

MINNEAPOLIS: BOB KROLL HAS TO GO IF CITY IS TO HEAL

Police Federation chief has stoked racial tensions, writes PETER FROST

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BLM: RIGBY FAMILY SLAMS RACISTS' USE OF SON'S NAME ... LABOUR DEMANDS ACTION AS TORIES DITHER

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for Peace and Socialism

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NO MORE WAITING: RACIAL INJUSTICE MUST BE TACKLED

by Bethany Rielly

THE government must not wait any longer to address “systemic racial injustices” laid bare by the coronavirus pandemic, Labour demanded yesterday.

A review by Public Health England (PHE) confirmed earlier this week that black people and ethnic minorities (BAME) are more likely to die from the virus.

However the report sparked widespread criticism for failing to provide any recommendations and omitting submissions which highlighted the effect of structural racism and inequality on mortality rates.

In an urgent question yesterday, shadow women and equalities secretary Marsha de Cordova demanded to know why recommendations were not made, despite its terms of reference promising to do so.

“The government must not wait any longer to address underlying racial

and socio-economic injustices, so that no more lives are lost,” she said.

During its inquiry, PHE received submissions from engagements with over 1,000 people – but none of these was included in the final publication.

The Muslim Council of Great Britain, which submitted evidence, said: “To choose not to discuss the overwhelming role structural racism and inequality has on mortality rates and to disregard the evidence compiled by community organisations, whilst simultaneously providing no recommendations or an action plan, despite this being the central purpose of the review, is entirely unacceptable.

“It beggars belief that a review asking why BAME communities are more at risk fails to give even a single answer.”

In the Commons, Labour MP Gill Furniss demanded that the review be published in full. “There is no more important time to tackle racial injustice in our society to save lives during this crisis,” she said.

“It is now up to the government to take action and show its commitment that black lives matter.”

As protests spread across the world in response to the police killing of George Floyd in the US, the spotlight is increasingly being turned on racism in Britain and its potential role in the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities.

However, Equalities Secretary Kemi Badenoch rejected claims that “systemic injustice” was to blame for higher death rates among BAME communities, claiming that Britain is “one of the best countries in the world to be a black person.”

She said the Cabinet Office’s race disparity unit was working on recommendations, claiming that PHE “did not have all the data that it needed,” including population density and housing conditions, to propose them itself.

The SNP’s Alison Thewliss charged that Britain’s immigration system

puts BAME migrants at greater risk from the disease, with those who have no recourse to public funds “forced” to continue working.

In response to the review, International Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB), which largely represents BAME and migrant workers, said it feared the government would fail to address the role of precarious work in the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME people.

BAME workers are overwhelmingly represented in low-paid and precarious sectors, meaning they are more likely to have continued working through the lock down to avoid destitution, it said.

The union also announced yesterday that it is seeking to intervene in a legal challenge brought by multi-millionaire Simon Dolan to end the lockdown prematurely.

Mr Dolan, who lives in Monaco, filed a High Court challenge last month against England’s coronavirus lockdown

rules, branding them “some of the most extreme restrictions imposed on fundamental freedoms in the modern era.”

Black Lives Matter UK called for nationwide doorstep protests yesterday at 7pm – in reference to the “clap for carers” slot – to demand an investigation into the root causes health disparities.

The protest, in which people were asked to play Jimmy Cliff’s “The Harder they Come,” was co-organised by Race and Health.

Protest organiser and lecturer in Global Health at UCL Dr Rochelle Burgess said: “The findings of the PHE report are not really a surprise to anyone who is a person of colour in this country, or the world.

“It is painfully clear that none of this data will change without action at an individual level and structural change.

“Our governments need to do both, and they need to do it now.”

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■ DEPRIVATION

Homeless people face being dumped on the streets again

by Bethany Rielly

THOUSANDS of homeless people given emergency shelter during the Covid-19 pandemic could be kicked out onto the streets by the end of the month, the homeless charity Crisis warned yesterday.

Crisis understands that most contracts between local authorities and hotels are due to end as government funding allocated to housing rough sleepers during the pandemic runs out.

If ministers fail to provide alternative accommodation, more than 14,500 people housed under the “Everybody

in” scheme risk being driven back onto the streets.

But despite the impending end date just a few weeks away, Crisis says it has had “no indication at all” from the government that it will extend the scheme.

The charity’s director of policy Matt Downie said: “We will take one of two paths here: one is that 15,000 people are permanently helped out of homelessness through the amazing Everyone In scheme, or we will see a massive increase in rough sleeping in this country just at the point when we thought it would be possible to avoid that.

“It’s within the government’s

control to make decisions so that doesn’t happen, for example to either continue hotel schemes or to give alternative arrangements to local authorities and individuals.”

The charity wants to see the government table an emergency homelessness bill forcing councils in England to provide accommodation for a year to anyone made homeless during the pandemic.

In March, housing minister Luke Hall announced an initial £3.2 million to local councils followed by £3.2 billion over the next few months, though this sum was expected to cover a variety of other costs including social care.

However, local authorities have raised concerns that funds are running out and that the funding was already insufficient and left them to top it up from depleted budgets.

A government spokesperson said that suggestions it was rowing back on its commitment to the scheme were “untrue.”

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■ POLITICS

Starmer in plea for PM to intervene with Trump

LABOUR leader Sir Keir Starmer wrote to PM Boris Johnson yesterday, calling on the government to urge US President Donald Trump to “respect human rights.”

In the letter, Starmer said that the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent response of the US authorities to peaceful protests has “shone a spotlight on the racism, discrimination and injustice experienced by those from black and minority ethnic communities in the US and across the world.”

As well as his call on the government to raise the issue with the US, Starmer also asked what steps the government was taking to reassure black communities in Britain.

He wrote: “The death of George Floyd has justifiably prompted anger and a burning desire for fundamental change.

“[Britain] must be clear in showing that we understand this frustration and that we are ready to stand together with those who seek to tackle the injustice and inequality that remains within all our societies.”

UPRISING: Demonstrators heading towards College Green in Bristol yesterday during a Black Lives Matter protest against racism



■ RESISTING RACISM

Black Lives Matter protesters continue to demand justice

by Ceren Sagir

THOUSANDS of demonstrators continued to take to the streets across Britain yesterday to show solidarity with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the United States.

Following nationwide marches on Wednesday in protest at the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, people gathered in Birmingham town centre yesterday for what they described as a “socially distanced peaceful standing demonstration.”

Aston Villa footballer Tyrone Mings indicated that he would attend the rally in Victoria Square, telling his 109,000 social media followers: “Don’t be afraid to speak your truth. Stand for what’s right.”

In Bristol, a rally was held at College Green, where protesters carried signs with messages including: “When will you see us?” “Doing this now so my children won’t have to” and “Black lives matter,” while oth-



DEMANDING A BETTER FUTURE: Honeybee, aged seven, and Santino, aged five, at a protest rally in Bristol’s Eastville Park

ers staged a socially distanced die-in.

Poet and musician Benjamin Zephaniah, whose cousin Mikey Powell died in police custody in 2003, said that he “felt rage” and “just wanted to take to the streets” following Mr Floyd’s death.

“We want compassion, we want understanding, we want an end to racism,” he insisted.

Lyn Rigby, the mother of murdered soldier Lee Rigby, called for people to stop using her son’s memory to “fuel arguments against the BLM protests.”

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RAIL WORKER'S COVID-19 DEATH

BRAVERMAN REFUSES TO REOPEN SPIT ATTACK CASE

SEEKING JUSTICE: Labour raises Belly Mujinga tragedy in the Commons after police close inquiry

by **Lamiat Sabin**
Parliamentary reporter

ATTORNEY General Suella Braverman ignored calls yesterday to reopen the case of railway worker Belly Mujinga, who died after being spat at by a man who claimed to have coronavirus.

Ms Mujinga, a ticket office clerk, died of Covid-19 in hospital on April 5, 11 days after the attack on the Victoria station concourse.

The British Transport Police said that, following "extensive inquiries," it had determined that the attack did not lead to her death.

The force also said that no further action would be taken against the man and closed the case last week. In a statement, the police said there was no evidence of anyone spitting. Despite calls from Labour

for Ms Braverman to reopen the case, she declined to do so.

Shadow home office minister Bambos Charalambous said in the Commons: "British Transport Police have decided not to refer that matter to the CPS [Crown Prosecution Service] for prosecution, not even for common assault.

"So can the Attorney General demand the investigation to be reopened and for swift action so that there can be justice for Belly Mujinga's family?"

Ms Braverman replied: "This was a tragic incident and it was appalling frankly that Belly Mujinga was abused for doing her job at Victoria station and my thoughts are with her friends and her family.

"British Transport Police did conduct an investigation following reports that a man claiming to have Covid-19 coughed and spat at Ms Mujinga and a colleague. Their investi-



VICTIM: Belly Mujinga

gation found no evidence that an offence had occurred at that time."

Transport union TSSA, of which Ms Mujinga was a member, said that it had asked to see a copy of the CCTV footage of the attack, but the request was refused.

General secretary Manuel Cortes added: "We are also continuing to fight for justice for Belly. We reported the station incident to the Railway Inspectorate back in April and their investigation is ongoing.

"We also need protection for her colleagues, so many of whom are black, Asian and minority ethnic people working on the front line.

"Right across our transport networks, it's vital that staff are protected from this virus."

TSSA has also demanded that front-line transport workers be provided with personal protective equipment such as face masks, face shields and hand sanitiser.

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PRESS FREEDOM

NUJ blasts police over attacks on journalists

Mr Rigby was 25 when he was murdered in May 2013 on the streets of Woolwich, south London, by two Islamist extremists.

Over the past few days, some social media posts by people opposed to the BLM protests have compared his killing and the reaction to it with that of Mr Floyd.

In a post on the Lee Rigby Foundation Facebook page, Lyn Rigby said: "We find these posts extremely heartbreaking and distressing, and in complete opposition to what Lee stood for."

The Metropolitan Police said 13 arrests had been made during protests in Westminster, which continued into the early hours of yesterday morning, after small clashes took place.

Stand Up to Racism said an online-only rally was planned for this Sunday to discuss "how we turn the new wave of anger over racism and injustice into an effective movement for change."

An online fundraiser for the British branch of the BLM movement had pulled in more than £270,000 as of yesterday morning, with the money destined to "support black life against institutional racism."

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HAVE A STORY?

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CORONAVIRUS

Face masks finally to be required on public transport

by **Lamiat Sabin**
Parliamentary reporter

PASSENGERS in England will be required to cover their faces on public transport from June 15 to help limit the spread of the coronavirus, the government announced yesterday.

The move was welcomed by transport unions RMT, TSSA and Aslef, but Labour questioned why it had taken months for ministers to act.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps told the daily Downing Street press conference that face masks, scarves or visors will be mandatory on buses, trains, tubes, and trams.

Fines may be imposed on anyone failing to comply with the new rule, which does not apply to children aged under two or primary-school children travelling alone.

Shadow transport secretary Jim McMahon said that enforcing the measure two months after Labour and London Mayor Sadiq Khan called for it was "another example of the government being slow to act."

Mr McMahon also pointed out that the government had yet to say whether bus drivers will be offered gloves and masks.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said the measure was "long overdue," but added that people must avoid making non-essential journeys and that two-metre social distancing should be enforced.

He added: "We fear this announcement is being driven not by safety concerns but by the premature easing of the lockdown, which is swelling passenger numbers and making social distancing on transport increasingly impossible."

TSSA general secretary Manuel Cortes also welcomed the rule, but added that it was "important to stress that people must not interpret the use of a face covering as a licence to breach social distancing."

Mick Whelan, general secretary of train drivers' union Aslef, hailed face-covering as a "sensible step" that would "ease the concerns" of passengers and staff.

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SHADY:
Dehenna Davison MP was pictured in a photo with two alleged far-right activists in February



■ EXTREMISM

Anti-fascists concerned by MP's new position

A TORY MP who was pictured with two alleged far-right activists has been selected to sit on the government's Immigration Bill committee.

Dehenna Davison, the MP for Bishop Auckland, expressed her excitement on Twitter yesterday after she had been chosen to sit on the committee.

She posted: "Just had an email to say I've been selected to sit on the Immigration Bill Committee over the next few weeks.

"An exciting opportunity to help shape this landmark Bill and deliver the end to freedom of movement.

"We are delivering on the EU referendum, and on our manifesto."

As reported in the Morning Star, Ms Davison was pictured holding a County Durham flag with Andrew Foster and Colin Raine.

Hope Not Hate described Mr Foster as "a Hitler-loving, Muslim-hating extremist of the very worst kind" who has attended far-right rallies held by Britain First and English Defence League (EDL).

And former Tory activist Mr Raine was banned from the party after allegations he was behind a far-right protest and for making a string of Islamophobic remarks online.

Ms Davison has said she does not support the pair's views.

■ WESTMINSTER

Rees-Mogg blasted after MP forced to self-isolate

by Laimat Sabin
Parliamentary reporter

JACOB REES-MOGG was yesterday accused of shrugging off concerns about health and safety of parliamentary cleaning and catering staff during the coronavirus outbreak.

SNP MP Alison Thewliss said that the Commons leader has put staff at risk by having MPs return to Parliament.

Mr Rees-Mogg said the cleaners were "coming in anyway," which Ms Thewliss said was a "dismissive" remark when she later raised a point of order over his comments.

Before MPs returned to Parliament on Tuesday, the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union said that there are "significant" risks posed to workers who cannot work from home, such as those in security, cleaning and catering.

PCS said that staff will not be safe from the coronavirus even with social distancing and personal protective equipment.

General secretary Mark



Serwotka said that a second spike in Covid-19 infections is a "strong possibility" and that Mr Rees-Mogg needs to reach an agreement with unions on how to proceed.

Tory MP Mr Rees-Mogg also faced calls to resign over his handling of the Commons' return that saw "shambolic" queues of MPs waiting to vote.

He was challenged by Labour over the long queues of MPs, dubbed the "coronavirus conga," after arrangements for virtual Parliament – that allowed MPs to contribute from home – were stopped.

MPs wanting to vote are required to queue, keep two metres apart, walk through the Commons chamber and announce their vote.

On Wednesday, Business Secretary Alok Sharma (above) left a Commons debate after being taken ill.

Mr Rees-Mogg said that Labour's concerns were "overcooked."

Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle has granted an application for an emergency debate on the issue for Monday.

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■ COVID-19

Campaigners to PM: 'Stand up to Big Pharma' on vaccine

by Laimat Sabin
Parliamentary reporter

CAMPAIGNERS urged PM Boris Johnson to "stand up to Big Pharma" yesterday by pledging at a global vaccine summit to make the coronavirus vaccine affordable for the world's poorest people.

The demand came as world leaders congregated via video-link in the virtual Global Vaccine Summit chaired by Britain, during which Mr Johnson gave a keynote speech.

Mr Johnson called for "a new era of global health co-operation" and encouraged world leaders to raise £5.9 billion to distribute vaccines for various infectious diseases in some of the poorest countries over the next five years.

The money will go to Gavi, a global vaccine alliance part-funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which was set up 20 years ago to develop and distribute vaccines to the poorest countries for diseases such as malaria, cholera, mea-

sles and HIV/Aids.

At the summit, Gavi launched the new Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access (Covax) facility. It is expected to raise money to boost manufacturing for a future vaccine through advanced purchase commitments, as well as to secure supplies for developing countries.

Global Justice Now called on Mr Johnson to ensure that any funding raised to purchase Covid-19 vaccines for developing countries has conditions attached to secure an affordable price.

The campaigners said that funding from the facility should have conditions that ensure pharmaceutical companies offer Covid-19 vaccines patent-free to enable a diversity of suppliers that can supply at cost-price.

Companies must also commit to sharing their knowledge with other countries to increase global manufacturing capability, they added.

Global Justice Now campaigner Heidi Chow said: "If no conditions are attached to this

facility, it will simply become a giant hand-out to big pharma.

"The Prime Minister needs to use his role as the summit host to work with Gavi and push for conditions to prevent monopolies, otherwise big pharma will be free to dictate whatever price they want while restricting supply.

"There should be no profiteering during a global pandemic.

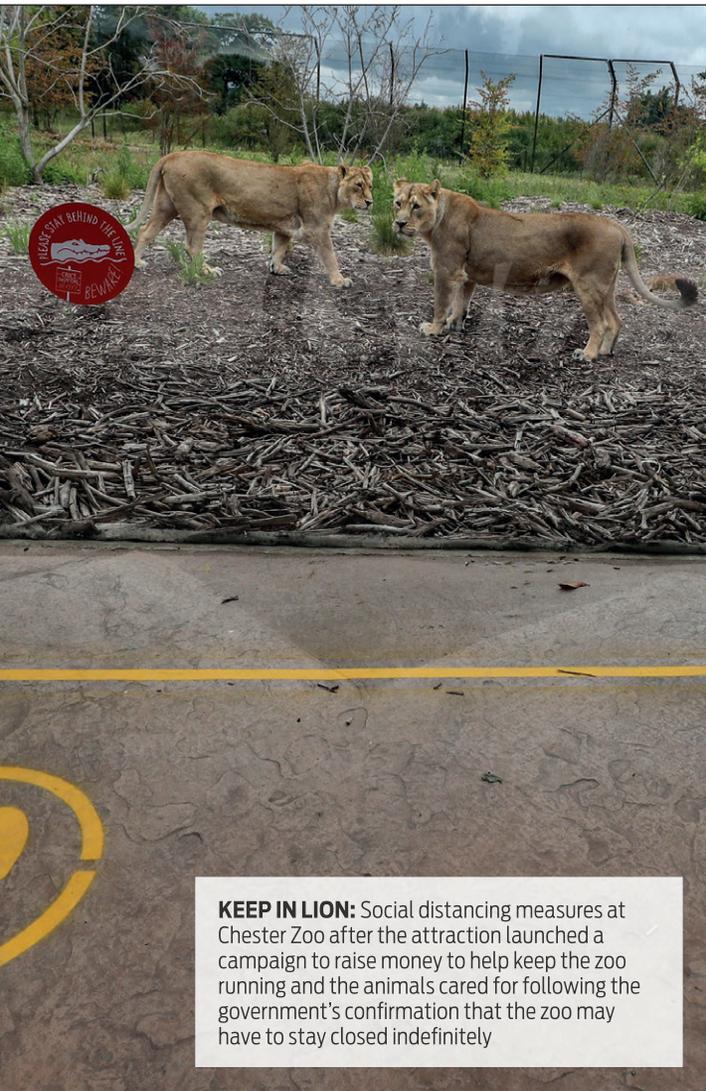
"Governments around the world are already pouring billions into vaccine research and development but there are no safeguards that ensure any publicly funded vaccine will be produced patent-free.

"Any vaccine developed must be a global public good and therefore patent-free so that it is affordable for all countries and free to every person."

Medecins Sans Frontieres this week urged governments to sell coronavirus vaccines "at cost" and make them "universally accessible to all across the world."

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CUT OUT AND MAIL TO US



KEEP IN LION: Social distancing measures at Chester Zoo after the attraction launched a campaign to raise money to help keep the zoo running and the animals cared for following the government's confirmation that the zoo may have to stay closed indefinitely

WORKERS' RIGHTS Call centre staff are 'terrified' of returning

CALL centre staff are "terrified" they will be infected by the coronavirus if they are forced to return to the workplace, new research revealed yesterday.

Independent research, based on 3,000 workers in financial call centres, by Professor Phil Taylor of the University of Strathclyde, found "massive alarm among the workforce about the safety conditions within their workplace."

Mr Taylor said: "Rapid action will save some lives. Inaction will cause further deaths and serious illness."

The Unite union called for urgent action from financial service bosses to ensure workplaces are safe following the report.

Unite national officer Rob MacGrego said: "The scale of the fear among call and contact centre staff is stark to see from this report by Professor Phil Taylor."

"Workers in the finance sector are calling out for their employer to do more to keep them safe during this public health emergency."

"Employers from banks and insurance companies must consider this report urgently and redouble their efforts to keep their workforce safe."

LABOUR PARTY

2,300 ACTIVISTS CALL FOR 'OPEN INVESTIGATION'

TRANSPARENCY: Letter demands full report on bullying and sabotage

by Our News Desk

ALMOST 2,300 activists have signed a letter to the lawyer leading the inquiry into a leaked Labour Party report, calling for a "full and open" investigation.

The open letter was sent yesterday to Martin Forde QC after the signatures were gathering in a week through social media. Among those who have put their names to the appeal are more than 70 branch chairs and secretaries, 19 Labour councillors and senior academics.

In April, the leaked report exposed bullying and sabotage by Labour headquarters staff during Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the party.

Yesterday's letter asks for a full investigation into the truth of all the report's allegations and the extent of racist, sexist and other discriminatory cul-

ture within the party's workplaces.

It also calls for Mr Forde to probe the relationships and communications between all of the staff members mentioned in the report and all senior members of the party.

Letter co-author Nick Fitzpatrick warned that members were seeing a loss of trust in Labour within black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, which are "appalled" by the allegations of racism within the party.

He said: "Activists are stunned at how senior party members and officials allegedly subverted the party machine, damaging Labour at a critical time."

"We need to regain these communities' trust and heal the wounds in our party."

Mr Fitzpatrick said that in order for Labour win back trust, party members and the wider public need to have full

confidence that the inquiry will "deliver what was promised" by Sir Keir Starmer.

The Labour leader had pledged that there would be a full and open independent inquiry into the whole report and the wider culture and practices that it appears to have revealed.

Mr Fitzpatrick added: "The people who signed this letter in their thousands include deeply committed loyal activists from across the whole country - branch and CLP officials, councillors, senior academics, rank-and-file members."

"These are the people who make Labour tick, and they are demanding with one voice a rigorous and transparent investigation into these damning allegations and what they mean for the party."

The letter remains open online for further signatures. news@peoples-press.com

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SOLIDARITY

Firefighters to continue with C-19 duties

FIREFIGHTERS will continue carrying out extra duties such as driving ambulances and moving dead bodies at least until July 15 as part of efforts to tackle coronavirus.

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU), National Fire Chiefs Council, and National Employers agreed to continue the extra duties because the virus "continues to be a risk in our communities."

First agreed on March 26, the duties saw firefighters assist ambulance services, deliver vital supplies to the elderly and vulnerable and move the bodies of the deceased.

Other activities, since added, include assembling personal protective equipment and training care home staff in infection, prevention and control.

The work could be further extended until August 26.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "You need only look at the horrific death toll in our care homes to see that this pandemic is not over yet."

"The government may be easing restrictions, but firefighters are still needed to respond to this serious threat."

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Unions declare solidarity with Assange

A NEW campaign is being launched across the labour movement to show solidarity with imprisoned Wikileaks founder Julian Assange and demand an end to extradition proceedings.

Mr Assange, whose extradition hearing is due to resume in September, has been denied bail and campaigners are increasingly concerned at his declining health.

Birmingham Trades Union Council is the latest trade-union

body to demand his release, and Don't Extradite Assange is now asking unions, labour party bodies and campaigns across the movement to do the same.

The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) points out that Mr Assange faces up to 175 years in prison for making important information available to the public.

His extradition would set a dangerous precedent for the persecution of journalists, the union says.

"This is the defining free-speech case of the 21st century," Don't Extradite Assange's John Rees said.

"Freedom of information, free from government censorship, is the lifeblood of an effective labour movement."

"The NUJ have made a stand. Follow their example"

■ The NUJ's resolution is available at dontextraditeassange.com

EDUCATION

GCHQ programme 'teaches kids to spy'

by Our News Desk

SCHOOL children are being taught how to spy on others and launch cyber attacks in a programme enabled by spy agency GCHQ, according to a report by investigative news website Declassified UK.

The programme, known as Cyber Schools Hub or Cyber-First, has been hosted in over 40 primary and secondary schools, teaching pupils how to spy on other children's wifi traffic and hack "vulnerable machines."

An investigation by Declassified into GCHQ's potential role in schools uncovered that the programme was created in partnership with Cyber Security Associates (CSA), a company founded by former members of the Ministry of Defence's cyber-warfare unit.

Documents seen by the investigative site suggested the schools programme - set up in 2017 - was designed in close collaboration with GCHQ, Britain's largest intelligence agency.

The Cyber First website claims that the aim of the programme

is to "encourage young people to engage with computer science and the application of cyber security in everyday technology."

However Emma Sangster, the co-ordinator of ForcesWatch, an organisation which tracks militarisation in British society, told Declassified that training children in the "murky world of cyber warfare under the guise of improving their aspirations is immoral, dangerous and deeply worrying."

She said: "The creep of the security state into schools is not receiving the public scrutiny it

deserves.

"Not only is the understandable interest of children and teenagers in this area being exploited for the benefit of under-the-radar interests, but facilitating activities such as hacking puts young people at risk by encouraging potentially illegal activity."

CyberFirst is also supported by major arms companies BAE Systems and Raytheon, both of which have produced weapons being used in the war against Yemen.

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LIBYA

GNA forces claim victory in battle to control Tripoli

by Our Foreign Desk

LIBYA'S UN-recognised government said yesterday its allies had lifted the siege of Tripoli after securing control of the airport.

All entry and exit points to the capital were now under the control of government-allied militias, spokesman Mohamed Gnono said.

The announcement is a major setback for General Khalifa Haftar, whose Libyan National Army (LNA) still controls most of the country's territory. His rival government is based in Tobruk.

"Haftar's plan to take over Tripoli has been smashed," Colonel Salah al-Namroush of the Government of National Accord (GNA), the UN-recognised administration, declared.

Libya has not been at peace since Nato armed forces overthrew Muammar Gaddafi in 2010, but in recent years the struggle between the GNA and Gen

Haftar has become a proxy war between international forces, with Italy, Qatar and Turkey supporting the GNA, and France, Russia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel all accused of supporting the Tobruk government.

Stockpiles of French weapons have been found in LNA hands and the United States accused Russia last month of deploying aircraft to assist Gen Haftar, a charge previously levelled at France by GNA authorities and in both cases denied.

Turkey has made no secret of its deployment of jihadist militias, many relocated from the Syrian conflict, to fight alongside the GNA.

The restoration of full GNA control over Tripoli after a siege of more than a year suggests Turkey's intervention has altered the balance of forces.

The United Nations said on Monday that both sides had agreed to resume ceasefire talks.

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RUSSIA

State of Emergency in Norilsk after huge oil spill

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin has declared a regional state of emergency after a catastrophic oil spill in Norilsk.

An estimated 20,000 tons of diesel spilled from a power plant on the edges of the Arctic city, already one of the world's most polluted due to its nickel-ore smelting industry.

Booms have been laid in the Ambarnaya river to try to prevent the fuel from poisoning a lake downstream which feeds a river that runs into the Arctic ocean.

World Wildlife Fund Russia's

Alexei Knizhikov said the spill would poison fish and other resources and cause economic damage to the tune of more than a billion roubles (£11.5 million) including in destroyed fish stocks.

The plant belonged to Norilsk Nickel, whose factories are also held responsible for the acid rain and fog that plague the city.

Its cause is unknown, but the company said it was worried that facilities built on sinking soil above permafrost – which many scientists say is at risk from global warming – are insecure.

EUROPE

ECB doubles pandemic financial support plan

THE European Central Bank almost doubled the size of its emergency pandemic support programme yesterday from €600 billion to €1.35 trillion (£540bn to £1.2tn).

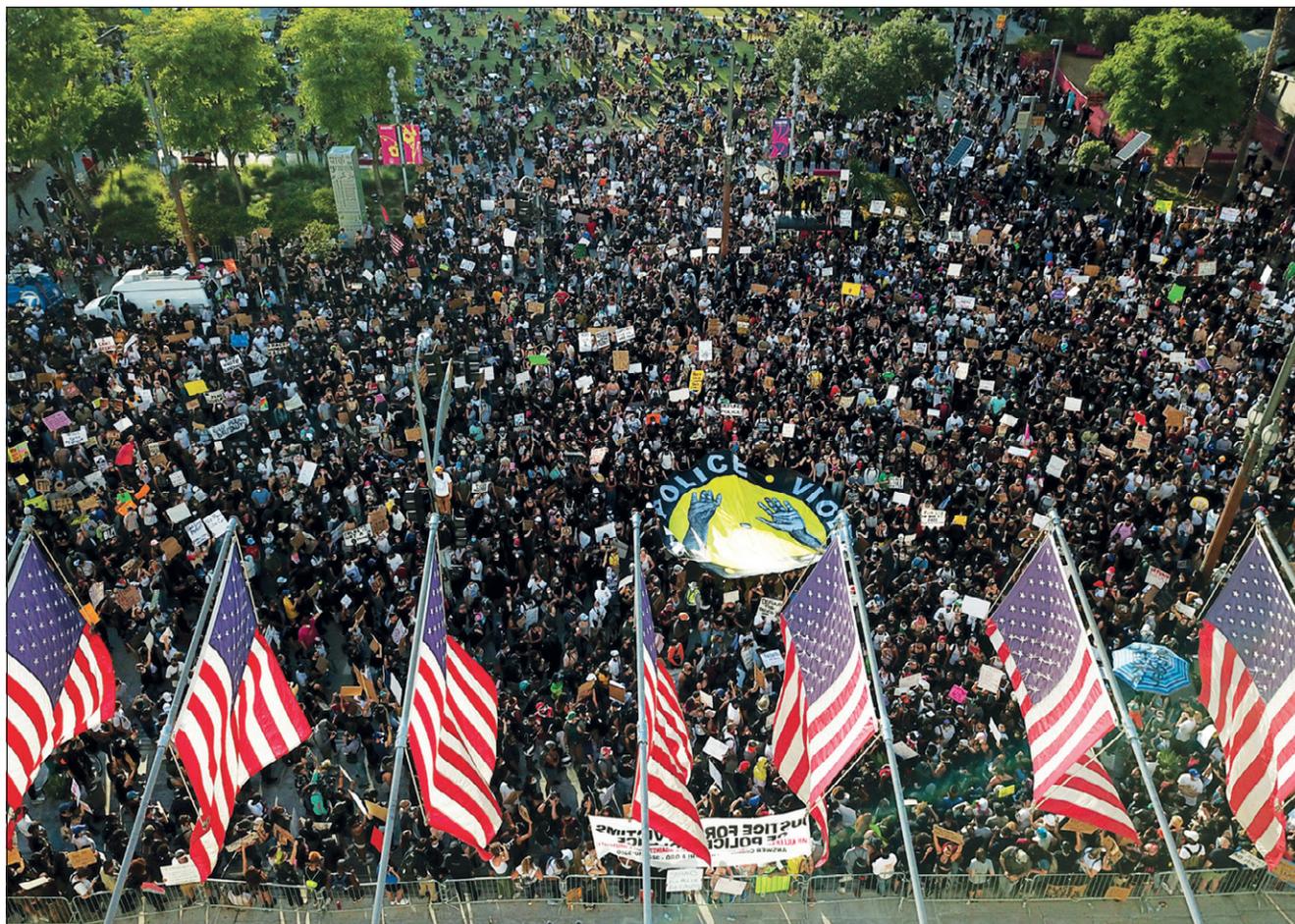
The bank expects the eurozone economy to shrink by 8.7 per cent this year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and its president, disgraced former French finance minister Christine Lagarde, said that "the speed and scale of the rebound are highly uncertain."

The decision came a day

after Germany announced its own €130bn stimulus, with the country's trade unions warning of soaring joblessness.

Germany's plan includes cuts to VAT, additional funding for local and state governments and child benefit boosts for all families.

That package also adopts subsidies for the purchase of electric cars, a measure introduced in France to assist the automotive industry and accelerate the transition to cleaner transport.



FIGHTING BACK: Protests in LA, Washington and New York yesterday

UNITED STATES

CRACKDOWN SEES MORE THAN 10,000 ARRESTS

FLOYD PROTESTS: Mourners gather in Minneapolis for memorial amid cop curfew violence

by Our Foreign Desk

OVER 10,000 people have been arrested so far in the US crackdown on huge protests over the police murder of George Floyd.

The tally comes as mourners gathered last night in Minneapolis for the first of three memorial services for Floyd, an unarmed black man killed by police officer Derek Chauvin on May 25.

Civil rights leader the Rev Al Sharpton was due to address them.

President Donald Trump has deployed the army to the streets of Washington DC and called for police and the National Guard to shoot at the "thugs" taking to the streets but the majority of arrests are for failing to disperse

and violating curfews, which have been imposed in dozens of cities, rather than looting or burglary.

And claims that protests are driven by outside agitators have been undermined.

Last week Minnesota Governor Tim Walz said that "80 per cent" of those "destroying property" were from outside the state, while the mayors of Minneapolis and St Paul, Jacob Frey and Melvin Carter, made similar claims.

But 41 of 52 people arrested in Minneapolis over 24 hours last Saturday had Minnesota driving licences, police confirmed, while 86 per cent of those arrested as of Wednesday afternoon in Washington DC were from the city or neighbouring Maryland or Virginia.

Fundraising campaigns to defend those arrested have sprung up, with a Los Angeles scheme having raised over \$2 million (£1.6m) so far, made up of over 46,000 small donations, many giving just \$10-20.

The funds will go to the National Lawyers Guild and Black Lives Matter LA.

National Lawyers Guild Los Angeles office Kath Rogers said the brutality of the crackdown was unprecedented.

"We go to hundreds of demonstrations, but I've never seen rubber bullets flying like this, tear gas used this way," she said.

On Wednesday evening prosecutors raised the charge against Mr Chauvin from third to second-degree murder, while three officers who were with

him were charged with aiding and abetting the crime.

But the victory for protesters took place as police continued to attack demonstrators.

Hundreds crossing a bridge in New Orleans were assaulted with tear gas. The army raised barricades around the Capitol building in Washington, where the US Congress meets.

Three men charged with the murder of Ahmaud Arbery in February appeared for a "probable cause" hearing yesterday that will determine if their trial goes ahead.

Special prosecutor Jesse Evans said Mr Arbery, a black man jogging in their neighbourhood, "was chased, hunted down and ultimately executed" by the men.

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■ MEDITERRANEAN

Masked men trash refugee boat off the Greek coast

by Ben Cowles

ACTIVISTS shared footage of a group of masked men attacking a refugee boat carrying around 35 people in waters off the coast of Greece yesterday.

Alarm Phone, an activist network which runs a hotline for refugees in distress at sea, was contacted by two boats carrying around 70 people in total in Greek waters yesterday.

One of the boats left Turkey on Wednesday night and was taking on water when it contacted Alarm Phone in the morning, a spokeswoman for the activists told the Star yesterday.

"They informed us the Greek police – those are the words they used – had taken their engine, thrown it into the sea and stolen their petrol," she said.

"They created waves with their boat and tried to push them towards Turkey. That was early this morning. And up until now, no rescue has taken place in the Greek search and rescue zone.

"A while ago we received a video from them, of a boat with masked men attacking it. It's horrifying, heartbreaking. Children are crying in the video, saying: 'Mama, mama, mama.'

"We're doing our best, trying to call the coastguards and to put some pressure so that they actually rescue these people."

Returning refugees to danger (referred to as refoulement or "pushback") is a violation of international refugee laws.

Reports of refugees being pushed back to Turkish waters by the Greek coastguard are nevertheless on the increase, warned Marie Read, a spokeswoman for the human rights monitoring ship Mare Liberum, which is based in the Aegean Sea.

"These pushbacks between Greece and Turkey are not new," Ms Read told the Star yesterday. "But the number of illegal pushbacks has increased dramatically.

"We've received reports of the Greek coastguard having disabled the motors of refugee dinghies, leaving them to float without being able to manoeuvre.

"There have also been several eyewitness reports of the refugees making it to dry land and after the Greece coastguard showed up, they disappeared and reappeared somewhere else in Turkey.

"The European Union has failed to condemn these systematic human rights violations. Right now, Turkey is pushing people towards the border in Evros [north-east Greece] again, and they were quick to make a statement about that.

"But when it comes to speaking about the consequences of fortress Europe on refugees, the EU is absolutely silent."

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 in brief

President rattles sabre on borders

HUNGARY: MPs observed the centenary of the Treaty of Trianon yesterday with President Janos Adler calling for "rectification" of the redrawing of its borders after World War I.

He insisted he was talking about the country's "spiritual borders" but called for the removal of the "curse of Trianon."

The kingdom of Hungary with the Austro-Hungarian empire ruled large parts of what are now Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Activists face ban on agit-prop drops

KOREA: Seoul will ban activists from flying propaganda leaflets into North Korea, it said yesterday.

Using balloons to fly leaflets into the country attacking North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is a common activity by certain South Korean campaign groups.

The North had threatened to withdraw from agreements on defusing tensions if the South did not address the actions of the "human scum" responsible for the balloons.

Bars set to double price in 'helpy hour'

BELGIUM: Optimistic bar owners are hoping to replace Happy Hour with "Helpy Hour" as the country's drinking establishments reopen.

The Federation of Belgian Cafes said that instead of getting two drinks for the price of one, customers should get one for the price of two.

The initiative is to help bar owners bear the shock of the economic crisis triggered by the virus.

AKP strips opposition MPs of their seats

TURKEY: Three MPs were stripped of their seats yesterday, prompting the opposition to accuse the ruling AKP of being "the enemy of democracy."

Republican People's Party MP Enis Berberoglu was punished for leaking images showing Turkish deliveries of weaponry to Syrian terrorists, while Peoples' Democratic Party MPs Leyla Guven and Musa Farisogullari were accused of links to the banned Kurdistan Workers Party.

■ ISRAEL

Row breaks out over speed of Palestine annexation

by Our Foreign Desk

A ROW is emerging over how quickly Israel will proceed with its illegal annexation plans in the West Bank and Jordan Valley after US envoy Jared Kushner apparently called for it to be slowed down.

Mr Kushner is President Donald Trump's son-in-law and wrote the "Trump peace plan" rejected by Palestinians and most of the international community as a one-sided farce precluding the possibility of a viable independent Palestine.

He urged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to "greatly

slow the process" of annexation while the US struggled to cope with the international fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic and mass protests that followed the police murder of George Floyd, according to Israeli media.

Israel Defence Minister Benny Gantz, who is due to succeed Mr Netanyahu after 18 months according to a power-sharing agreement, had instructed the military to begin annexing illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Jordan Valley from July.

And Mr Netanyahu was also attacked by leaders of illegal settlements, who criticised the Trump plan for its formal rec-

ognition of Palestine's right to statehood and for leaving Palestinians the right to remain on land near some settlements.

The settlers' Yesha Council chairman David Elhayani said the plan proved Mr Trump was "not a friend of Israel," forcing Mr Netanyahu to retort that the US President had "led historic moves for Israel's benefit."

Parliamentary Speaker Yariv Levin added that Mr Elhayani was "rude and irresponsible" and risked damaging US-Israeli relations when Israel was advancing "the historic process of applying sovereignty" to Palestinian land.

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■ INDIA

Modi slammed as he tries to roll back food price controls

INDIA'S communists attacked an agricultural reform yesterday that will undermine food security and open the nation further to global agribusiness.

Amendments proposed by the cabinet to the Essential Commodities Act remove price controls that ensure staple foods remain affordable and "pave the way to artificial shortages due to speculation by middlemen and traders adversely affecting the country's food security," the Communist Party of India-Marxist said.

New "barrier-free interstate and intrastate" sale of farm produce and licences for electronic trading will allow speculative forward trading

in commodities and allow the entry of transnational giants into Indian agriculture, the party warned.

"The aggressive pursuit of neoliberal reforms by the Modi government" would allow food profiteering that will "squeeze the farmer and the consumer" and is set to "bring back the days of ruthless exploitation under British rule," it said.

India and Australia signed agreements to strengthen military co-operation and allow mutual access to military bases yesterday. The "comprehensive strategic partnership" between the two US allies comes when both are heightening tensions with China.

★ Star comment

Parliamentary political distancing: Rees-Mogg's charade

How ludicrous is the sight of MPs queuing in the quadrangles of the Palace of Westminster?

Rees-Mogg contrived this gathering of the gullible and gormless in order to give his besieged premier the supportive claque he needs when the questioning becomes too searching to bear and when Johnson's body language and temper too obviously exposes his inadequacies.

In doing so Rees-Mogg has subverted the formal myths which sustain the illusion that this diseased institution is designed to hold the government accountable.

By all accounts the 45-minute queue to vote was full of Tory MPs complaining about being forced to dance the Covid-19 Tango before going into the chamber to vote for a procedure which will force them to stand in line every time the government feels obliged to demonstrate the size of its majority.



Any MP falling into the categories which government advice insists remain isolated should be precluded from voting and a good number sensibly stayed at home. According to the same advice, now that the business secretary has gone down with the symptoms of Covid-19, anyone who came in contact with him should immediately isolate. In thus notionally narrowing the pool of active MPs even further the House of Commons becomes more an empty vessel than a functioning parliament.

You have to wonder at the mindset of any MP daft enough to go along with this. The Tories have a majority. Labour doesn't need to play patsy with Rees-Mogg.

The millions of workers forced back to work in dangerous conditions and those still sheltering at home would understand if Labour said it was not going along with this nonsense.

Rees-Mogg pretends that these procedures are designed to restore the Commons as the forum where the government is held accountable. On the contrary, his intent is to afford the prime minister protection from those who might actually hold him accountable.

The morbidly suspicious will conclude that this charade has been staged to bring further pressure on public opinion to tolerate a dangerous dismissal of the scientific and medical advice and relax the lockdown rules.



Whenever the government's principal scientific and medical advisors appear alongside ministers they are careful to maintain the appropriate social distance. But critical here is the not-so-subtle political distancing that these eminent professionals are now employing.

Where once ministers carefully constructed each sentence to emphasise that they were guided by the science they now employ formulations of increasing opacity.

The scientific and medical consensus is that the status of the preventative measures should not be downgraded. The reality is that active measures by the government and unobtrusive messaging from the monopoly media are in place to drive a further dissolution of the lockdown regime.

There is very great pressure from Labour for the government to publish the findings of a report into the incidence of Covid-19 infection among black and minority-ethnic people.

Already there is a wide understanding that essential workers are especially vulnerable to coronavirus infection. Any further evidence which shows that where class and race intersect workers are even more at risk will not come as a surprise to anyone who works in the health system, the public services, manufacturing, transport or everywhere where employers put profits before people.

This question offers Labour an opportunity to bring home to the nation the way in which racial discrimination has become deeply embedded as a persistent feature of the capitalist labour market, but it also opens the way to a clearer explanation that each pattern of discrimination, every example of oppression and exploitation is rooted in the particular history and class nature of British society.



Solomon Hughes

invest

Seen but not 'he

CHANNEL 4's Dispatches produced new evidence that Boris Johnson was pursuing a crackpot "herd immunity" strategy against coronavirus, which the government has again denied.

This just adds to the herd immunity evidence, some of which is very public.

There is in fact also evidence of the herd immunity plan in the recently released papers of the government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage), which has been generally overlooked.

Dispatches says that on March 13 Johnson spoke to Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte about the coronavirus crisis – at that time Italy was in lockdown, with Spain and France soon to follow.

Italy's health minister says that after this call he spoke to Conte and "he [Conte] told me that he [Johnson] wants herd immunity."

Responding to the documentary, the Department of Health said: "The government has been very clear that herd immunity has never been our policy or goal."

The herd immunity strategy is to let the virus rip among all but the most vulnerable, so that people become ill, but then recover and become immune.

The formerly-ill-now-immune can then care for the most vulnerable groups and keep society running.

It's a kind of "laissez-faire" or semi-Darwinian approach that appeals to some on the right.

However, if death rates for coronavirus approach anything like 1 per cent, then it could imply around 500,000 deaths: because of this, the government has repeatedly denied it had a herd immunity strategy, despite evidence that it did.

So on March 13 government chief scientific adviser Patrick Vallance told Radio 4's Today programme that government policy was protecting the most vulnerable and reducing the outbreak "peak."

However, he argued that because most people only got a "mild illness," allowing a slow spread would let them "build up some kind of herd immunity."

David Halpern, a psychologist and businessman who was invited to sit on Sage, also referred to "herd immunity" at the same time.

Halpern set up a government group, the Behavioural Insights Team, also known as the "Nudge Unit," which was then privatised.

His Nudge Unit sells policy solutions to governments which supposedly use psy-

The newly released papers from the government's Sage group reveals 'herd immunity' was a recurring theme in many guises – despite government c



chological techniques to create clever but low-cost social interventions.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock rejected Vallance and Halpern's statements, saying: "Herd immunity is not our policy. It's not our goal."

However, as well as Vallance and Halpern's statements, Sage papers show there was discussion of herd immunity, although the herd immunity enthusiasts could not win backing for the plan.

The Labour opposition pressured Johnson into releasing the papers from Sage, to show what actual scientific advice the government had received.

These papers show the Sage discussion of herd immunity.

A February 26 Sage paper, written by a subcommittee called SPI-M-O says one strategy "would be to apply more intense measures on those age or risk groups at most risk of experiencing severe disease," including "household isolation" for over-65s and "special measures around care homes."

Meanwhile "the majority of the population would then develop immunity."

This is Vallance's herd immunity plan, but the paper says the scientific group "has not looked at the likely feasibility or effectiveness of such meth-

ods." A paper for the March 5 Sage meeting from another subcommittee, called SPI-B says scientists have "divergent opinions" on a plan to only impose isolation on "at-risk" groups while allowing everybody else to start "building some immunity."

Again, the herd immunity plan was discussed, but

not supported by all. On the same day that Sage refused to support herd immunity, Johnson himself appeared to at least partly support it: he said on ITV's This Morning that "one of the theories is, that perhaps you could take it on the chin, take it all in one go and allow the disease, as it were, to move through the population, without taking as many draconian measures."

Johnson said he would "strike a balance" between this and trying to "stop the peak of the disease."

Government reluctance to go into lockdown suggests it was drawn to the "herd immunity" plan because it involved doing least, only dropping it when it realised the potential scale of death involved.

While the Sage papers show that the scientific advisers discussed but rejected herd immunity, they also show that Sage did not have a very strong alternative.

Sage papers show that by February 17 Sage thought the potential loss of life was very great: they estimated an unchecked coronavirus epidemic would probably mean "around 80 per cent of the population becoming infected."

On February 26 Sage made



However, if death rates for coronavirus approach anything like 1 per cent, then it could imply around 500,000 deaths

Investigating scoundrels

‘Herd’?

Government's secretive
handling
of denials



its first estimate of the infection fatality rate, which it put at roughly 1 per cent. It feared hundreds of thousands of lives were at risk in an unchecked epidemic.

However, Sage papers also generally showed the advisers did not believe that fully stopping the virus was possible: they were not impressed by attempts on mainland China or Hong Kong or Singapore to completely check infection by “contact tracing,” hygiene and isolation.

Instead, as early as February Sage advisers were saying that because the “NHS will be unable to meet all demands” from an unchecked pandemic, measures should be taken to “delay” and “reduce the size of the peak” of infection.

Some Sage papers recommended some combination of strong measures back in February, including “closure of schools” and “social distancing for 13 weeks, when enacted early.”

However, the main Sage committee, with people like Halpern, Vallance and Cummings present, were able to drag their feet on lockdown and reject full national contact tracing as a means to stop the pandemic, even if Sage could not be persuaded to back herd immunity.

THE stream of Labour members receiving letters giving the notice of administrative suspension or notices of investigation are told:

“We must therefore ask you to ensure that you keep all information and correspondence relating to this investigation private and that you do not share it with third parties or the media (including social media).

“That includes any information you receive from the party identifying the name of the person who has made a complaint about you, any witnesses, the allegations against you, and the names of party staff dealing with the matter. If you fail to do so, the Party reserves the right to take action to protect confidentiality, and you may be liable to disciplinary action for breach of the party’s rules.”

The constraints this places upon subjects of disciplinary process are oppressive and contrary to their entitlement to free expression under Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights as incorporated into the Human Rights Act 1998:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.”

As most letters contain neither the name of any complainant, the names of any witnesses, nor the name of any member of the party staff it would be impossible to publicise these in any case.

Being investigated in a sea of anonymity is, itself, of considerable concern. The names of complainants and witnesses may be withheld in cases where there may be a justified fear of retaliatory harassment.

Does the party suspect the recipients of these letters are likely to engage in such behaviour and if so what grounds does the party have for such a belief?

Starmmer must stop flouting the rights of party members

Labour is now headed by a distinguished human rights lawyer — he should direct his attention to the disciplinary processes of the party, writes **MIKE CUSHMAN**

Any burdensome requirements must be applied to individual, carefully considered instances; not rolled out wholesale.

The letters claim: “The Labour Party’s investigation process operates confidentially. That is vital to ensure fairness to you and the complainant, and to protect the rights of all concerned under the Data Protection Act 2018.”

The party fails to explain how the person receiving such a notice has their rights protected by a duty of confidentiality imposed on them. Perhaps because they would be totally unable to.

In the past these letters were signed by a member of the Governance and Legal Unit. Now they are not signed by any named individual, but end: “Yours sincerely, The Governance and Legal Unit, The Labour Party.” In many years of handling trade-union casework, I have never encountered the names of staff dealing with a case being kept secret.

Not being able to discuss the nature of the allegations is a

fundamental attack on political liberty. The Labour Party as a political organisation should be a locus for political debate so we can all learn: the allegations made are a political act and free debate of them would enable the accused member and others to explore the issues raised, learn from them and, if appropriate, modify their behaviour, and/or attempt to convince others of the validity of their analysis.

It is absurd for the party to seek to inhibit such a process of political education and damaging to the development of the party to combat anti-semitism, racism and other forms of discrimination.

There is a further and disturbing element. The instruction as printed suggests that accused members are not even entitled to share their documents with an advisor or lawyer or family member and that they are required to prepare their response to a potentially life-changing letter unaided.

Jewish Voice

for Labour knows that members can, in fact, seek assistance and share their documents for that purpose. Not all members will know that and the standard letter conceals this important information.

This cannot be accidental as the standard letters have obviously been drawn up with some considerable care. Care is not shown to members targeted by these letters who will feel isolated and threatened. Withholding this vital information is more than harassment — it is abuse of a malicious order.

As investigations are a quasi-legal procedure we should expect they meet the minimum requirements of a right to a fair trial under article 6 (3) c of the ECHR: “to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing.”

Further, the short time scales for response to complex, and frequently ill-framed, allegations are at variance with article 6 (3) b: “to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence.”

The party does not have unfettered discretion on how to deal with members. There is clear case law that states an implied duty of fairness and natural justice in handling disciplinary processes.

The Court of Appeal recently ruled against the party, stating that “discretion conferred on a party under a contract is subject to control which limits the discretion as a matter of necessary implication by concepts of honesty, good faith and genuineness, and need for absence of arbitrariness, capriciousness, perversity and irrationality.”

The prohibition on members disclosing the allegations made about them is a clear breach of this obligation. The standard letter recognises that the party’s heavy-handed approach puts the mental health of its members at risk and may even lead some to contemplate suicide: it invites them to consult their GP or the Samaritans.

It is hypocritical of the party to pretend such care. It is hard to conceive that it has met its duty of care by seeking to ameliorate the negative effects of its actions: it would fulfil its duty only by not engaging in abusive behaviour in the first place.

Starmmer must require the party to reconsider urgently these blanket restrictions which are contrary to the spirit of the Chakrabarti report on how best to make progress on such issues. They are also contrary to any spirit of human decency and natural justice.

Failure to bring the party into line even with minimally acceptable practice will demonstrate that he is keen to pursue the abuses committed by others but content to draw a veil over those he is responsible for.

■ Mike Cushman is a member of Streattham Constituency Labour Party and membership secretary of Jewish Voice for Labour.



PROFESSOR John Baruch says he is a retired scientist “as much as scientists retire,” meaning in reality he isn’t retired at all.

The former head of the Department of Cybernetics at the University of Bradford is now a visiting professor at three universities working on “education for the fourth Industrial Revolution” – the impact of new technology on work and the economy.

But his latest project is the Bradford Science Collective, a group of like-minded scientists concerned about the government’s appalling handling of the coronavirus crisis – and the science on which its actions are supposedly based.

He poses the question: is it the scientists telling the politicians what to do, or is it the politicians telling the scientists, whose wages it pays, what it wants to hear from them?

He explained the reasons for the need for scientific advice independent of government.

“Back in January and February we could see that the personal protective equipment (PPE) recommended by Public Health England was inadequate and has since contributed to many of the deaths of public facing health workers.

“Public Health England is part of the government and its advice is politically motivated.

“It was set up in 2013 as many NHS operations were closed to enable the government to implement privatisation of the NHS.

“The advice given by Public Health England on PPE was at odds with the advice given by the World Health Organisation (WHO).”

Baruch has doubts about the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, the Sage committee, which is advising the government on a daily basis.

“The Sage committee is also partisan with people like the chief government political adviser Dominic Cummings sitting in on it,” he said.

“He is no scientist. The previous chief scientific adviser to the government, Lord King, was so horrified by this political interference that he has set up his own committee.”

Why we need scientific advice independent of government

Appalled by supposedly independent science-based advice issued to the public by the government on the coronavirus pandemic, a group of scientists in West Yorkshire has set up an alternative, writes Morning Star Northern reporter **PETER LAZENBY**



BACK TO SCHOOL: Lessons with reduced class sizes at a primary in Norfolk

He went on: “It was the government’s Sage committee that produced the wicked ‘herd immunity’ strategy which, without a vaccine, would produce the best part of half a million deaths.”

The herd immunity theory is based on the belief that if the coronavirus is allowed to spread across the British population, people will develop a natural immunity which will end the march of the virus.

Although the theory was

hastily dumped when the potential 500,000 death toll was revealed, he believes the government may now be attempting to introduce it clandestinely to a degree through the premature reopening of primary schools and the scaled reopening of other schools soon after.

“Today we see the herd immunity idea surfacing again with the proposal to reopen the schools before we have cornered the virus with test, track and isolate methods, and without the PPE recommended by the WHO.

“The WHO is focused on the science and protecting the public and the economy.”

The issue of reopening schools was the subject of his group’s first media release in which Baruch explained how it could spread the virus.

“When the virus infects us we show no signs for four or five days but we are highly infectious and many children have the disease and never show any signs but are highly infectious,” he said.

“Opening schools will spread the virus right across the community.

“One child whose family has the virus will bring it into school. Every cough or sneeze will infect all around them,

everything they touch, door handles, pens.

“On day one they may infect only five of their fellow students. On day two each of these five will infect another five and on day three all the schools and the teachers will be infected and they will infect their families.

“There will be no signs for four or five days and then some of the children will become ill. Many of their parents and families will become ill. The virus will go right across the community and the death rate will soar.”

He says that the lockdown is the best way to slow the spread of the virus, and that testing and tracking is the way to defeat it, in advance of the development of an effective immunity inoculation.

“We need to test anyone and everyone to find the virus and then track those who that person has been in contact with and when we find people who are infected get them to isolate for 14 days.

“Opening the schools before we can do that is crazy. This government is struggling to have 100,000 tests a day, but we also need testing facilities at every pharmacy throughout the land. We are miles away

from that. The present lockdown strategy has to stay until we have the PPE gear necessary to keep everyone safe who is public facing.

“Then in every community we need to be able to test those we suspect have the virus. This we know from the WHO, whose advice kept the numbers of deaths in New Zealand to 21, in China to 4,633 and Germany to 7,510.”

Trade unions with members working in schools also have fears about reopening schools too soon.

General union GMB surveyed 14,000 school support staff and found that 96 per cent were worried that reopening schools too early will put children and their families at risk.

The survey also shows that only 0.6 per cent of respondents think it’s possible for young schoolchildren to socially distance in school, and fewer than 12 per cent are confident adequate coronavirus testing will be available for staff.

GMB national officer Karen Leonard said: “It’s impossible for young children to socially distance and current plans would put lives at risk.

“Ministers are playing Russian roulette with the youngest pupils in schools leaving par-

ents and staff feeling scared, confused and with no confidence in the process.”

The National Education Union also voiced fears.

Within an hour of being asked for their views after the announcement that schools would reopen, 49,000 teachers gave a resounding No to the government’s plans, and said they would feel unsafe.

The Bradford Science Collective’s latest warning focuses on the government’s decision for work to resume in workplaces such as factories and building sites – a decision trade unions say will put hundreds of thousands of workers at risk unless every workplace has been vetted for safe practices, including workers maintaining social distancing.

“The ‘go back to work but stay alert’ message without enforceable health and safety advice will convert our workplaces into cruise ships,” he said.

“The government is in a hole. They have failed to deliver adequate personal protective equipment for public-facing staff.

“They have failed to provide enough accessible testing for anyone who may have encountered the virus, and the economy has stalled.

“Now they are attempting to climb out of the hole over the corpses of working people who will be taking the virus home from their cruise ship employment.

“Without a health and safety evaluation which is enforceable by law, workers will not be able to

resist working practices they regard as unsafe.

“We have seen from cruise ships that keeping people apart in the same environment doesn’t stop the virus. People will return home from work and bring the virus with them. It is confusing, cruel and unnecessary advice.”

■ Prof Baruch is an active trade unionist and a member of Scientists for Labour and the Socialist Education Association.



VOICE OF CAUTION:
Prof John Baruch





Bob Kroll — Trump's racist policeman

The people of Minnesota believe that the racism in the police emanates directly from the president of the Minneapolis Police Federation, writes **PETER FROST**



DONALD TRUMP's tame racist policeman Bob Kroll, president of the Minneapolis Police Union, has to go.

That is the opinion of many Minnesota labour union members, including local AFL-CIO president Bill McCarthy.

McCarthy has called on Kroll to resign immediately, saying: "Kroll has failed the labour movement and the residents of Minneapolis. Bob Kroll has a long history of bigoted remarks and complaints of violence made against him.

"As union president, he antagonises the black community and advocates military-style police tactics, making communities less safe and the police more deadly."

McCarthy went on: "If Bob Kroll does not value the lives that he is sworn to protect then we can only expect more deaths under his leadership."

In a reference to Kroll speaking at President Trump's election rally, McCarthy said: "Americans have witnessed the disastrous outcomes of

unchecked power, authoritarianism, and white supremacy in our highest levels of leadership. We have seen Bob Kroll proudly standing behind this type of leadership.

"There is no room for white supremacists in our movement. Bob Kroll must resign, and the Minneapolis Police Union must be overhauled. Unions must never be a tool to shield perpetrators from justice."

He concluded by stating: "We join in solidarity with our fellow Minnesotans who are marching in the streets demanding justice for George Floyd.

"We join in solidarity with black residents who have seen too many deaths at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department ... Their cries for justice cannot go unheard."

So who is this Minneapolis Police Union president Bob Kroll? A man who allegedly wears a white power patch on his motorcycle jacket and who supports white supremacy and speaks at Trump election rallies.

At the Trump rally Kroll praised what he called the wonderful president for everything he's done for law enforcement. "Now is not the time to rush

to judgement and immediately condemn our officers," Kroll said about Floyd's death as the Minneapolis district attorney filed criminal charges against the officer, Derek Chauvin.

Activists are demanding changes to a police department which they say has long been plagued by racism and misconduct.

Throughout his police career, Kroll, still an active police officer, has been accused of using excessive force and making racist remarks.

Kroll has always been a staunch defender of white officers who have killed or assaulted blacks.

In 2015, after two white officers shot 24-year-old Jamar Clark in the head, Kroll spoke on television about Clark's violent criminal history. He also accused Black Lives Matter of being a terrorist organisation.

Kroll also referred to Muslim former congressman Keith Ellison as a terrorist. This is now the subject of a lawsuit filed by Police Chief Medaria Arradondo alleging racism within the police department.

The lawsuit accused Kroll of wearing a motorcycle jacket

with a white-power patch sewed into the fabric, and said he had a history of discriminatory attitudes and conduct.

Kroll admitted he was a member of the City Heat motorcycle club. The US Anti-Defamation League (the nearest thing to Hope not Hate in Britain) has reported that motorcycle club members often wear white supremacist symbols on jackets.

Kroll refused to answer accusations that he too wore the white supremacist badge.

A year after Jamar Clark's death, in 2016, Kroll commended four off-duty officers who walked off their security jobs at the Lynx basketball game when players wore Black Lives Matter warm-up jerseys.

Kroll joined the Minneapolis police department in 1989. Since then he has been the subject of at least 20 complaints.

In 1994, he was suspended for five days for using excessive force. The suspension was reversed by the police chief.

The next year, he fought a lawsuit that accused him of beating, choking and kicking a mixed-race 15-year-old boy while using racial slurs. A federal jury cleared him of wrongdoing.

In 2003, he was demoted for three months for code of ethics violations.

In 2004, while off-duty, Kroll and another officer beat a man whose backpack bumped their car. The two also punched and kicked the man's friends. Kroll was suspended for 20 days.

As head of the police union, Kroll has pushed for more aggressive policing. Last year, Mayor Jacob Frey banned warrior-style and killology training for officers.

Minnesota police killings, including that of Philando Castile in 2016, have been linked to this training.

The training urged officers to use more force, not less. Kroll described the mayor's ban as illegal and offered the banned training, paid for by the union,

to any officers.

Kroll is President Trump's greatest fan: "The Obama administration and the handcuffing and oppression of police was despicable," Kroll said in a TV interview, after speaking at a Trump rally.

"The first thing President Trump did when he took office was turn that around ... he decided to let cops do their job, put the handcuffs on the criminals instead of us."

Before the rally, Kroll's union sold bright red Cops for Trump T-shirts, as a way round the mayor's prohibition on officers wearing their uniform at political events.

On May 25, four white police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, after a deli employee accused him of buying cigarettes with a fake \$20 bill.

Seventeen minutes later Floyd was unconscious and pinned beneath three police officers, showing no signs of life.

Officer Derek Chauvin had knelt on Floyd's neck for over eight minutes with Floyd shouting "I can't breathe." The other officers gathered round.

The day after Floyd's death, the Police Department fired all four of the officers involved in the episode, and on Friday county attorney, Mike Freeman, announced murder and manslaughter charges against Chauvin.

Extra and new charges are being placed as we go to press.

Instead of trying to find ways to make sure what happened to George Floyd never happens again, Kroll tries to justify this senseless killing and have the officers' charges reduced and even to have them reinstated.

The people of Minnesota believe that the racism in the police emanates directly from the president of the Minneapolis Police Federation — Bob Kroll. Their cries for justice must not go unheard — Bob Kroll must go.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

A combination of sunny spells and showers, some heavy with isolated thunder, in many areas of Britain. Heavy rain and gales developing across the north of Scotland, edging south later.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Rain, locally heavy at first, moving south through the weekend, clearing the south-east by the end of Sunday. Drier conditions follow in most areas. Windy, with coastal gales, and cool in most parts.

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Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

25 days left



YOU'VE RAISED: **£6,419**
WE NEED: **£11,581**

A COMRADE in Dumfries grew up in the German Democratic Republic, where on June 1 each year there were huge celebrations for International Children's Day. So she donated £10 yesterday to celebrate the occasion once more. I'm celebrating going into the weekend as the Fund has moved on by £2,400. Len Symonds, a member of Chesterfield Communist Party

and Derbyshire NUM, was remembered yesterday by his daughter with a £520 donation. Also remembered were comrades Graham Stevenson, Ed Spring and Denis Goldberg with a contribution of £50 from Pulborough. Graham was also saluted by comrades in the West Midlands, Oxford and Sheffield, all of whom sent £50, while Frank Lerner, who died

in March, was saluted with £10 from London. The Central London School of Krav Maga sent £195, while a £40 gift from Dunstable was one of many from this source. A 501 Club winner returned £25, a London friend sent £15 and also from London came of £10, £20 and three gifts of £50. Further afield, £10 arrived from San Francisco with

thanks for Holly Barrow's article headed: "Covid-19, Western hypocrisy and orientalism." And from the Himalayan foothills of Nepal came a donation with the words: "Here's a tenner to the only real newspaper in the UK." Finally, thanks go to Kilmarnock for £50 and the message: "Your whole team's efforts are so very appreciated; your coverage remains second to none."

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DAILY SUDOKU

(easy)

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7	3					4		
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2								

Solution tomorrow...



Yesterday's sudoku

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

TV & radio preview with Maurice Oxford



If you've gone wild about wildlife, you'll naturally be delighted by Springwatch

ONE interesting side effect of the lockdown in urban areas was that, before the government rushed to dismantle the restrictions, it seemed to make the natural world more noticeable. With little traffic on the roads and far fewer people outdoors, birdsong sounded much louder and there were many reports of wild creatures being seen on deserted city streets. At the same time, many people with more time on their hands have become more aware of the flora and fauna around them. I know I have. Those who have developed a new curiosity about such matters will want to catch **Springwatch 2020** (8pm BBC2), in which Chris Packham, Iolo Williams and Gillian Burke tell a unique story of habitat rewilding on the Knepp estate in West Sussex, where white

storks have begun to breed, and Packham explains why we should all love wasps. The highlight, however, is natural history film-maker Gordon Buchanan's account of his epic wildlife week in Scotland. With programme production presumably curtailed by the Covid-19 crisis, the TV schedules are swamped with repeats. Better than most is **Vera** (8.30pm ITV). First shown in 2014, this episode sees Detective Chief Inspector Vera Stanhope (Brenda Blethyn) and sidekick Joe Ashworth (David Leon) investigate an elderly woman's murder on a train. While not quite Miss Marple, the prickly but passionately committed Vera makes a change from the macho stereotypes of most crime dramas. A nice bit of vicarious travel escapism is provided by **The**

World's Most Scenic Railway Journeys (8pm Channel 5). This week it's all aboard New Zealand's Northern Explorer, which run through some of the most astonishing landscapes of the southern hemisphere, from volcanoes and lava fields to unspoilt islands. With Tom Jones becoming an octogenarian on Sunday, BBC4 has raided the archives to mark the event. First, there's **Tom Jones at 80** (9pm), which retraces the Welsh singing legend's long career, then **Tom Jones's 1950s: the Decade That Made Me** (10pm) and finally **A Little Later** (11pm), with Jones's past performances on Jools Holland's show. Today's radio pick is **The Verb** (10pm Radio 3), in which Ian McMillan and guests look at how the pandemic has affected our vocabulary.

QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell

Pic: sarahemcc/Creative Commons



TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- Which familiar disc has a diameter of 4.75 inches, or 12cm?
- In Iceland, who would meet at the Althing?
- What is the name for a padlock whose opening requires the keying in of a number?

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

- Which opera by Mozart includes characters called Tamino, Papageno and Sarastro? **The Magic Flute**
- True or false: Lake Victoria (pictured) is shared by two countries. **False. It is shared**

- by three: **Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda**
- Which optical instrument can be Galilean or Newtonian, among others? **A telescope. Galilean uses a lens; Newtonian uses mirrors**

ONLINE WATCH | FOR LIFE

DENNIS BROE recommends a hard-hitting series nailing the toxic combination of racism and legal corruption in the US jail system

THE best US series in what might be a season cut short by the coronavirus is *For Life*, a combination of prison and courtroom drama about an innocent African-American inmate sentenced to life imprisonment for being a drug kingpin.

It is based on the true story of wrongly imprisoned promoter Isaac Wright Jnr, who used his time in prison to become a legal counsellor and claimed to have freed 20 unlawfully jailed prisoners.

In *For Life*, he becomes Aaron Wallace, jailed by ambitious and corrupt Illinois prosecutor Glen Maskins, who is running for Chicago District Attorney. To free himself, Wallace studies to become a lawyer, takes the bar and becomes the legal representative for inmates.

Attempting to prove a pattern of faulty convictions, he begins an aggressive campaign against the would-be DA.

The series is a brand-new slant on the courtroom drama genre. By crossing it with the prison series format, it emphasises the unfairness of the legal system and the ways African-Americans, Hispanics and poor whites are caught in the crosshairs of a system that presumes them guilty from the start.

This is a system where tainted evidence and lack of investigation characterise the actions of both prejudiced police and politically ambitious prosecutors.

It is stirring to watch Wallace (Nicholas Pinnock), who changes each week out of his



STIRRING: Nicholas Pinnock (right) as Aaron Wallace in *For Life*

orange prison jumpsuit into the tailored suit of a lawyer, appearing before a judge to masterfully argue his cases.

By being in prison and having access to the stories of inmates, and through his own interaction with the law, he is able to bring a perspective on the legal system the lawyers on the opposite side of the courtroom do not have.

In his defence of the inmates, he's also accused of cutting corners himself, and when questioned about it by a sympathetic liberal female warden, he responds that with all the obstacles against him, it is up to him where to draw the line.

And, when reprimanded by a black cop who he asks to illegally obtain his police file which he is barred from seeing, Wallace protests that the procedure is unfair.

"You should have thought of that before..." the cop says. But Aaron interrupts him with: "Before what, I decided to be black in America?"

The cop folds under this logic and grants Aaron his request.

While having its protagonist still in prison and battling to get out, most crucially *For Life* ups the ante by adding the element of that most incarcerated class of inmate, black men.

Their imprisonment is often not based on guilt or innocence but on a systemic need to discipline a recalcitrant and rebellious population and to fill the jail cells of a multibillion-dollar industry that has become a boondoggle for private enterprise.

In the Bible, Aaron is the older brother of Moses, who leads the Israelites out of their bondage in Egypt and to freedom.

Each week, Wallace attempts the same for a large ethnic group within the US working class, banged up no reasons other than prejudice and profit.

■ *For Life* is available on Hulu and YouTube.

FILM OF THE WEEK | DAYS OF THE BAGNOLD SUMMER (12)

DIRECTED BY SIMON BIRD | ★★★★★☆

An understated homage to British suburbia

MARIA DUARTE recommends a heartwarming film from debutant director Simon Bird

LIFE in the suburbs as a single mother with a moody teenager who listens to heavy-metal music all day long is the inspired focus of this affecting and comic coming-of-age drama. It's an impressive directorial debut from Simon Bird, best known for playing the hapless Will McKenzie in *The Inbetweeners*.

Adapted from Joff Winterhart's 2012 graphic novel by Bird's wife Lisa Owens, the film centres on 15-year-old Daniel (a phenomenal Earl Cave), whose world comes crashing down when his six-week-long trip to Florida to stay with his dad and his much younger pregnant wife is suddenly cancelled.

Instead, he has to spend the summer holidays stuck at home with his 52-year-old conservative-looking librarian mum Sue (Monica Dolan).

Dressed head to toe in black, Daniel spends his days eating crisps, listening to Metallica with his best friend Ky (Elliot Speller-Gillott) and taking his frustrations out on his overworked mum.

Their suburban home becomes the centre of the battle of the wills between Daniel



BATTLE OF WILLS: Daniel (Earl Cave) and his mum Sue (Monica Dolan)

and his mother, who's quietly livid that her ex isn't sending her child maintenance cheques while he lives the high life with his new young family.

Daniel can't stand her constant nagging and, as Sue's sister (Alice Lowe), concerned about his loner behaviour, tells her: "You're Mum mk II, down to the glasses," reminding her that she was never the life and soul of the party at Daniel's age either.

So when her son's smarmy history teacher, brilliantly played by Rob Brydon, asks her out on a date, she decides to live life on the wild side.

Although it seems as if nothing happens in the film, you'll be surprised by how much transpires by the end between mother and son. It all unfolds slowly and quietly and is beautifully underscored by indie band Belle & Sebastian's fantastic soundtrack.

With its downbeat look and tone, Bird delivers a wonderfully quirky homage to British suburbia, driven by standout performances by Cave and Dolan. It will be fascinating to see what Bird does next.

■ Available on demand from June 8

FILM ROUND-UP | MARIA DUARTE

A Rainy Day in New York (12)

Directed by Woody Allen

★★★★☆

IN HIS latest, Woody Allen returns to his old stomping ground of New York and romantic comedies, along with the recurring theme of older men falling for much younger women.

It centres on troubled student and avid gambler Gatsby (Timothee Chalamet), who devises an elaborate romantic getaway to the Big Apple with his college sweetheart Ashleigh (Elle Fanning), who's set to interview celebrated Hollywood director Roland Pollard (Liev Schreiber) for a college paper.

But all his well-laid plans are dashed when Pollard takes a shine to Ashleigh, whisking her away on a thrilling adventure around the city in which she encounters his long-suffering producer and screenwriter (Jude Law) and a film star

(Diego Luna) who, of course, all last after her.

This isn't Allen's finest work but it isn't his worse either, thanks in part to some cracking performances, especially from Chalamet and Fanning. The latter totally nails the wealthy beautiful-but-dim Ashleigh, who tells Pollard: "We're just Episcopalians who happen to be rich."

It's another case of *deja vu* as Chalamet, sounding like a young Allen, discusses anxieties, paranoia, death and the romantic virtues of New York in the rain in witty and elaborate retorts.

With three members of the star-studded cast apparently donating their salaries to charity in the wake of the MeToo campaign and the film itself screaming white-male privilege, maybe it's time for Allen, at the age of 84, to call it a day.

■ Available on Home Premiere

To the Stars (12)

Directed by Martha Stephens

★★★★☆

SET against the backdrop of the 1960s, this is a powerful and insightful drama about female friendship and sexuality.

It follows teenage recluse and loner Iris (Kara Hayward), who puts up with the boozey antics of her mother (Jordana Spiro) and the daily bullying from her classmates, who make her life a misery.

But that soon changes with the arrival of new girl Maggie (Liana Liberato), a charismatic and enigmatic force of nature who befriends Iris. She homes in



on her untapped potential and slowly but surely coaxes Iris from her reclusive shell.

Of course, there is more to Maggie than meets the eye, but director Martha Stephens manages to keep the tension bubbling under the surface in a painstaking slow reveal.

The end result is visually arresting and captivating, driven home by two mesmerising and superlative performances by Hayward and Spiro, who steal the film and your heart.

■ Available on video on demand

Guest of Honour

Directed by Atom Egoyan

★★★★☆

THE troubled relationship between a father and daughter is slowly revealed in this

bizarre family melodrama-cum-thriller by Atom Egoyan.

Told in flashback, local priest Father Greg (Luke Wilson) learns what kind of a man Jim (David Thewlis), late father of Veronica (Laysla De Oliveira), was.

A stickler for the health code, food inspector Jim took his work very seriously. He was a jobsworth, as we witness during a montage of visits to different eating establishments big and small.

Veronica is forced to confront her feelings about her father and her past so that Father Greg can deliver a eulogy at his funeral.

With fine performances from Thewlis and Oliveira, it is nevertheless an odd film about love, loss, sexual abuse and injustice that doesn't quite make up its mind what it wants to be or say.

■ Available on Curzon Home Cinema

POLITICS

More on the British Road to Socialism

YOUR recent article by Robert Griffiths (M Star May 29) of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), outlining the road to a socialist society, was informative and exciting.

One aspect he mentioned, of great interest to the whole of Britain, is the party's support for an option of federalism.

I believe this needs some more detail and clarification.

A previous issue of the party's programme, Britain's Road to Socialism, from 2011, listed the powers to be held by a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly as "full economic, legislative and financial."

The 2018 draft did not mention this but said that the all-Britain federal parliament would have jurisdiction over foreign affairs, defence, taxes, etc. The 2020 issue supports a federal Britain but no mention



of what powers would be held where. So, the question is how does the CPB see what specific powers would be retained, by who and where?

I feel that fuller explanation by the CPB of its position of the issue would be useful. Perhaps a short article can be done in the paper.

WILLIE HAINES
Edinburgh



PARLIAMENT
Queue have got to be kidding Mr Mogg

I NOTE that Leader of the Commons Jacob Rees Mogg has managed to engineer a physical return of Parliament involving MPs queuing for 90 minutes to vote.

Couldn't he have checked with his butler first how long it takes to queue to get into Waitrose to get his shopping?

KEITH FLETT
London N17

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OUR PAPER
Star's carrying of tributes to Graham Stevenson was a wonderful thing

I HAVE today transferred £50 to the Morning Star Fighting Fund.

Thank you so much to everyone at the paper for your tributes to Graham Stevenson on May 27. No other paper would even consider marking the passing of such

a towering figure, never mind giving him the respect and coverage that he truly deserved.

Graham's huge role in the International Transport Workers' Federation means your paper was read with interest across the world and

I myself am posting a copy of this issue to a leading trade unionist in Japan.

Thanks again. Once more it proves how invaluable the Morning Star is to those of us on the left.

MARTIN MAYER
Sheffield



SOCIAL DISTANCING
Beach bods an English matter

YOUR front page splash (M Star June 1) by Peter Lazenby wrongly said that thousands flocked to seaside resorts in Britain.

I know that many other widely read newspapers also included this claim, but I am

sure the Star would not have based its story on such English-centric titles such as the Sun and Mirror.

I expect better of the Morning Star in being able to differentiate England from other parts of Britain.

A cursory check would have shown that the public did not flood seaside resorts in Wales, where we continue to follow Welsh government restrictions.

DAVID NICHOLSON
Llantwit Major

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CUT OUT AND MAIL TO US



Berry slams IOC for its double standards on racial injustice

Olympian was reprimanded for raising a fist in protest but is now seeing those same people claim they 'stand with those who demand equality,' writes **EDDIE PELLIS**

AS IT turns out, the hard part for United States Olympian Gwen Berry hasn't started yet.

The raised fist at the Pan-Am Games last summer, along with the public shaming she received from Olympic authorities afterward, and the wondering what might happen if she were to use her platform at the now-postponed Tokyo Games to protest racial injustice – all that seems easy now.

"I feel like, right now, my body and my mind, it's like I'm going to war," Berry said. "I'm trying so hard to protect something that is near and dear to me."

Berry is the African-American hammer thrower who captured headlines last year when she used her turn on the gold-medal podium at the Pan-Am Games to raise her fist as a show of her frustration with the US's treatment of black people.

Her gesture, to say nothing of the punishment that

came afterward, are all being seen in a new light these days in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, a tragedy that has sparked protests across the US while also compelling hundreds of commissioners, leagues and players in the sports world to respond.

To Berry, the statement from the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), that the federation "stands with those who demand equality," was galling.

It came less than a year after the USOPC put Berry on a 12-month probation for her gesture at the Pan-Am Games.

The letter CEO Sarah Hirschland sent Berry that day said that while she respected Berry's perspective, "I disagree with the moment and manner in which you chose to express your views."

"I want an apology letter ... mailed ... just like you and the IOC MAILED ME WHEN YOU PUT ME ON PROBATION,"

Berry tweeted shortly after the USOPC sent out its letter this week.

Later, she amended her demand and said she wanted a public apology.

The USOPC has not yet responded publicly to Berry's requests; nor did officials there immediately answer emails from various media seeking comment.

Berry had been scheduled to meet with USOPC leadership on Wednesday night.

The episode comes against the backdrop of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) statement earlier this year that reiterated rules forbidding the types of protests Berry made.

In her interview, she said she was disappointed with the USOPC: "I feel like for them to post something like that without first apologising ... it takes away their sincerity to the situation at hand," Berry said.

And yet, in Berry's view, the

back and forth with the USOPC is the least of the problems facing her or her country, as the US heads into the second week of protests in reaction to Floyd's death.

A white police officer, Derek Chauvin, has been charged with second-degree murder in the killing of Floyd, a black man who was handcuffed as the officer pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for several minutes.

Berry said she heard a lot of people's feelings while joining recent protests in Houston.

She says the endless stream of stories of police brutality levelled against black people in the US keep her in a constant state of worry about her son and her brothers.

"I have a child who is a black man, who does not look like a child," she said.

"I have siblings who are black men who do not look like children. They're big. They can be intimidating. I'm in fear for

their lives right now. I feel like I'm fighting for them right now."

She's been inspired by former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who ultimately lost his job after kneeling during the national anthem in 2016 to protest police brutality and racial injustice.

"My hero," Berry said. "A person who looks like me, stands for what I stand for and believes in what I believe in ... He's a leader."

Asked if she was hopeful the protests could be an impetus for change, Berry said she looked at it as a "tipping point."

"I definitely don't think this is the thing that's going to bring America together," she added.

"The people who run the system, they're not going to just let this one situation be the tipping point. They're going to fight until they can't fight any more. So we will have a lot of fights to do. This is the start.

This is a key moment."

When Berry raised her fist during The Star-Spangled Banner last summer, her message was not all that different from the one sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos delivered at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, when they raised their fists on the podium.

They became internationally known for their fight to shed light on their country's history of social injustice for blacks.

At that time, Berry didn't really have any follow-up plans in mind. Now, she does. Her probation will be over in the Summer of 2021 – the new date for the Tokyo Games.

"I'm prepared to take my platform to the next level. I really don't know how I will go about that, because I know just speaking out and posting is not enough," Berry said.

"Being more involved and helping my message reach bigger influencers, I think that will help me a lot."



■ **MEN'S FOOTBALL**

MAXWELL WANTS SWIFT RETURN FOR EVERYONE

Scottish Premiership teams allowed to resume training from June 11

by Our Sports Desk

IAN MAXWELL is "determined" to get every level of Scottish football back in action as soon as possible after the governing body approved the return of training for Premiership clubs from June 11.

The Scottish Football Association chief executive admitted Covid-19 testing criteria were "prohibitive" but was keen to devise a route map for lower levels and the women's game.

All Scottish football activity has been forbidden since March 13 and the suspension will only be lifted for top-flight clubs' first-team squads.

The decision, taken by the SFA board, was a formality after representatives secured backing for safety protocols from the Scottish government last week.

National clinical director Jason Leitch clarified that teams would be limited to what was allowed in the guidelines for the route out of lockdown, which currently only allow two households to train together outside while social distancing.

But the Scottish Professional Football League is aiming for an August 1 kick-off for its top division.

A statement from Scottish football's Joint Response Group read: "The suspension of football will be lifted to enable training from June 11, specifi-



cally for SPFL Premiership first-team squads only.

"Any other competitions wishing to return to training must be able to confirm their ability to meet the testing regime and other safeguarding measures agreed between the Scottish FA and the Scottish government.

"The suspension remains in place for those competitions that cannot meet such criteria and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis."

Maxwell added: "Firstly, I would stress that the conditional lifting of suspension for Scottish Premiership clubs is predicated on observing the measures outlined by Scottish government in their route map out of lockdown.

"I would like to thank the

Joint Response Group subgroups for their work in helping to produce the robust return to training protocol which has given the government the necessary comfort to provisionally plan for an August 1 restart for the Premiership.

"In particular I would like to recognise the efforts of Dr John MacLean, our medical consultant, and his medical subgroup in providing clear and unambiguous guidance to clubs on the testing procedures required.

"I am also aware that other parts of the game will seek further clarity on when they may be able to resume. The testing criteria required at this stage is prohibitive but as the governing body for football we

are determined to restore the national game at all levels as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

"I am aware of the need to provide an achievable route map for the women's game and we are engaged with Scottish Women's Football to discuss the practicalities for the Scottish Women's Premier League, especially given Glasgow City's involvement in the Uefa Women's Champions League.

"The grassroots subgroup has recently issued a Q&A to the recreational game and we are in the process of looking at initiatives to keep those grassroots footballers of all ages engaged until they can return to the football pitch."

Rangers managing director Stewart Robertson has still not

ruled out some fans being present when the season kicks off.

A deal was ratified with Sky on Wednesday to allow clubs to sell virtual season tickets and livestream their home matches amid expectations that games will be played behind closed doors.

Robertson told Rangers TV: "We are working on the basis that the season is going to start at the beginning of August.

"That will obviously depend on the government restrictions but at the moment it is looking as though it will be the beginning of August, probably behind closed doors initially, maybe with small crowds. There is a lot of work going on in that side of things."

No target date has been set for other Scottish divisions but Robertson revealed the latest on plans for the Scottish League Cup, which normally starts in mid-July.

"We are hoping to be back [for pre-season training] round about June 15," he said.

"There is a lot of detailed work behind the scenes there. We look forward to announcing a couple of pre-season friendlies as well, we need to get the guys up and running again, but we need to do it safely and carefully.

"It looks as though the League Cup is going to be moved back to October/November time. That's not been confirmed yet but that's the latest."

■ **FOOTBALL**

Japan to introduce a new league for women

JAPAN'S football federation announced a new professional women's league that will begin play next year.

Called the WE League, for women's empowerment, the new organisation will initially consist of six to 10 teams and will kick off in the autumn of 2021.

The league's round-robin format will include home and away games between each of the teams.

Japan Football Association president Kohzo Tashima said the aim of the league was not just to develop women's football in the nation.

"Our aim is to contribute to build a sustainable society through promoting female social participation and enhancing diversities and choices.

"How we contribute to the society through sports is an important mission for all of us in the sports world," he said. "We will work to establish the career of women's professional football, which is the dream of many girls, and further promote women's empowerment and solve social issues."

■ **MEN'S FOOTBALL**

Taylor 'Hope fans understand why I won't play'

by Our Sports Desk

LYLE TAYLOR says his dream of playing at the highest level he can was behind his agonising decision to refuse to play out the rest of the season with Charlton.

The 30-year-old is out of contract at the end of the month and has told manager Lee Bowyer he will not play on when the Championship resumes on June 20.

The striker is in demand after hitting 25 goals in Charlton's promotion-winning campaign.

He netted five goals in his first six games in the Championship before a knee injury ruled him out until December and took his tally to 11 after returning.



The Addicks sit third-bottom of the table and Bowyer is also resigned to being without Chris Solly, who is in the same situation as Taylor, as well as on-loan Birmingham player David Davis.

Taylor told Sky Sports News: "I've sat in my living room star-

ing at a blank TV screen for hours. I've not eaten or slept properly. I've been up till five in the morning. It's been very very difficult.

"It's not a normal conversation, a normal decision, an are-you-fit, aren't-you-fit conversation. This is a: 'Lyle, are you going to finish the season, are you going to extend the contract?'"

"I said: 'Bow, my heart says play, you will be OK, you have been fine for 10 years, 12 years until this knee injury. But my head is saying there comes a time when I have to consider that injury is actually a real factor and where would I be should I get injured in the next six weeks, eight weeks?'"

Bowyer has said he "half-gets" Taylor's decision given

he is on the verge of a "life-changing move."

The former Bournemouth, Falkirk, Sheffield United, Scunthorpe and AFC Wimbledon player said: "Ever since I was 18 and was released by Millwall I have dreamed of playing at the highest level I could possibly play at.

"I was told I wasn't good enough to be a professional footballer at that age, I was told I wasn't good enough for League One, I was told I wasn't going to make the step up the Championship.

"And all I have done is try to prove them wrong and step up and make the best of the opportunities that I have been given.

"At the age I am, should I get injured, there won't be another opportunity. Should I get seri-

ously injured, I doubt there would even be an opportunity to play at the level I am playing at now.

"I might be remembered as whatever – money-grabbing, a let-down, never been a club legend because he left us in the lurch. But I'd like to think that, at some point, people will think: 'We don't like it but we understand why he has done it'."

TODAY'S TIPS

Farrington's Doubles

RIVER NYMPH
Lingfield 5:35 (nap)

BRIGHTON PIER
Lingfield 3:50

Houseman's Choice

OXTED
Newmarket 2:25



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