there are certain, probably unconscious, biases and stereotypes that follow you around."

He added: "There's been situations where I could have maybe turned away from the sport, but I've just decided to try to break down the challenges and barriers and prove my worth."

WEEKEND FIXTURES

Euro 2020

- Wales.....Switzerland, 2pm
- Denmark.....Finland, 5pm
- Belgium.....Russia, 8pm
- England.....Croatia, 2pm*
- Austria....North Macedonia, 5pm*
- Netherlands.....Ukraine, 8pm*

Copa America

- Brazil.....Venezuela, 10pm*

World Cup Qualifying

- St. Kitts and Nevis.....El Salvador, 9pm
- Haiti.....Canada, 10pm
- Panama.....Curacao, 12.05am*
- Korea Republic.....Lebanon, 7am*

Intl Friendlies

- Ghana.....Ivory Coast, 6pm
- Morocco.....Burkina, 8pm
- Mexico.....Honduras, 12.30am*
- Tanzania.....Malawi, 2pm*
- Sudan.....Zambia, 6pm*

Women's Friendlies

- Luxembourg.....Belgium, 5pm
- Japan.....Mexico, 6am*
- Costa Rica.....Guatemala, 6pm*

* denotes Sunday game



MEN'S FOOTBALL

Scotland to kneel in solidarity with England on June 18

by Our Sports Desk

SCOTLAND players will take the knee in solidarity with their England counterparts when they meet at Wembley, 24 hours after announcing they would stand.

The Scots had confirmed on Thursday they would continue standing together in opposition to racism before their European Championship games.

But the reaction to their decision, both negative and positive, has prompted a partial rethink 24 hours later.

Scotland will still stand before their Hampden Park games but make an exception for their Auld Enemy encounter in London on June 18 as a gesture of togetherness with their opponents, who were booed by some of their own fans when they knelt ahead of two



warm-up games at the Riverside Stadium in Middlesbrough.

Head coach Steve Clarke felt their announcement that they would stand against racism had been "politicised or misrepresented" in some quarters.

"In light of divisive and inaccurate comments being perpetuated by individuals

and groups, whose views we denounce in the strongest terms, we have reflected today as a group," Clarke said.

"We remain committed to our principles of taking a stand but we must also be unequivocal in condemning the opportunistic false narrative being presented by some.

"We have therefore agreed that we will show solidarity with our counterparts in England, many of whom are teammates of our own players, and who have found themselves on the receiving end of abuse from fans in recent international matches.

"We will continue to take a stand – together, as one – for our matches at Hampden Park. For our match at Wembley, we will stand against racism and kneel against ignorance."

Clarke added that Scotland had begun standing for their opening World Cup qualifiers in March.

Days earlier Motherwell and Dundee United switched from taking the knee to standing in a bid to revive the anti-racist message.

The following day both Celtic and Rangers players stood in solidarity with Ibrox midfielder

Glen Kamara soon after he was racially abused by Slavia Prague player Ondrej Kudela, whose 10-game Uefa ban rules him out of the Czech Republic's clash with Scotland on Monday.

Clarke said: "I explained in March the rationale behind the squad decision: not only is it consistent with the collective approach from Scottish football above but the purpose of taking the knee, to raise awareness and help eradicate racism in football and society, has been diluted and undermined by the

continuation of abuse towards players.

"For the avoidance of doubt: me, my coaching staff, my players and my backroom team take a stand against racism and all forms of unacceptable and discriminatory behaviour across society.

"We do so to raise awareness of the ongoing problem but also as a reminder to those who have the ultimate power and responsibility to implement meaningful change."

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