



for Peace and Socialism

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# TAX THE RICH AND BRING IN £10BN FOR PUBLIC PURSE



by Peter Lazenby

THE TUC has condemned a “tale of two Britains” which sees working people suffering “the longest pay squeeze in modern history” while bankers’ bonuses are at eye-watering levels and chief executive pay is surging.

The damning criticism came as the TUC launched a blueprint to squeeze Britain’s multimillionaires for a “modest” proportion of their wealth and end the country’s “increasing wealth inequality.”

The blueprint would raise £10 billion for the public purse and should be the “start of a national conversation about taxing wealth,” said TUC general secretary Paul Nowak.

It would affect only 140,000 individuals – 0.3 per cent of Britain’s population – and is similar to a policy that operates in Spain.

Mr Nowak said: “It’s time to

start a national conversation about how we tax wealth in this country.

“It is absurd that a nurse pays a bigger share of their income in tax than a city trader does on profits from their investment portfolio.

“That’s not only fundamentally unfair and unjust – it’s bad for our economy too.”

He said that Britain’s “broken” tax system means those at the top are hoarding wealth and getting richer and richer while working people struggle to get by.

“That is starving our economy of spending – as it’s working people who spend their money on our high streets – and it’s starving our public services of much-needed funds,” Mr Nowak said.

“This is a debate we should not be afraid of having. The Chancellor should use his autumn statement to make sure the wealthiest pay their fair share of tax.”

He said that as working

people suffered a record squeeze on pay “the super-rich are coining it in.”

“Porsche sales are at record highs, bankers’ bonuses are at eyewatering levels, and CEO pay is surging,” he added.

“Enough is enough. We need an economy that



**Enough is enough. We need an economy that rewards work – not just wealth.**

PAUL NOWAK

rewards work – not just wealth.

“Fair tax must play a central role in rewiring our economy to work for working people.”

The analysis sets out options for taxing the small number of individuals with wealth of more than £3 million, £5m and £10m, excluding pensions.

The lower tax on people with more than £3m would

affect 142,000 wealthy people, the tax on those with more than £5m would affect 48,000 and the tax on those with more than £10m would affect 17,000.

The system would mean that someone with £3m would pay nothing, someone with

income from assets or property are taxed less than those who rely on real work.

While working people have been “hit by a pay loss of historic proportions” the wealth of multimillionaires and billionaires has boomed, said the TUC.

Campaign group Tax Justice UK, which earlier this year drew up proposals to raise up to £50 billion through taxing the super-wealthy, welcomed the TUC’s proposals.

Executive director Robert Palmer said: “With public services on their knees, and wealth inequality rampant, it’s high time the UK started taxing wealth properly. It’s great to see the TUC champion steps towards a fairer tax system.”

He said the public was “crying out for action” which would “go a long way towards raising money desperately needed for our schools, NHS and social security system.”

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## VILLIERS'S £70K SHELL SHAME

THERESA VILLIERS'S failure to disclose ownership of £70,000 in Shell shares while she was environment secretary sheds light on the Tories' anti-strikes and anti-protest laws, climate campaigners have said.

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## REFUGEES FACED WITH EVICTION

THOUSANDS of refugees from Afghanistan face eviction from their housing this month as a government deadline for them to “help themselves” nears.

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## VICTORY OFF PITCH IS JUST AS CRUCIAL

JAMES NALTON writes about how even in their Women's World Cup defeat, US footballers represent America better than their detractors

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RAILWAYS

## Calls for action on Carmont anniversary

RAIL staff and passengers are being put at risk by government and Network Rail failures to improve safety, transport union RMT has warned, on the third anniversary of the fatal Carmont derailment.

Driver Brett McCullough, 45, conductor Donald Dinnie, 58, and passenger Christopher Stuchbury, 62, died when the 06:38 Aberdeen to Glasgow service hit washed-out debris at

Carmont, south of Stonehaven, on August 12 2020.

A series of safety failures led to the accident, which occurred following heavy rain, investigators found.

A 2022 report made 20 safety recommendations, but progress addressing them has been slow, prompting regulator the Office of Rail and Road to warn earlier this year that lessons had not been learnt.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said: "Unfortunately, we are faced with a toxic mixture of an increasing number of extreme weather events and government and Network Rail cutting back on railway safety.

"If [they] do not give immediate priority to acting on these safety recommendations, there is an increased risk of more accidents putting rail workers and passengers at risk."

DECLARATION OF MEMEBRS' INTERESTS

## Ex-environment secretary failed to mention Shell link

by Berny Torre

THERESA VILLIERS'S failure to disclose ownership of £70,000 in Shell shares while she was environment secretary sheds light on the Tories' anti-strikes and anti-protest laws, climate campaigners have said.

The former member of Boris Johnson's cabinet is facing calls to resign as an MP after admitting her shareholding in the oil and gas company via her latest update to the register of members' financial interests.

MPs are required to register any change to their registrable interests within 28 days, but a list of ministers' interests from November 2019 did not mention Ms Villiers' connection to Shell.

The MP for Chipping Barnet's latest register entry for shareholdings, valued at more than £70,000, now includes "from February 23 2018, Shell PLC; energy" and newly declared shares above the same threshold in drinks manufacturer Diageo and Experian PLC. Greenpeace UK co-executive

director Areeba Hamid said the revelation was a "sign of how close the Conservative Party is with this planet-wrecking industry."

"Is it any surprise they're shutting the door to civil society while dishing out new oil and gas licences?"

"Faced with images of horrifying wildfires and flooding, it's not what voters want or deserve," she added.

"We need a government that will stand up to vested interests and tackle the climate crisis head on, not continue to add fuel to the fire and stoke oil and gas companies' profits."

Labour's Richard Burgon MP said: "We can't expect MPs to fight climate change if they're financially benefiting from oil and gas companies."

And wildlife presenter and activist Chris Packham said: "You couldn't make it up ... and you don't have to."

Treasury minister John Glen described Ms Villiers's omission as an "oversight on her part" and insisted the former minister has been "very clear" in apologising.

A spokesman for Ms Villiers said she "deeply regrets her failure to monitor the value of shareholdings and has offered her sincere apologies.

"She is taking steps to ensure that this never happens again. Nothing she has ever said or done as MP has been influenced by these shareholdings."

The spokesman added she disclosed that she "had a portfolio of shares which was professionally managed for her and over which she did not take investment decisions" when she became environment secretary.

Green co-leader Adrian Ramsay said: "You have to question how serious the Conservatives are in tackling the climate crisis when the Cabinet contains people deriving financial benefit from fossil fuel company shares of any value.

"We need representatives in Parliament focused on freeing us from our dependence on oil and gas which is destroying our planet and instead investing in the energy sources of the future – wind, sun and water."  
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in brief

### Bus drivers down wheels over pay

**SOLENT:** First South bus drivers in the Solent area will hold a four-day pay strike over the August bank holiday weekend their union, Unite, announced yesterday.

Bosses are refusing to make a "reasonable cost-of-living payment" to staff, who service cities including Portsmouth and Southampton for just £12 an hour, it stressed.

Union general secretary Sharon Graham slammed the "bare-faced cheek" of the profitable company.

### Rob Blackie set to be Lib Dem candidate

**LONDON:** The Liberal Democrats have announced businessman and long-standing London Assembly member Rob Blackie as their candidate for next year's London mayoral contest.

Mr Blackie described himself yesterday as a much-needed "liberal challenger" to Labour incumbent Sadiq Khan and accused the Tories, whose last month chose London Assembly member Susan Hall as their candidate, of having effectively given up on London.

### MacNeil expelled after SNP fight

**SCOTLAND:** Na H-Eileanan An Iar (Western Isles) MP Angus Bredan MacNeil has been expelled from the SNP, it was revealed yesterday.

He lost the whip for a week in July after an argument with party whip Brendan O'Hara, before resigning altogether to attack SNP independence strategy.

Mr MacNeill tweeted: "I didn't leave the SNP – the SNP have left me. I wish they were as bothered about independence as they are about me!"

### No-fault evictions are up by 41 per cent

**HOUSING:** The number of households in England removed from their homes by courts as a result of no-fault evictions is up 41 per cent since last year, research by a charity has found.

Shelter urged the government to scrap the Section 21 powers in the delayed Renters (Reform) Bill as its figures show that more than 7,400 renters were placed at risk of homelessness.



**GOING UP:** Hot air balloons over Bristol during the mass ascent at the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta 2023

POLITICS

## Hunt is 'asleep at the wheel' while economy flatlines

by Matt Trinder  
Industrial reporter

TORY Chancellor Jeremy Hunt is "asleep at the wheel while our economy is going nowhere," the TUC warned yesterday after new figures showed no end in sight for Britain's stagnant growth.

Good weather in June led to a surprise 0.5 per cent boost to gross domestic product (GDP), according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), but the second quarter of the year saw economic growth of just 0.2 per cent overall.

The lacklustre performance followed growth rates of just 0.1 per cent in the first three months of 2023, as the country continues to struggle with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, war in Europe and more than a decade of government-enforced austerity.

ONS director of economic statistics Darren Morgan said the economy had "bounced

back" from May's extra bank holiday marking the coronation of Charles Windsor to record "strong growth in June.

"Manufacturing saw a particularly strong month with both cars and the often-erratic pharmaceutical industry seeing particularly buoyant growth," he said.

"Services also had a strong month with publishing, car sales and legal services all doing well.

"Construction also grew strongly, as did pubs and restaurants, with both aided by the hot weather."

But TUC general secretary Paul Nowak warned that stagnant growth overall "puts jobs at risk and holds down pay and conditions for those who remain in work.

"The Chancellor must stop hiding behind the Bank of England and take responsibility for the serious economic failure unfolding on his watch," he demanded.  
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Scottish  
★ Morning Star

Aberdeen Supporters' Group

OUR CLASS, OUR CULTURE

Poetry in the context of The Spanish Civil War

Talk by Michael Arthur  
Chair: Tommy Campbell

Saturday August 19, 2pm

Aberdeen Trades Union Council Office, John Londragan House, 22a Adelphi, AB11 5BL <https://mstar.link/Aberdeen>





■ SCOTLAND

## Loudon urged to resign over social media behaviour

by Matt Kerr

RUTHERGLEN SNP MSP Clare Haughey has been forced to apologise after reposting an attack on a by-election candidate's school.

The former children and young people's minister shared a Talking Up Scotland blog on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Thursday night which appeared to show that modern studies results at Park Mains High School in Erskine had fallen.

The blog used the statistics to take aim at Michael Shanks, Labour's candidate in the forthcoming Hamilton West and Rutherglen by-election who is one of four modern studies teachers there.

Ms Haughey's repost was liked by members of the Rutherglen SNP, but swiftly faced outrage, including from SNP members and teachers who called it "so Tory."

Scottish Labour's Jackie Bailie said: "This extraordinary attack on schoolchildren in a

pathetic attempt to score political points is nothing short of reprehensible and shows the gutter politics on which the SNP now rely.

"Katy Loudon has a choice – either she does the decent thing and resign her post with Clare Haughey or she is seen to endorse political attacks on school pupils and staff in her name.

"Humza Yousaf, as the SNP's 'First Activist', must suspend Haughey from the party or be seen to justify attacking Scotland's young people for political gain.

"The people of Rutherglen and Hamilton West need a fresh start – not a politician that weaponises school pupils to score grubby points."

An SNP spokesperson said: "Clare has removed the tweet and apologises for any offence it caused."

Yesterday, the Scottish Liberal Democrats announced that Gloria Adebo, who works as a data analyst, will run as their candidate.

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**WOOD AND COULD:** Volunteers work on the replica of the Sutton Hoo longship in Woodbridge, Suffolk. Three apprentice joiners are undertaking a two-week-long placement with the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company, which is leading work on the 88ft-long full-size replica

■ WALES

## Campaigners to push for work language protection

TUC Cymru and Welsh language campaigners have joined forces to protect workers' rights to use Welsh in the workplace.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith and the union body signed a memorandum of understanding to promote common principles such as fair work, equality and social justice on Thursday.

Dr Mandy James of TUC Cymru said she was "very excited" about the partnership which will focus on supporting and promoting the rights of workers to use Welsh in the workplace... as part of a broader agenda of fair work,

equality and social justice."

Cymdeithas yr Iaith argues healthy communities, based upon sustainable work, fair wages, and reasonable living standards, are essential if Welsh is to thrive as a natural language.

Siân Howys, chairwoman of its Welsh Language Rights Group, said: "To achieve the aim of normalising Welsh in the workplace, we have agreed upon common objectives."

These included awareness raising, supporting fair treatment for workers and promoting language-learning opportunities.

■ POLITICS

# SUNAK'S FIVE PROMISES A FAILURE, CRITICS CLAIM

**NO PROGRESS:** PM vowed to cut NHS lists, fix national finances and grow the economy

by Berny Torre

RISHI SUNAK'S five key promises, made shortly after becoming Prime Minister in January, have turned into five failures according to figures showing ministers' lack of progress since then.

The PM has repeatedly said the government is "laser-focused" on his pledges to halve inflation this year, cut NHS waiting lists, get national debt falling, grow the economy and "stop the boats."

But the Tories have left the country's finances, health and international reputation in tatters – all while stripping back hard-fought for civil liberties.

Taking his pledges in turn, inflation remains the highest in the G7 – with RPI still at an eye-watering 10.7 per cent in June.

NHS waiting lists in England this week hit a new record high of 7.6 million.



And Britain's debt pile was bigger than its economic output in June – the first time this

has happened in more than 60 years.

Yesterday's 0.2 per cent growth in Q2 GDP was hailed as an unexpected win for Britain's spluttering economy, which the Bank of England says will remain sluggish for years to come.

And dangerous refugee crossings not only set a new record for the month of June, but fresh arrivals on Thursday saw the total number of people risking their lives to cross the English Channel on small boats reach 100,000 for the first time since 2018.

A lot of parliamentary time and Britain's international standing was lost before the controversial Illegal Migration Act was passed shortly before the summer recess.

But with its flagship policy of sending those deemed to have entered Britain illegally either to Rwanda or another "safe" third country facing a Supreme Court battle, the Tories

have been hinting Britain could leave the European Convention on Human Rights to enable the scheme.

Since Mr Sunak pledged at the start of the year that NHS waiting "lists will fall and people will get the care they need more quickly," numbers have soared to new record highs.

Data published by NHS England on Thursday revealed 7.6 million people were waiting to start treatment at the end of June, the highest since records began, up from 7.5 million in May.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation chief economist Alfie Stirling said yesterday the 0.2 per cent growth figure "means little to the 7.3 million low-income families who right now are going without essentials like heating, eating and adequate clothing."

No 10 was approached for comment.


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IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
**MAY DORIS HOGGARD**  
WHO DIED ON JULY 2  
2004, AGED 89

In Melrose, Scotland  
Born in Sandiacre,  
Derbyshire in 1916

Lifelong socialist and  
supporter of the Daily  
Worker and then the  
Morning Star

From ever-loving daughter  
Dr Carol Norris MBE (nee  
Hoggard)





■ TRANSPORT

## Manchester's buses hit by walkout double whammy

BUS services across Manchester are at a standstill as drivers at two private operators strike over pay.

Over 1,000 members of Unite working for Stagecoach began a four-day walkout yesterday.

The drivers said a settlement proposed by the company would deprive them of 10 months' back pay.

In a separate dispute, First Bus Manchester has been hit by strike action since June.

Its 300 drivers were out again yesterday and will also strike on August 15, 16, 18, 21, 23 and 25. Unite said that for the 2021-

22 financial year, Stagecoach had reported revenues of almost £1.2 billion, with profits of £72.7 million.

General secretary Sharon Graham said: "Stagecoach is making huge profits and can afford to improve this 'strings attached' offer to one that is implemented from the correct anniversary date."

Pickets are in action at Stagecoach's Ashton, Stockport, Hyde Road and Sharston depots from 5am each morning.

The strike by First Bus drivers affects depots in Rochdale, Oldham, Manchester and Ashton.

■ HEALTH SERVICE

## Junior doctors kick off fifth round of action over salaries

by Peter Lazenby

JUNIOR doctors returned to the picket lines yesterday as they began their fifth round of strike action, demanding that pay be restored to the level of a decade ago.

The four-day stoppage ends at 7am on Tuesday.

Health Secretary Steve Barclay again attacked the doctors, accusing them of adding to record waiting lists.

But the British Medical Association condemned Mr Barclay for refusing to negotiate and "adding insult to injury" by blaming them for the treatment backlogs.

Dr Robert Laurenson and Dr Vivek Trivedi, co-chairmen of the union's junior doctors committee, said: "It has now been almost three months since the government was last willing to talk to junior doctors about their pay."

"Since then, we have stated

repeatedly that our door remains open for talks at any time, as long as we could be presented with a credible offer that would address pay erosion of more than a quarter over the last 15 years.

"Instead of acting responsibly and coming to the table, the government has wasted time by first saying nothing and then having the Prime Minister declare an end to talks without first having stepped into the room with doctors.

"He then adds insult to injury by blaming those same doctors for rising waiting lists.

"Sooner or later, the government will accept that they need to work with doctors, rather than against them. We are here to talk when they do."

Mr Barclay claimed that the doctors' strike action had led to the postponement of 800,000 operations. The number of patients on waiting lists stands at 7.4 million and rising.

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STAYING POWER: BMA members at a rally outside Downing Street yesterday



PICKET LINE: Striking drivers outside a Stagecoach depot yesterday

■ REFUGEES

## EVICTION LOOMS FOR MANY AFGHANS AS SUPPORT ENDS

FIASCO: Asylum-seekers taken off Bibby Stockholm barge after dangerous bacteria found

by Peter Lazenby

THOUSANDS of refugees from Afghanistan face eviction from their housing this month as a government deadline for them to "help themselves" nears.

But they are being refused accommodation elsewhere, leading many to report themselves as homeless to local councils.

The government rushed thousands of vulnerable Afghans through refugee channels when Britain and the United States hurriedly pulled out of Afghanistan in August 2021 as the Taliban regained control.

The government provided "bridging accommodation" in hotels for many who arrived in this country.

In July, the government confirmed that the refugees have been given notice to quit the hotels by August 31.

About 8,000 Afghans were still in hotels almost two years after the evacuation.

Cabinet Office minister Johnny Mercer told Parliament

that there is no reason they cannot live independently of central government support, saying that ministers expect "families to help themselves."

Air force veteran Matt Simmons, who set up community aid organisation Bridge to Unity, said private-sector landlords and agents "changed their tune" when they found out that an applicant was from Afghanistan.

He said the refugees were asking themselves: "Why are landlords being so difficult?"

"We, as part of a coalition of charities, have been phoning round estate agents and land-

lords. Afghans in hotels – the English speakers – have been doing the same and just getting knockback after knockback."

Mr Simmons criticised a "lack of on-the-ground resources in place and the slow nature of help provided."

The National Residential Landlords Association blamed "tax policies intended to reduce the number of available homes to rent" and called on ministers to "revisit these damaging policies if we are to stand any chance of meeting housing need."

Meanwhile, dozens of asylum-seekers were removed from the

Bibby Stockholm barge – having only just moved in this week – after Legionella bacteria was discovered in the water supply.

Care4Calais chief executive Steve Smith said: "We have always known our concerns over the health and safety of the barge are justified and this latest mismanagement proves our point."

"The Bibby Stockholm is a visual illustration of this government's hostile environment against refugees but has also fast become a symbol for the shambolic incompetence which has broken Britain's asylum system."


Kolbassia Haoussou of Freedom from Torture was similarly scathing, blasting the government's "punitive policies and deliberate neglect of the asylum system" as "not just cruel [but] dangerous."

Fire Brigades Union assistant general secretary Ben Selby said the union still had concerns about fire safety and operational safety on board the vessel.

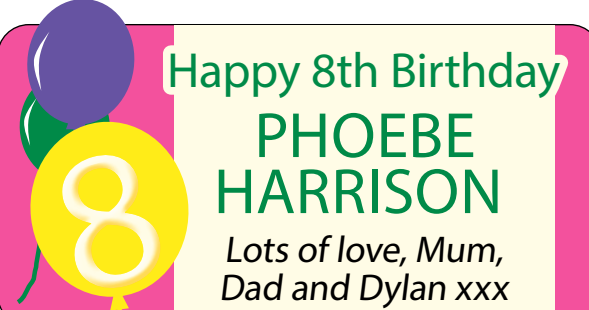
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HEALTH HAZARD: The Bibby Stockholm in Portland Port, Dorset



The WMA sends its best wishes to all Morning Star readers, and we hope to see you in Ingestre Hall Next Year – 16th-23rd August 2024



Happy 8th Birthday  
**PHOEBE HARRISON**  
Lots of love, Mum, Dad and Dylan xxx





■ COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

# Wages in Scotland falling faster than in rest of UK: STUC

by Matt Kerr  
Scotland reporter

WORKERS in Scotland are “being let down by two governments” as wages north of the border fall faster than the UK average, the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) said yesterday.

A STUC study of PAYE data from June 2021 and June 2023 has revealed that real wages in Scotland fell by 3 per cent in that time, compared with a 1 per cent fall across all of Britain and Northern Ireland.

The analysis concluded that the cost to the average worker in Scotland over those two years – when the cost-of-greed crisis was at its height – was a staggering £1,448, while the UK average pay cut stood at £995.

The Tory government at Westminster eschewed price controls to focus on “wage restraint” to tackle inflation, but a similar policy by the SNP Scottish government has followed, despite the STUC offering tax proposals to raise £1.3 billion a year to boost public-sector pay and services in Scotland.

Ahead of statistics due next week that are widely expected to show some wage growth, STUC general secretary Roz Foyer warned that it would take more than one month’s growth to undo two years of pay cuts.

She said: “What this analysis shows is that workers in Scotland are at risk of becoming the poor relation of the UK, with wages falling further and faster than the UK average.

“The blame lies firmly at the door of our political class, with ordinary working people being let down by two governments.

“The UK government,



TWIN TARGETS:  
Scottish Trades Union Congress general secretary Roz Foyer

through its economic stupidity and suppression of wages, has pushed workers to the brink, whilst the Scottish government is hardly helping through its punitive public-sector pay strategy.

“The Scottish government must immediately revisit this strategy and provide workers with the real-terms support they need.

“One month’s potential growth will be cold comfort for workers who have endured over two years of cost-of-living agony, denigrating their living standards and decimating their incomes.”

A Scottish government

spokesperson said: “Employment law is reserved to the UK government.

“However, Scotland is leading the way, with 91 per cent of employees aged over 18 [having] earned the real living wage or more in 2022 – higher than any other UK country.

“In comparison to the rest of the UK, our approach to public-sector pay has resulted in Scottish public-sector workers receiving between 4 per cent and 6 per cent higher salaries on average over the last three financial years.”

The Scotland Office was contacted for comment.

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■ MERSEYSIDE

## Hospital support staff vote to go on strike over wages

by Matt Trinder  
Industrial reporter

MORE than 400 NHS hospital staff on Merseyside have voted for strikes over pay, their union Unison warned yesterday.

An overwhelming majority of clinical support workers across the Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH) backed action in the recent poll, with walkouts now “imminent” unless bosses act, it said.

The health service stipulates that workers on a low-pay band should only be undertaking personal care such as supporting patients with going to the toilet, bathing and feeding.

But a union survey found that most clinical support workers are routinely undertaking other tasks like taking and monitoring blood, electrocardiogram tests and inserting cannulas.

All these duties should be paid according to at least a band three salary, which is nearly £2,000 a year higher, Unison argued.

A total of seven health trusts across north-west England have now moved low-paid staff onto the higher rate, but WUTH has “refused to draw up a similar agreement, despite a collective grievance signed by over 400 staff,” according to the union.

Deborah, a clinical support worker at Arrowe Park Hospital, told the union that staff feel “taken for granted.”

She added: “It looks like WUTH will be the first trust in the country where it will take strike action to resolve this issue – it shouldn’t have come to this.”

A trust spokesperson told the Morning Star that the staff are a “vital part of our workforce.”

“We are listening to them, and it is our position that they should be paid the right banding for the work we are asking them to do,” they said.

“We will be continuing the work to deliver our pledge. We do not yet have dates of any strike action but we will be doing everything we can to minimise [the] impact on patients.”

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■ INDUSTRIAL

## Workers at firm making Irn Bru begin stoppages

WORKERS at AG Barr, which makes the Irn Bru soft drinks, began a series of strikes yesterday as they fight pay cuts.

Shunter and truck drivers at the firm’s Cumbernauld plant rejected a 5 per cent rise earlier this year and despite protracted negotiations and talks brokered by Acas, bosses have failed to improve on an offer that is less than half the rate of inflation.

A spokesperson for the drinks giant, which made £43.5 million in pre-tax profits last year and has £52.9m in net cash at the bank, said: “We made a pay offer that we believe is fair and competitive, in line with what has been agreed with our other employees.”

But Unite’s Andy Brown told the Star: “They claim 5 per cent is fair because it’s what they imposed on other workers at the plant, but we won’t accept an imposed pay cut.

“AG Barr’s stinginess made this dispute, but they can fix it.

“They need to get back round the table and make a fair offer.”

HAVE A STORY?  
Email us: news@peoples-press.com

## VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

to distribute the Morning Star this weekend

Manifesto Press are embarking on a new and ambitious project, **THE ROARING RED FRONT**, which will launch with a new football fans charter “wrap-around” advert on this coming weekend’s Morning Star. Volunteers are asked to help distribute the papers outside the stadia at the following times:

**Saturday 12/8**  
1100-1230 Arsenal (London)  
1330-1500 Bournemouth  
1330-1500 Brighton  
1330-1500 Liverpool (Everton stadium)  
1330-1500 Sheffield (Sheffield United stadium)  
1600-1730 Newcastle

**Sunday 13/8**  
1230-1400 Brentford (London)  
1500-1630 Chelsea (London)

**Monday 14/8**  
1830-2000 Manchester (Old Trafford)



Contact Paul, Bella and Stewart on mpbc2022@proton.me to volunteer.



■ ECUADOR

# Six Colombians arrested over role in assassination

by Our NewsDesk

THE SIX men arrested as suspects in the assassination of an Ecuadorian presidential candidate are Colombian nationals, a police report said on Thursday.

The six men were captured hiding in a house in Quito, Ecuador's capital, the report said. Officers also seized four shotguns, a rifle, ammunition and three grenades, along with a vehicle and a motorcycle, it said.

Fernando Villavicencio, 59, who was known for speaking up against drug cartels, was assassinated in Quito on Wednesday, less than two weeks before a special presidential election.

He was not a frontrunner, but his death deepened the sense of crisis around organised crime that has already claimed thousands of lives and underscored the challenge that Ecuador's next leader will face.

Ecuador's Interior Minister Juan Zapata had earlier confirmed the arrest of some

foreigners in the case. Mr Zapata described the killing as a "political crime of a terrorist nature" aimed at sabotaging the August 20 presidential election.

The police report doesn't say whether the Colombians are alleged members of a criminal group. Mr Zapata said those arrested were linked to organised crime, although he didn't give more details.

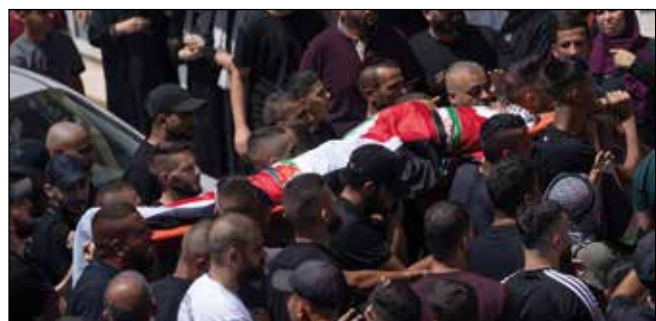
Mr Villavicencio had said that he was threatened by affiliates of Mexico's Sinaloa cartel, one of a slew of international organised crime groups that now operate in Ecuador. He said that his campaign represented a threat to such groups.

Video of the rally in Quito posted on social media shows Mr Villavicencio walking out of the rally surrounded by guards.

The footage then sees the candidate getting into a white pickup truck before gunshots are heard, followed by screams and commotion around the truck.

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**WEST BANK:** Mourners carry the body of Mahmoud Jarad, 23, during his funeral in the West Bank city of Tulkarem yesterday. The Israeli military stormed into a refugee camp in the northern occupied West Bank, sparking a firefight with Palestinian gunmen and killing the 23-year-old militant, Palestinian authorities said. Pic: Nasser Nasser/AP



■ SYRIA

# Soldiers killed in suspected Isis attack

AT LEAST 20 Syrian soldiers were killed in a suspected terror attack on Thursday night.

Gunmen believed to be part of the Islamic State (Isis) group ambushed a bus near Maydeen in Deir el-Zour. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 23 soldiers were killed and 10 more wounded, while local reports put the death toll at 20.

Isis emerged as the strong-

est jihadist group fighting to overthrow the Bashar al-Assad government in 2014, when its forces took control over huge swathes of Syria and Iraq, but it was driven out of all the territory it held by 2019. However, it maintains cells in the country and periodically stages attacks, the worst this year being the massacre of 53 agricultural workers collecting truffles

near Sukhna in February.

Other jihadist groups remain active in parts of Syria, especially Idlib province where they run a local administration under Turkish protection. Isis said earlier this month that its leader Abu al-Hussein al-Hussein al-Qurayshi had recently been killed in clashes with al-Qaida, and named a new leader, Abu Hafis al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi.



**SAVING LIVES:** The Humanity 1 saved 80 people in distress from an overcrowded, unseaworthy inflatable boat in international waters yesterday morning. Pic: Danilo Campailla/SOS Humanity

■ MEDITERRANEAN

# Hundreds saved from flimsy boats by civilian rescuers

by Ben Cowles

HUNDREDS of people have been saved from unseaworthy boats by civilian rescuers in the central Mediterranean in the last few days, during a deadly week for refugees at Europe's sea borders.

Four civilian rescue ships were given permission to head towards Italy's ports yesterday after their crews saved the lives of at least 685 people.

The Humanity 1 saved 80 people in distress from an overcrowded, unseaworthy inflatable boat in international waters yesterday morning.

"Water had already entered the boat at the time of the rescue," the ship's operators SOS Humanity said yesterday afternoon.

No-one had a life jacket. Among the survivors are several women, including at least

one pregnant woman, multiple unaccompanied minors, and two babies. SOS Mediterranean said yesterday that the crew aboard its ship, the Ocean Viking, had saved more than 500 lives in 11 operations in 42 hours at sea.

"Operations are still ongoing in the area between Tunisia and [the Italian island of] Lampedusa," the organisation said.

The medical team aboard the Astral, a rescue vessel operated by Open Arms, called on the Italian authorities to evacuate an unconscious pregnant woman in a critical state of health yesterday.

The Astral crew found her on Thursday night among about 60 people in four heavily overloaded iron boats.

"The 60 people on board, including five small children, need to disembark as soon as possible and receive the necessary medical care," Open Arms said.

The Mare Go, a small vessel operated by activists from an organisation of the same name, also saved about 46 people from an overcrowded rubber on Thursday afternoon.

Despite finding the refugees six hours away from Lampedusa, the Italian authorities ordered the crew to sail for Catania on the island of Sicily – a 48-hour journey from their position.

At least 232 people were saved by the crews of the Louise Michel, Nadir and Geo Barents civilian rescue ships earlier this week.

But 41 people died in a shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa earlier this week.

"We have counted 161 people dead or missing," said Tamino Bohm, the tactical co-ordinator on Sea-Watch's reconnaissance plane, the Seabird, on Wednesday.

"And who knows how many we will never know about." bencowles@peoples-press.com

in brief

## Music man seeks compo from band

**MALAYSIA:** The organiser of a music festival is seeking 12.3 million ringgit (£2.1m) in losses from British band The 1975, after its lead singer's on-stage protest at the country's anti-gay laws prompted authorities to shut the festival down.

During the July 21 performance, Matty Healy used criticised the Malaysian government's stance against homosexuality and kissed bassist Ross MacDonald during the opening show in Kuala Lumpur.

## Kidnapped officials walk out of captivity

**YEMEN:** Five United Nations officials who were kidnapped in the country 18 months ago have walked free, the UN said yesterday.

In a brief statement, Farhan Haq, the deputy spokesman for UN secretary general Antonio Guterres, said all "available information suggests that all five colleagues are in good health."

"The secretary-general reiterates that kidnapping is an inhumane and unjustifiable crime, and calls for the perpetrators to be held accountable," Mr Haq said.

## Authorities ready for evacuation

**NORWAY:** Authorities were on standby yesterday to evacuate more people in the south-east, where huge amounts of water, littered with broken trees, debris and trash, was thundering down the usually serene rivers after days of torrential rain.

The level of water in swollen rivers and lakes continued to grow despite two days of dry but overcast weather, with houses abandoned in flooded areas, floating hay bales wrapped in white plastic, cars coated in mud and camping sites swamped.

## People run for their lives from wildfires

**HAWAII:** Emergency management records show no indication that warning sirens sounded before people ran for their lives from wildfires on Maui that killed at least 55 people on Thursday.

Instead, officials sent alerts to mobile phones, televisions and radio stations – but widespread power and cellular outages may have limited their reach.

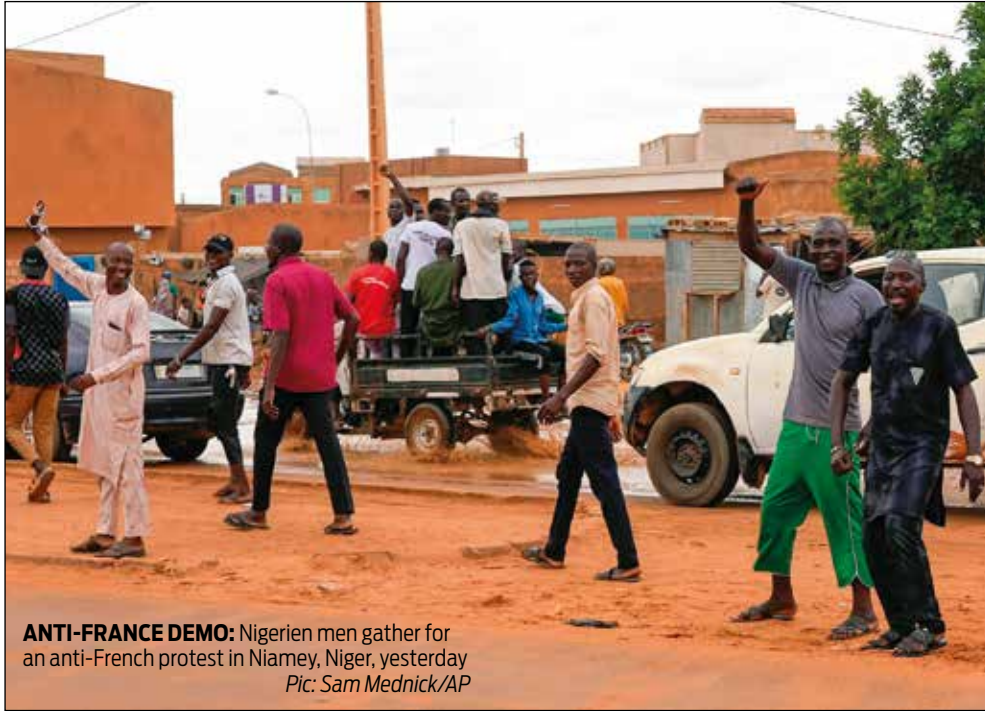
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**ANTI-FRANCE DEMO:** Nigerien men gather for an anti-French protest in Niamey, Niger, yesterday  
Pic: Sam Mednick/AP

■ WEST AFRICA

# ECOWAS GENERALS DUE TO DISCUSS ATTACK ON NIGER

by Our Foreign Desk

ARMY chiefs from the west African regional Ecowas bloc will meet in coming days to plan a possible attack on Niger, a bloc spokesman said yesterday.

Though Nigeria's parliament had rebuffed its President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's push for authorisation for an armed intervention to oust Niger's junta, which seized power on July 26, Ecowas said on Thursday it would prepare a "standby" military force for the task.

Though sources from the meeting said the force would consist of 5,000 soldiers, it is not yet clear which countries would contribute what, with Ivory Coast, committing 850 personnel, the only state to name a figure.

"Ivory Coast will provide a battalion and has made all the financial arrangements ... We are determined to install [over-

thrown president Mohamed] Bazoum in his position," President Alassane Ouattara said.

The announcement met immediate support from the African Union – but prompted outrage on the streets of Niger's capital Niamey.

"It is our business, not theirs," a Nigerien pro-coup demonstrator told reporters. "They don't even know the reason why the coup happened."

Hundreds of people marched towards a French military base, chanting "down with France" and waving Russian flags. France, which has 1,500 troops in Niger and controls its lucrative uranium industry, said on Thursday night it "supported all conclusions" of the pro-war Ecowas summit.

Niger's neighbours Mali and Burkina Faso, also ruled by military leaders who seized power in anti-Western coups, have vowed to come to Niger's aid if it

is attacked by Ecowas – meaning deployment of troops could spark a bloody regional war.

Whether the French and US forces stationed in the country would take part is unclear. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised Ecowas's determination to restore Mr Bazoum to power on Thursday night, but called for exploration of peaceful solutions to the crisis.

A US official claimed yesterday that junta representatives had told US Under-secretary of State Victoria Nuland that they would kill Mr Bazoum, who remains under house arrest, if foreign forces invaded, though this account was not confirmed by Nigerien authorities.

While the region oscillates between mediation and preparing for war, Nigeriens are suffering the impact of harsh economic and travel sanctions imposed by Ecowas.

international@peoples-press.com

■ NORTHERN IRELAND

## Police officers panic over huge data breach

A GROUP set up by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for those concerned about risk has had more than 600 referrals, the Chief Constable said yesterday.

It follows an "industrial scale breach of data" this week which saw some details of around 10,000 officers and staff published online for a number of hours.

Chief Constable Simon Byrne said that the Threat Management Assessment Group was set up to look at real-time concerns about risk since the breach on Tuesday.

It is designed to triage the level of risk they perceive the person to be facing, and offer them advice. He said that it has had more than 600 referrals but no-one has been

moved from their home.

"We have not yet redeployed anybody, for example, from their home, we're taking steps this afternoon to reassess in some cases, which I won't go into for operational reasons, whether we need to redeploy some specialist officers away from the usual place of work to a new location," he said.

■ POLAND

# Law & Justice schedule vote on privatisation

by Our News Desk

POLAND'S ruling Law & Justice party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski said yesterday an autumn referendum will ask Poles if they support the privatisation of state-owned enterprises.

Mr Kaczynski, who is deputy prime minister but usually seen as the most powerful man in Polish politics, said voters would be asked "whether the wealth of generations will remain in Polish hands."

The move follows Italian far-right Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's windfall tax on banks (since watered down under pressure

from big finance) and indicates a push by European nationalists to pitch themselves as economically to the left of social democratic and liberal parties.

Poland's government had already expressed its intention to hold a nationwide referendum alongside parliamentary elections in October – but on whether to participate in the EU's refugee resettlement scheme.

Mr Kaczynski now indicates that a referendum may ask multiple questions, evidently designed to wrongfoot the opposition Civic Platform, whose leader – former Polish PM and former European Council leader Donald Tusk – he has

attacked as "a true enemy of the Polish nation" who should "take his politics to Germany."

Law & Justice tend to portray the pro-EU Civic Platform as German puppets. However, opposition politicians said Law & Justice's supposed opposition to privatisation was cosmetic.

Deputy parliamentary speaker Malgorzata Kidawa-Blonska of Civic Platform said the referendum was "one big Law & Justice scam."

"They sold [Polish oil company] Lotos to the Saudis for a song, and now they will brazenly ask Poles what they think about it? Liars and manipulators."

news@peoples-press.com

**MYANMAR FLOOD:** Volunteers push a woman with her belongings on inner-tube along a flooded road in Bago, Myanmar, about 50 miles north-east of Yangon, yesterday  
Pic: Associated Press



## Comrade Hardev Singh

25-5-1947 to 5-8-2023



Dyal Bagri  
National President

Mohinder S Farma  
Leicester President

INDIAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION GB

A great loss to the IWA and the left movement. He served the movement with dedication. And he was one of the pioneers of Bhangra beat in the UK. Condolences to family and friends.



HERE was widespread relief at the underperformance of Spain's far-right Vox party in last month's general election.

The centre-right also failed to meet expectations, leaving no bloc easily able to form a government and the likelihood of a second election later this year.

Boasts from some centre-left commentators, however, that the election marked a turning point in pegging back the continent's radical right were wide of the mark. The overall reality is not only a continuing advance of far-right forces but also a degree of convergence with a traditional right and centre that are adapting to them.

That is reflected in the decision-making structures of the EU. A reformation of the EU is underway. But it is not the dream of those who imagined it to be an essentially social-democratic driver of progress within and without.

Rather, the direction of travel is that sketched in the middle of the last decade by Viktor Orban in Hungary – a Europe of conservative reaction, strengthened national-chauvinism, hardened borders and greater militarism.

When Orban outlined that vision, he was appealing to like-minded politicians in Austria, Poland and Slovakia to found a "Europe of fatherlands." Euro-enthusiasts dismissed it as an Eastern European hangover that would wither with the advance of liberalism and economic integration.

Not now. Giorgia Meloni's far-right Brothers of Italy is in government in Rome, where the founding treaty of the EU was signed. Her government is the fruit of decades of reorganisation of the right in Italy after the collapse of Christian Democracy, the radicalisation of conservatism under Silvio Berlusconi and previous gains by far-right parties.

Whatever qualms European leaders had about a Meloni premiership vanished overnight when two immediate red lines were met. The first was dropping provocative talk about Italy suffering due to the euro and the dominance of Germany and France in the EU.

The second was to quash any idea that Italy would unhitch itself from Nato's war in Ukraine or resile from its military commitments.

So loyalty to the twin economic and military pillars of the European enterprise.

The minute those undertakings were given and acted upon, Meloni was transformed in the European media and diplomatic communiques from a dangerous disrupter to a keen, young leader who is not so bad once you get to know her.

That in turn has boosted her role as a beacon for a range of racist and far-right formations looking to go beyond the fringes and actually to exercise power.

It has again revealed the retreat from the liberal values

# The EU is re-forming around the radical right

Forget the notion of the European institutions being the guardians of centrist politics and liberal humanitarianism, the widespread success of the far right is now setting the agenda, warns **KEVIN OVENDEN**

that are meant to undergird European institutions. That was already well underway regarding the highly reactionary government of Poland.

Its near-total ban on abortion and threats to the independence of the judiciary had brought murmurs of disapproval from Brussels and Berlin. There was even a hint at action when the Polish government looked like it might interfere with business interests and orthodox economic policy.

All of that evaporated last year with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the emergence of Poland alongside Britain as heading the most bellicose Nato states in escalating the war and refusing moves to a ceasefire.

Far from the system of European alliances exerting some moderation upon the radical right in Poland, it is the Polish state that is able to leverage its militarism and geostrategic position to win concessions from apparent ideological opponents in European capitals.

Thus the German government, led by the social democrats, is providing more weapons to Poland, which has just announced it is deploying



**HARBINGER OF THE NEW ERA:** Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban

10,000 troops on the border of Belarus. Instead of curbing Polish reaction, the EU and Nato are enabling the Polish state's ambition to be a major military and economic power in the eastern European region.

The concessions to Meloni are even more dramatic and far-reaching as they go to the heart of the mechanism that is

generating support for the far right. That is Fortress Europe and the increasingly racist asylum and migration policy linked to the militarisation of the continent's borders.

In June EU states came up with a fresh tightening of anti-refugee and anti-migrant policy. Rather than this being some kind of liberal contain-

ment of Meloni, as optimists had vainly predicted, it was widely reported by diplomats to be a triumph for her on account of surrender to the viciously xenophobic Italian position.

There is to be a fast-tracked and stricter process to detain and expel those who are deemed in advance to be unlikely to be given asylum. Despite nominal EU commitments not to deport to countries with appalling human rights records, it is to be left to the "border states" of the bloc, like Italy and Greece, to assess those records.

This is the classic Europeanist hypocrisy of stirring language of human rights on paper to the tune of Beethoven's Ninth but vitiated in practice. See relations with Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, Egypt...

And as the drowning of another 41 people off the coast of Europe this week underlined, that is leaving aside the murderous efforts to stop people arriving in the first place or, as in Greece, to "push back" those who manage to.

In a nod to states such as Hungary and the Netherlands, countries not on the external

EU border will be able to pay to avoid taking asylum-seekers relocated from those that are; that money is to go into "projects" outside Europe.

In other words, it is to fund the barbaric detention of people in Libya, Tunisia and in the Sahel region.

This is where France and Western imperialist interests are struggling to retain exploitation of vital raw materials while ensuring those uprooted in the process and through climate breakdown are locked out of migrating to where those commodities and the profits from them end up.

French troops have been stationed for decades in Niger to ensure uranium is extracted from the country while keeping the people in their place – literally.

EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen visited Tunisia on a joint delegation with Meloni and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte to sell the new migration arrangement to its president Kais Saïed.

A united front not against the far right, but including it in the interests of a Europe of



**BORDER REGIME:** African migrants protest after Tunisian security forces reportedly expelled hundreds over the border into Libya, where they have been stranded in scorching summer temperatures without water and food, August 4 2023

“

Ursula von der Leyen visited Tunisia with Meloni and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte to sell the new migration arrangement to its president Kais Saïed





**INTO THE MAINSTREAM:** Silvio Berlusconi (left) welcomes Giorgia Meloni into power, after decades of paving the way for the far-right

exclusion and capitalist exploitation. Saeid has usurped power for the last two years, dismissing the parliament and imprisoning opponents, including the constitutional Islamist leader Rached Ghannouchi.

He has also launched a violently racist campaign against black African migrants, deploying a version of the European fascist “great replacement” conspiracy theory. Saeid’s fantasy is that it is black Africans supposedly aiming to replace Tunisian Arabs in their own country.

Weeks after visiting Tunis, Rutte’s government in the Netherlands collapsed as he tried to push through yet more restrictions on asylum and migration. The country is now heading for a general election in which anti-refugee and racist politics are set to dominate to the benefit of Geert Wilders and others of the radical right.

We are not talking about reaction on the fringes – politically and geographically – of Europe, but pulsing out from its centre.

Finland has its most right-wing government in its post-war history. There is an unravelling of once vaunted social-democratic consensus across Scandinavia. Three parties of the far right have entered the Greek parliament even as the traditional right also gained.

The extreme right AfD in Germany, which has a “fascising” wing led by Bjorn Hocke, is second in national opinion polls. It could even top the poll at next year’s European elections, where the right and far-right are set to do well across the continent. Hocke says, “This EU must die so the true Europe can live.” An echo of the Nazi slogan that soldiers had to die at Stalingrad so “Germany may live.”

Now the leader of the centre-right CDU Friedrich Merz has broken what was an official cordon sanitaire by mooting possible co-operation with the AfD.

Despite public outrage, Merz’s position is likely to grow in influence as the alternative for the CDU is to consider one in four voters useless for them when it comes to forming a government.

It is an illusion to imagine that the liberal-capitalist centre is going to come to the rescue. The German government, which includes the Greens, is reneging on environmental pledges, threatening to deport relatives of those convicted of a crime and witch-hunting the left opposed to German rearmament and imperialist expansion.

Capitalists in Italy, whatever their personal values, are content with a government that removes lesbian parents from birth certificates and clamps down on journalists. It was only when Meloni tried this week to introduce a windfall tax on the banks that there was a business backlash that forced the government to back down.

The outcome will be more hounding of those the capitalist class are content to see suffer – the poor, the sick and the disabled, all under the cover of scapegoating and distraction.

This poses a profound strategic question for the left. The failure of the left insurgency of the middle of the last decade – from the US to Greece – did not mean the end of “populist” irruptions into everyday life and the restoration of the liberal centre.

The growth of the new right and the radicalisation of the old one are proving that.

So it is not a question of whether there will be another round of insurgent politics. It is whether there is going to be a stronger insurgent left or not. One that can avoid the lure of conventionalism that proved so fatal last time. For there most certainly is a strengthening radical right and the collapse of the liberal centre in the face of it.

# Launching a new campaign to save Labour Party democracy

The recent blocking of Mish Rahman yet again showed contempt for Labour Party democracy – we need permanent campaigning for the right of members to decide, writes **MATT WILLGRESS**

**L**OCAL Labour Party members in Wolverhampton West recently wrote an “obituary” marking the death of party democracy in their constituency.

It followed the recent exclusion of Labour NEC member Mish Rahman from the longlist in their parliamentary selection, and Michael Crick reporting that the “local Labour executive [is] in revolt over NEC bigwigs taking control of selection.”

Rahman’s blocking is yet another example of members and affiliates blatantly being denied the democratic right to choose candidates. And anyone who still doubts that trade unions’ views are not being taken seriously when it comes to candidates’ selection under the current regime should note that Rahman had the backing of seven trade unions and affiliates.

This anti-democratic move came hot on the heels of the exclusion of Jamie Driscoll from the longlist as Labour candidate for North East Metro Mayor.

And this of course also came on top of numerous other similar moves, including perhaps most prominently Keir Starmer’s railroading through Labour’s NEC a decision to deny Islington North the right to select their own candidate for the next general election by blocking Jeremy Corbyn from being a Labour candidate.

In response, a statement from the officers of Islington North CLP on March 28 noted: “We reject the NEC’s undue interference in Islington North, which undermines our goal of defeating the Conservatives and working with our communities for social justice.”

Members in Hackney North and Stoke Newington are also greatly concerned that if the Labour leadership doesn’t heed the advice of Martin Forde KC and others by accepting Diane Abbott’s apology and restoring the whip to her, they too may be denied their choice of candidate at the next general election.

And these are not isolated examples.

Under the current Labour leadership, members have too often been denied the option of selecting from a full range of candidates – meaning that many candidates, like Rahman, with significant support from trade unions and left-wing members have not reached the

shortlist for often extremely dubious reasons.

The list of CLPs this has affected is now long, and includes Broxtowe, Milton Keynes North, Kensington and Chelsea, Camberwell and Peckham, Stroud, Hastings, Sedgfield, Bolton North East and more.

Within this context, recently a range of organisations plus Labour members and affiliates have issued an appeal for support for a statement entitled “Let the members decide – for Labour Party Democracy.”

The statement was launched at a massive online event during the recent Arise festival of left ideas, making the case for Labour Party democracy, members’ rights and the trade-union link. The statement reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned, note the Labour Party’s constitution states it is a ‘democratic socialist party’ (Clause IV).

“We further note that Starmer stated in February 2020: ‘The selections for Labour candidates need to be more democratic, and we should end NEC impositions of candidates. Local party members

should select their candidates for every election.’

“We agree with his statement, and strongly believe that it should be the democratic right of constituency members to choose their prospective candidates.

“With regards to the selection of parliamentary and other candidates, we note the growing concern across our movement at the imposition of shortlists and/or the exclusion of popular local and trade-union-backed candidates in numerous areas.

“We therefore call on the NEC to confirm that the selection of candidates is the democratic right of local Labour Party members and must be upheld.”

It is clear that many cases where local members are being denied the right to select their own candidate are seeing mass local opposition and broad condemnation across the Labour movement, and the same is true of other attacks on pluralism and Labour Party democracy, such as the recent moves against Neal Lawson of Compass.

What is needed urgently

from the left is a determination to keep this issue permanently on the agenda – and not let anger at different individual cases fizzle out – and further campaigning initiatives on these vital issues will also be announced in the months ahead.

As Jon Trickett MP recently commented, “I believe it is incumbent on all democrats in the party, including the Labour left, but also beyond it, to make a stand. This should embrace every level of the party, including members of the shadow cabinet, the PLP, leaders in local government, the affiliated unions, local parties and activists.”

Now is the time to speak up and get organised – please spread the word.

■ The statement can be signed at [www.bit.ly/letmembersdecidestatement](http://www.bit.ly/letmembersdecidestatement).

■ A model motion can also be found at [www.bit.ly/modelmotionletmembersdecide](http://www.bit.ly/modelmotionletmembersdecide).

■ Matt Willgress is the national organiser of Arise – @Arise\_festival.





★ Star comment

## Building unity against the Westminster consensus on the NHS

JUNIOR doctors walking out for a fifth time this weekend are blamed by Tory ministers for

the NHS's record-breaking waiting lists.

Their pay restoration demands are billed as greedy, though the case they make is straightforward, as the British Medical Association's junior doctors committee co-chair Dr Robert Laurenson points out: "Over the last 15 years, the government has cut our pay by 31.7 per cent so we're looking to restore that pay back to what it was like in 2008."

Rishi Sunak declines even to discuss this – maintaining that the current offer is "fair and final," on the grounds it has been recommended by an "independent" (by which he means government-appointed) pay review body.

Because doctors are paid more than the majority of NHS workers, whose unions have mostly either accepted the improved 6 per cent offer won through strikes earlier this year or (like the Royal College of Nursing) haven't managed to overcome the arbitrary thresholds imposed on strike ballots since 2016, ministers hope that sympathy with their strikes will be limited.

It's important that we counter that propaganda, and maintain support for striking doctors on picket lines.

Attempts to contrast doctors' salaries with those of Agenda for Change workers is classic divide and rule.

It is not the case that there will be more money for anyone else if doctors' strikes fail, as unions demonstrated earlier this year when strikes forced up the government's public-sector pay offer across the board. Pay victories strengthen workers' bargaining power and improve the chances of winning further pay victories.

What's most relevant to nurses, paramedics, porters and others is not the difference between their pay and that of doctors, but the real-terms decline in pay over the past 15 years, precisely the issue the BMA continues to demand talks over. Forcing the government to concede the principle of pay restoration, even as a goal over multiple years, would be a step forward for the labour movement.

Attempts to blame industrial action for lengthening waiting lists is also insidious, because it masks the chronic staffing shortages that are really responsible.



Labour backs the Tory policy for reducing waiting lists, which is to increase NHS use of private-sector providers.

This cannot possibly work, since the private sector is parasitical on the NHS and poaches NHS staff. Commissioning more private-sector work actively worsens the NHS staffing crisis.

Our demand ultimately needs to be for more resources for the NHS. It needs more staff, it needs to pay them more and it needs to treat them better.

The Westminster consensus against raising spending needs to be challenged. It's therefore disappointing that Scottish Labour simply carped at the Scottish National Party after research it commissioned exposed the huge funding gap between the NHS and European healthcare systems – with Germany and Norway spending a full third more per head on healthcare than we do.

Labour's criticisms of the SNP's record on healthcare are legitimate in themselves – but the party should prioritise the need to change the narrative and demand more money for our NHS.

Scottish Labour has left "clear red water" between it and Westminster Labour before – when in government in Holyrood it opposed the Blair government over tuition fees and prescription charges.

Devolved and regional administrations have shown a greater inclination to oppose Tory policy than Westminster Labour has – whether that's the Scottish and Welsh government's opposition to anti-strike laws, or mayors in northern England battling to save ticket offices.

Campaigns for proper NHS funding, and against private-sector involvement, would benefit through isolation of the pro-privatisation and pro-cuts Westminster consensus as a policy opposed by the nations and regions of Britain. We should do what we can to promote unified campaigning for the NHS, even across bitter political divides.

# Talking to Mark Drakeford at the Eisteddfod

**MEIC BIRTWISTLE** spoke to the First Minister as he took in this year's National Eisteddfod, a huge celebration of Welsh language, history, music, poetry and culture

**S**NATCHING an interview with Mark Drakeford, pictured right, on his annual visit to the National Eisteddfod was always going to be tricky. The people of Wales were keen to chat to their First Minister.

And chat is the operative word. The relationship has become a close one. They were wanting to voice their worries but also give their thanks for his leadership and grab selfies with the man as he wandered the field calling in on stalls and organisations of the country in his care.

But he'd promised to spare time for the Morning Star before his various official appearances.

"The National Eisteddfod is an opportunity to attend a unique event. We are a small language and surrounded by a global language and so this is our chance to use Welsh amongst ourselves in a total and thoroughgoing way for a week. But it is also a place where we reach out to others, share our experiences with the world... and of course, have a great day out."

I asked if the labour movement needed more representation on the field.

"We need to reflect the breadth and depth of Welsh life and that must include the experience of the organised labour movement. There is work to be done on both sides by both the Eisteddfod and the labour and trade union movement itself.

"Next year the National will be in Rhondda-Cynon-Taf in the very cauldron of the Labour and trade union tradition in Wales. We need to recognise that and prepare to celebrate that history and present-day work next August in Pontypridd."

Drakeford was dragged off by more selfie-seekers and a press officer worried about the time. But here was a politician happy amongst his people – and in Llyn, a Plaid Cymru stronghold.

A famous Welsh politician who has a more complicated relationship with Wales and

history is David Lloyd George. And this British prime minister has his grave and a museum nearby here at Llanystumdwy.

One excellent experience at Boduan was a one-man show by the actor Carwyn Jones of Mewn Cymeriad written by the acclaimed dramatist Manon Steffan Ros. In period costume the "Welsh wizard" declaims his story, from poverty to a key place on the world stage.

As it progresses, despite his hubris, he becomes forced to skirt around his own actions in the cash-for-honours scandals, the Middle East, Ireland and



Pic: Tonwen Davies



We need to reflect the breadth and depth of Welsh life and that must include the experience of the organised labour movement

the meeting with and praise for Adolf Hitler. A brilliant piece of work.

Lloyd George kicked off his legal and political career defending quarry workers in the courts, and the National Museum of Wales has a good representation here of the slate industry which is such a feature of the landscape and history here in Gwynedd.

Elaborately carved slate, fans produced by the workers, a slate plaque from the offices of the Quarrymen's Union of North Wales and a slate sculpture by the artist Kyffin Williams are among the delights on show. Let's hope Drakeford caught that exhibition.

In a historic event, the radical Welsh Language Society and Wales TUC signed a partnership agreement on the Eisteddfod field. Sian Gale on behalf of TUC Wales and Robert Idris for Cymdeithas yr Iaith pledged to fight together to strengthen workers' linguistic rights in the workplace as well as "good local jobs with decent conditions in

all parts of Wales." And indeed the old cry from the 1831 Merthyr Rising was sounded: "Caws gyda bara" ("not just bread but cheese"). This ceremony was followed by a well-attended public meeting with representation from a range of unions.

Under the banner of cymunedoli, some 28 community enterprises have come together in Gwynedd to create a unique organisation. Effectively they jointly represent nearly 400 full-time jobs in the county, operating in celebration of the co-operative ideal.

These include the tourism, educational, community, energy and cultural areas – there's even a Welsh Language opera group. They had massive tentage and numerous events to fill it.

And one of those enterprises a few miles from the Eisteddfod Field is the community pub with accommodation – "Tafarn Yr Heliwr" at Nefyn. It was here that Morning Star supporters called in for a swift pint after the excellent Star event on Thursday night on Independence v Progressive Federalism (more on that in another issue). And a long day giving out papers around Y Maes to a great reception.

And of course, no Eisteddfod is complete without ad-hoc fringe events – and it was in Yr Heliwr on Wednesday night that an incredible folk session with musicians from around the world broke out, with uilleann pipes, massed fiddles, mandolins, double bass, whistles and a saxophone. Plus, of course, songs in Welsh! Drakeford would have been well chuffed.



(L to R) Sian Gale, President Elect of TUC Cymru and Robat Idris, Chair of Cymdeithas yr Iaith

Pic: Cymdeithas yr Iaith



# China: meeting trade unionists and party members, young and old

In his third report on the delegation of Western communists, **ROBERT GRIFFITHS** describes discussions on Chinese union activism, working hours and productivity, and the emerging new cold war

**O**N the afternoon of June 29, the international delegation from Britain, Ireland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, the US, Canada and Australia flew to Beijing to stay at the state-owned and splendidly refurbished Wanshou Hotel, east of the city centre.

Our first meeting on Friday morning was with a long-standing friend, director-general of the CPC international department's North American, Oceanian and Nordic Affairs bureau, Zhou Rongguo, his deputy Wang Yingchun and younger bureau officials.

They were keen to learn more about how people in developed Western countries live, deal with their problems and fight injustices. How are our communist parties doing, what are their prospects and those for the advance to socialism?

They also welcomed suggestions about how the Communist Party of China (CPC) might counter lies and smears. How could we improve relations between our respective peoples, avoid a new cold war, and strengthen relations between our Communist parties?

Every party from the delegation had ample time to respond, although none could deny the reality of growing anti-China feeling in the West and the onset of a cold war (except for one delegate who believed that such tension could only improve the prospects for socialist revolution, whatever the risk of war).

My own response welcomed the CPC's readiness to admit and address China's problems, weaknesses and mistakes, which some people in the West would contrast favourably with the conduct of their own political leaders.

Of course, I outlined the cost-of-living (or "cost-of-profits") crisis in Britain and the resistance to it, highlighting the British mass media's distorted picture of domestic issues and their exclusion of all dissenting voices when it comes to China, the Ukraine war, Nato and nuclear weapons.

Perhaps China should challenge the world's nuclear-armed powers to all sign up to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons together on a named date in the future?

I also pointed to the case of the Wafer Fab semiconductor plant in Newport, where up to 600 staff face redundancy if the company's Chinese shareholding cannot be sold, as an example of how anti-China economic sanctions – introduced at the behest of the US – are directly



damaging the interests of workers and the economy.

It was then an honour to speak at a ceremony where the heads of the CPC international department awarded 50-year



Legislative changes have compelled foreign-owned enterprises to allow the formation of CPC cells in all workplaces, much to the dismay of transnational corporations



service medals to veteran Communists and new recruits swore their oaths of loyalty to the party and the people. No foreign delegation has previously been invited to attend such an event.

I congratulated the CPC members on their half-century in a spirit of modesty, having myself served in the Communist Party of Britain for only 40 years.

Mao's definition of a good communist seemed apposite at this point: "Someone who is unselfish, resolute, practical, far-sighted and without prejudice... Someone who subordinates personal interests to the interests of the masses."

Then it was a meeting and lunch with international vice minister Guo Yezhou, another

friendly and familiar face, who wanted to hear more about the political situation in Britain as well as other countries.

In the afternoon, the international comrades met China's Communist Youth League (CYL) at their Beijing offices. One of its central secretaries, Shapkat Wushur – a member of China's growing Uighur community – reported on the 19th CYL congress held earlier that month.

Women comprised 40 per cent of the 1,500 delegates representing 74 million members aged from 14 to 28 (although office-holders may continue in membership for a few years). It was also attended by Johnnie Hunter, general secretary

(Above) Unions win wages cards for 3,000 migrant workers in Weifang; (left) Foxconn electronics workers, Shenzhen  
Pics: China Daily

of Britain's Young Communist League (YCL).

The congress revised its development plan, which seeks to strengthen bodies under its control such as the National Youth Federation, the National Federation of Students and the Chinese Young Pioneers.

In the discussion that followed this report, Judith Gazorla outlined the recent growth of the YCL and the importance of combining militancy and discipline with Marxist-Leninist education.

Later, at the headquarters of the All-China Federation of Trades Unions (ACFTU), deputy chair Xiong Xuanguo outlined the very different context in which China's unions operate.

The ACFTU organises 300 million workers in 10 industrial unions and 31 provincial and regional associations. As the only union body recognised by employers and the state, its wide range of responsibilities includes not only collective bargaining and protecting workers' existing rights but also lobbying state bodies and the CPC about labour and social rights and

assisting members with access to employment, financial support, social benefit advice and skills training.

Legislative changes have compelled foreign-owned enterprises to allow the formation of CPC cells in all workplaces, much to the dismay of some transnational corporations and the anger of US representatives at the World Trade Organisation.

Comrade Xiong insisted that workers must enjoy their full share of the "fruits of modernisation," and that this should include migrant workers and others who need retraining to keep up with technological advances.

The Covid pandemic had a negative impact on many workers, with company losses provoking redundancies and some employers refusing or delaying the payment of wages – especially to migrant workers. Combined union and CPC pressure has usually paid off.

In recent years, hundreds of trade union service stations have been set up to provide outdoor workers in cities and the countryside with leisure, cooking, sanitation, first aid and communications facilities.

**D**eputy chair Xiong was unapologetic about the ACFTU policy of raising productivity and avoiding strikes wherever possible. Many millions of its members continue to benefit from China's phenomenal economic growth, which is currently running at an annual rate above 6 per cent.

Nor did he agree with a reduction in the standard five-day, eight-hour working week – at least not yet. "There's not enough wealth in the country to cut it, although we are not in favour of overloading workers either, although some overtime is acceptable for the appropriate pay," he told our delegation.

I took the opportunity to brief the ACFTU deputation on Britain's strike wave and its prospects and pointed to the desirability of sending more British and Western trade union delegations to China.

Within weeks of my return, an email invitation from the ACFTU to send such a delegation had been received.

■ Robert Griffiths is general secretary of the Communist Party of Britain.



## Notes from a Free Walker

THE Ministry of Defence military lands include many of our best and most intact wild places.

Now hold on! I'm no friend of the armed forces. Let me illustrate.

It's near midsummer, and dusk is far advanced. I clamber over the gate and make my way along the forest track, accompanied by the soft descending song of willow warblers and the faint calling of a cuckoo from across the wooded valley.

I find my spot, with a high, open view and the wood edge close by. The bird song quietsens and a couple of pipistrelle bats start circling next to the trees.

I hear the soft grunting of the "roding" woodcock first, then see it as it sculls above the trees tops and away across the valley, against the apricot sunset.

Over the next hour four more patrolling woodcock pass over. These are now-rare breeding woodcock, not the more frequent birds down from the frozen north, that we find in wet winter woods.

After 90 minutes the darkness is complete and I make my way back along the track. A glow worm glints in the grass, and close-by a nightjar breaks into loud churring, like an engine starting.

I've been on army land the whole time.

That scene of delightful naturalness only shows half the picture. Next to the wonderful stretches of military heathland in Surrey – Woolmer Forest, Bramshott and Hankley Commons, Eelmoor, Pirbright, Cleygate – are the sprawling semi-military conurbations of Bordon, Aldershot, Farnborough and Sandhurst.

And next to the stretching wildness of Salisbury Plain are the ever-expanding "camps" of Larkhill, Bulford, Tidworth and Boscombe.

Where the military are concerned, naturalness sits alongside mess, damage, fences, toxic wastes, warning signs and built-up sprawl.

Yet the naturalness is very real.

It is a hot, still day in early August as I trudge down the rough track that transects Salisbury Plain's high plateau. Grassland and low scrub fill my view in every direction. It feels completely out of time to be here. Like being back on Thomas Hardy's Egdon Heath. I scan the horizon for groups of great bustard, the mega-fauna of this Plain, now returned after an absence of nearly 200 years. They're not on this part today, but no matter.

In an old army hut I find a swallow's nest with five warm eggs. A grasshopper warbler reels away in the tall grass and bramble, and amongst the knapweed flowers are species of bumble bees that are almost



(Left) MoD exercises on Salisbury Plain; (below) a whinchat

Pic: Terry Seward/CC

## Does the military run the best nature reserves?



**DAVE BANGS** explains the unintended positive consequences of off-limits military training grounds

lost from my own countryside.

The wildflowers here are in such splendour, compared to the tatty morsels that survive on my own Downs – great swarms of blue viper's bugloss, mauve saw wort, white wild carrot and egg-yellow dyer's greenweed, with little harebells at my feet.

I stop on the Black Heath, and watch an agitated whinchat – "yeo, tick, tick" – that plainly has a nest nearby. As I turn back I see a dust column on the horizon that moves slowly towards me, resolving itself into a giant whirling cloud of flying ants all around me in their multi-millions.

Such plenty!!!



Pic: Billy Lindblom/CC

Yet beyond the skirts of the MoD estate the rest of Salisbury Plain is dominated by vast cereal fields and loose gridded modern shelter belts. Wildlife has no place there.

Why are there such black and white contrasts between the biodiverse military training lands and the farmed landscape? The answer is simple. The MoD estate is free from the imperatives of commercial exploitation. It lies outside the immediate purlieu of the capitalist economy, which treats all land as a "factory floor," to be simplified and modified to maximise returns.

If the plains and heaths and moors of the MoD lands had been subject to commercial imperatives as most of our countryside has, they would have lost their wildness many years ago.

Instead the estate operates according to the political

imperatives of our bourgeois state. On those training lands troops tested their munitions, machines and tactics for cold war confrontation and imperialist wars in the poor world.

In the post-war period woods were planted on Salisbury Plain to better mimic the landscapes of the "iron curtain" in central Europe. With the end of the cold war some of those woods have gone. Mock-up housing estates were built to train troops in door to door fighting, such as they inflicted on Derry and Belfast, and later Iraq and Afghanistan.

Nature survives on the MoD estate not because of any primary intention of our ruling class, but because the military lands are needed to serve the political imperatives of imperialism. Nature survives because capitalism doesn't need to destroy it there – yet.

It survives outside the gaze of us ordinary folk, in the interstices of capitalist Britain. Twenty-five years ago a large team of plant ecologists completed a 15-year task of describing the multitude of vegetation communities in Britain. The result was called the National Vegetation Classification (NVC).

The descriptions of grassland covered many categories and sub-categories. Yet when the ecologists later had the opportunity to study the Salisbury Plain grasslands they

didn't fit any of their published categories.

The secrecy of the MoD had made the ecologists miss a whole vegetation community – indeed a vegetation type which survived at a landscape scale, found nowhere else in Britain.

Overall the MoD own, lease or use some 1.1 million acres of land in the UK. They own

505,000 acres of that, of which about 78 per cent is in England.

The Ministry of Defence, however, use a lot more than they own. Huge areas of Kielder Forest, Thetford Forest (both Forestry Commission) and Dartmoor (Duchy of Cornwall) are used by the military. And the MoD has huge training lands abroad, as in Belize, where it trains on nearly a million acres.

Currently the MoD is committed to sell off 10 per cent of its sites by 2040, though the Ukraine war may alter that.

Wild nature on the MoD estate is no more secure than it is anywhere else under capitalism. Its preservation is not the priority for its military managers.

We must fear for the bustards and whinchat, the harebells and bumblebees.

■ Dave Bangs is an eco-socialist who migrated to King's Cross, then back to Brighton 26 years later. He has trespassed all his life. His first direct action was aged 11 when he nicked some bags of sugar and put them in the tank of a bulldozer on some precious Downland being built on. He's won some battles against council housing "stock transfer" (privatisation) and the privatisation of council Downland. He's lost loads more. Notes from a Free Walker is a new monthly column, to appear on the second weekend of the month. Keep an eye out for the next one on September 9.



When the ecologists later had the opportunity to study the Salisbury Plain grasslands they didn't fit any of their published categories



It feels completely out of time to be here. Like being back on Thomas Hardy's Egdon Heath



# A man of mettle

The fourth extract from **PHIL KATZ's** book looks at Tom Mann's role in the Merseyside transport strike of 1911

**T**HE period between 1906 and World War I (WWI) was increasingly volatile as new groups of workers asserted themselves as trade unionists. The "Great Unrest" also coincided with a constitutional crisis in 1910, agitation for home rule in Ireland, and the emergence of a suffragette movement.

THE period between 1906 and World War I (WWI) was increasingly volatile as new groups of workers asserted themselves as trade unionists. The "Great Unrest" also coincided with a constitutional crisis in 1910, agitation for home rule in Ireland, and the emergence of a suffragette movement.

Between June and August 1911, Tom Mann was involved in strikes that developed into a movement in north-west England. On June 9, a national seamen's strike sparked The 1911 Liverpool Transport Workers' strike. Mann chaired its central strike committee.

The strike lasted for 72 days, during which the press referred to him as the "Dictator of Merseyside," as if it was he who had dispatched troops and a gunboat to quell citizens lawfully conducting their rights. Though indeed, not even the Royal Mail delivered unless the central strike committee, led by Mann, gave its authorisation.

In 1912, the first issue of *The Syndicalist* carried a feature reproducing a leaflet written by stonemason Fred Bower. This was to cause Mann no end of problems. He could immediately sense trouble when the printers and editor of *The Syndicalist* were arrested and jailed. Characteristically, once published, Mann refused to back down. The feature called soldiers not to shoot or raise their weapons if ordered to do so during action allied to a labour dispute.

Mann was arrested on March 19. Found guilty on a charge of incitement to mutiny, he was given six months, reduced due to local demonstrations and considerable public pressure. On his release in July 1912, he went straight to Tower Hill to speak at a mass meeting of striking lightermen.

## The Dublin lockout

In August 1913, Dublin tram drivers donned their Irish Transport and General Workers Union badges and walked off the job. A quarter of the workforce had already been sacked for union membership, leaving barely a quarter of the workforce in a union. This was an existential struggle for the union, leaving 15,000 workers locked out.

Mann was brought in to lift spirits and extend the strike to all transport workers, as he had done on Merseyside. But this time, partly because of exhaustion, British dockers did not respond.



Illustration: CORATA GROUP.



“ if the workers can show solidarity, and be as firm about refusing to work except under their own conditions, they would control the economic situation

Mann is quoted as saying: "Trades unionism is syndicalism." His object was "to combine all workers in each industry, ... to take over control of the whole economic system." In that way, the proletariat "could fix the number of working days, the abolition of employers, capitalists and government."

Eventually, the Trades Union Congress cut funding off. The employers thought that they had the whip hand. Yet, within six months, the war had begun and shortages of labour gave the union renewed vigour and numbers.

## The first world war

In 1909 Mann said: "The nations are on the eve of the most frightful war that has ever been known." When war broke out, he could see that the situation would radically change for organised labour. In Britain, unions signed a compact with the government to police labour

disputes in return for "no conscription."

The Munitions of War Act passed in 1915 made strikes illegal and introduced compulsory arbitration. Writing in April 1915, Mann states that he was "not attempting anything in the way of agitation to stop the war, I am really of the opinion that it ought and must be fought out."

At the same time, he began to write for the anarchist journal *Mother Earth*, which allowed him to rail against the Munitions Act.

In a 1915 article, Mann reflects on a year of the war. By now, class-conscious workers had begun to take serious industrial action again.

A threat of action by the South Wales coal miners led to the government threatening conscription. Some 200,000 struck despite the threat and the government could not apply its "special measures" on such a scale.

Mann believed that "if the workers can show solidarity, and be as firm about refusing to work except under their own conditions, they would control the economic situation, and the social revolution would be realised."

Many of the organisations of which Mann was a leader had flipped to support the war, even the most militant syndicalists. This severely constrained his ability to mobilise. Marking the close of his syndicalist phase, he rejoined the British Socialist Party.

## Leeds Convention

The Leeds Convention was held on June 3 1917. The Convention represented

all anti-war opinions. The focus for some of the delegates was revolution as a means to secure peace, for others peace came first.

All united in defence of Russia, four months after the February Revolution. It was the first gathering of its kind in many years, breaking the united front of unions in favour of the war effort, and the first opportunity for rank-and-file leaders to exchange aims and strategies.

It passed four resolutions: congratulating Russia, on foreign policy, seeking the restoration of civil liberties and, finally, calling for the establishment of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils.

A major diversion came over the formation of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. The convention struggled to give shape to the councils or to map out how they might relate to existing centres of power. But the combativeness was evident.

William Anderson was cheered when he said that Britain should reach for a new form of international assembly where the Russians could be involved, and there should be a "full restitution of civil and industrial liberties."

Another immediate impact was the agreement, in November 1917, to draw up a new constitution for the Labour Party.

At 63 years of age, he was elected as the general secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

Mann's syndicalist dream of unified unions, covering entire industries, was edging closer. His general secretaryship of the AEU is significant as it represents historical continuity, the melding of the best elements of new unionism, the direct action of syndicalism, along with the strength and stability of a craft union.

It was now reinforced by shop steward organisation at workplace level, which surged in importance during the war.

“ His general secretaryship of the AEU represents historical continuity, the melding of the best elements of new unionism

■ *Phil Katz's book Yours for the Revolution* is published by Manifesto Press Co-operative Ltd. Readers can buy the book by visiting the Morning Star shop [shop.morning-staronline.co.uk/collections/books](http://shop.morning-staronline.co.uk/collections/books). This article was abridged for the Morning Star by Chloe Mansola and Jasmine Niblett.

■ Manifesto Press are embarking on their first summer speaking tour, WELL READ. WELL RED. Tickets can be reserved at [linktr.ee/manifestopresscoop](http://linktr.ee/manifestopresscoop).

■ Phil Katz is a designer and writer and has been a union organiser for 40 years. He contributes regularly to the Morning Star. Buy next weekend's Morning Star to read part V in this serialisation..



## WEATHER OUTLOOK



### TODAY

Breezy. The west and the north will see showers drift in from the west at times, some thundery. Mostly dry and sunny in the east in the morning but a few showers arriving later.

### NEXT FEW DAYS

Continuing breezy with variable cloud and scattered showers, most frequent in the west and north. Monday will see showers in the north, with spells of rain across the south, clearing to showers later.

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## Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

19 days left

**YOU'VE RAISED: £8,626** **WE NEED: £9,374**



CARRIED over from yesterday's bumper postbag are thanks to the following folk.

The Cop26 conference in 2021 promised much but delivered little and the climate crisis worsens with every report of fires across the world. It's remembered by many in Glasgow for heavy handed policing – interestingly of the many arrested few ended up in court.

Last week the Glasgow secretary of the YCL was cleared of all charges laid against him by a jury who watched police witnesses contradict each other.

This prompted a Midlothian comrade to send £50 as "they couldn't think of a better way of celebrating the not guilty verdict." A second £50 was because "I cannot bear to lose the Star." Thanks both.

So, what of today's haul? It's a whopping £947 from 26 contributors that takes us to 48 per cent of target.

From London W7 a £100 is "In tribute to the late Ron Phillips and Ray Bride. Both fellow members of the Workers Music Association Choir and lifelong supporters of the Daily Worker and Morning Star. I remember them with affection and respect."

Also from London came £500. Prestwick is the only place that Elvis Presley visited, albeit briefly at the airport, while in the US army. It is also the source of a £50 contribution, and £20 from Enfield is because they "cannot do without the excellent articles."

The week ends in a good place but it's too soon to slow down.

### Give by BACS...

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Cheques to PPF, 23 Coombe  
Road, London CR0 1BD

## Commie Chef

# Ratatouille-stuffed tomatoes for snacking

I'M generally not a big fan of stuffed vegetables but these tasty treats – which are vegan, incidentally, as well as quick and easy to make – are very much an exception.

The only finicky part is slicing the olives, so I recommend you look for ready-sliced which can often be found in a can.

■ This article first appeared in 2021.

## Ingredients

- 140g/5oz stoned black olives, thinly sliced
- 4 large tomatoes, halved crossways
- about 100g/4oz courgettes, cut into small cubes

- about 100g/4oz aubergine, cut into small cubes
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 2 tsps balsamic vinegar
- ½ tsp rosemary
- salt and pepper

## What to do

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/#4. Scoop out the interiors of the tomatoes.

Fry the courgette and aubergine in half the olive oil.

Remove from heat when soft and stir in the rosemary and seasoning, then the vinegar and the rest of the olive oil.

Finally, mix in the olives and fill the tomato halves with this mixture.

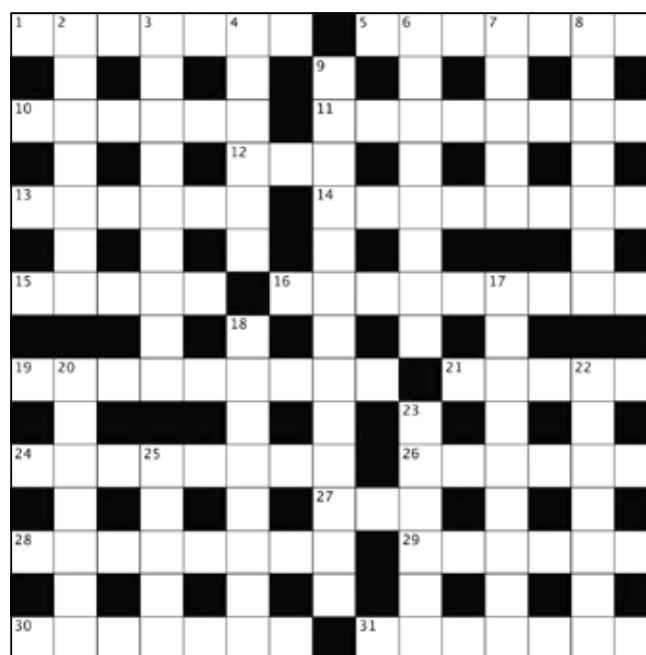
Place on a baking tray lined with tinfoil or cooking parchment and bake 15 mins.

Serve hot or cold with good, crust bread or as a side vegetable or part of a salad.



Pic: Liz West/CC

## CROSSWORD 1,505 set by Alamet



### ACROSS

- Write heartless riddle when thoughtful (7)
- Serious listener at home (7)
- Fur coat worn towards the end of Shakespeare play (3,4)
- Doubting Thomas finished mushroom to amuse on the radio (9)
- Something simple in the wind (6)
- Observer's victory over Independent: it holds water (6)
- Following 17 for a junket (5)
- More smart about going up to support college bar (8)
- Impractical to work a PIN out (7)
- Gave a pat on the back to a reluctant dog running around (13)
- Way to Crediton confused one entering (9)
- Rate poor unhappy surgeon (8)
- Prone to error, performing flea eats poster up (8)
- Immoral TV presenter enters, immediately making a comeback (6)
- Deliveries each Tuesday take in too much (7)
- Condition of dry Liberal getting pay out (6)
- Legend to panic comic (7)
- Report of dull races appeal to flyer (5,3)
- Tear around city's heart (6)
- My fighter is a dog (5)
- Basic goods (5)
- Darn beige damaged material (9)
- When not working one step backwards conceals sister's getaway (6)
- Time to go astray if boy like Eric starts being bad (8)
- Hand out for footballer? (7)
- Men involved in bluster and scrap (7)

### DOWN

2. Serious listener at home (7)
3. Doubting Thomas finished mushroom to amuse on the radio (9)
4. Observer's victory over Independent: it holds water (6)
5. Following 17 for a junket (5)
6. More smart about going up to support college bar (8)
7. Impractical to work a PIN out (7)
8. Gave a pat on the back to a reluctant dog running around (13)
9. Way to Crediton confused one entering (9)
10. Something simple in the wind (6)
11. Rate poor unhappy surgeon (8)
- 12, 27. Immoral TV presenter enters, immediately making a comeback (6)
13. Condition of dry Liberal getting pay out (6)
14. Report of dull races appeal to flyer (5,3)
15. Basic goods (5)
16. Darn beige damaged material (9)
17. Way to Crediton confused one entering (9)
18. Prone to error, performing flea eats poster up (8)
19. Pass compact co-worker (9)
20. Deliveries each Tuesday take in too much (7)
21. Loud music dress (5)
22. Legend to panic comic (7)
23. Tear around city's heart (6)
24. It's my fault politician accepts a clue mistakenly leads to answer (3,5)
25. My fighter is a dog (5)
26. When not working one step backwards conceals sister's getaway (6)
27. see 12
28. Time to go astray if boy like Eric starts being bad (8)
29. Hearing mostly about half a dozen unimportant things (6)
30. Hand out for footballer? (7)
31. Men involved in bluster and scrap (7)

Solution on Monday...

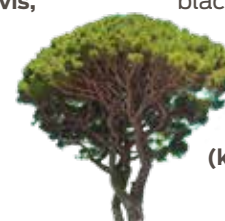
## QUIZMASTER with William Sitwell

### TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- Recently, the town of Reutlingen in southern Germany was hit by a huge storm of rain, hail or snow?
- True or false: lesser spotted woodpeckers always have a red patch on their heads.
- Of the eight countries that share the Amazon rain forest, only one is English-speaking. Which one?

### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

- Who composed the theme tune to Pride and Prejudice? **Carl Davis, who has just died aged 86.**
- Hank the Tank, a bear which was captured recently after a spate of break-ins in California, is a specimen of a brown bear, black bear or polar bear? **A black bear.**
- Which part of the stone pine tree (inset) is edible? **The seeds (kernels).**



## DAILY SUDOKU (to the max)

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

Solution on Monday...



# How the US wages war against the Earth itself

Despite fine words about fighting climate change, the US military is the world's most carbon-intensive institution — and its budget keeps growing, writes **ALLIYAH LUSUEGRO**



**N**OT long ago, I couldn't step outside my home without pulling on my KN95 mask. As smoke from wildfires in Canada swept in waves across the US, tens of millions of Americans from the east coast to the midwest found themselves living under severe air quality advisories. Phones buzzed with warnings as wildfire haze clouded our skylines and concerts and baseball games were cancelled or postponed. A few weeks ago was the first time I experienced a Code Purple or Code Maroon

— and the first time I understood what an Air Quality Index (AQI) of over 300 truly means as my eyes stung from the charred air. It's unlikely to be the last. With the wildfire season still going strong, heatwaves rolling across the country, and hurricane season looming, we haven't seen the last disruption to our lives this year. And it's becoming abundantly clear that we simply aren't prepared for climate disasters. Most of us understand that we urgently need to transition away from fossil fuels.

“  
 The Biden administration requested a whopping \$886bn military budget for 2024

But what many Americans don't realise is that a huge share of our tax dollars are actually funding the most carbon-intensive institution on the planet: the US military. The US military is the largest institutional oil consumer in the world. In fact, the Pentagon's ships, jets, bombers, and Humvees — and its global network of over 800 bases, all with buildings to heat, cool, and maintain — produce more carbon emissions each year than entire countries like Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal. Under President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act and

other new laws, the US is expected to spend about \$50 billion per year on climate for the next decade. But these welcome investments are dwarfed by much bigger spending on our polluting military. The Biden administration requested a whopping \$886bn military budget for 2024. In the wake of the debt deal recently passed by Congress, that number may still increase. We're steadily approaching an annual outlay of \$1 trillion for the Pentagon alone, while other programmes to regulate pollution or address its health impacts could see cuts.

The need to transition away from fossil fuels is urgent. I worry that a few days of unpleasant walks from wildfire smoke will turn into something much worse for families, workers, and future generations. For many front-line communities in this country, it already is. We need to get our priorities straight by pulling away from fossil fuels and our bloated military spending. Instead, let's put our resources towards protecting our people and the environment.   
 ■ This article appeared in *People's World*.

## TV Weekend Preview

with Maurice Oxford



MOLES: Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean

**Sunday**  
**The Real Spies Among Friends, 8pm ITV1**  
 A documentary examining the true story behind ITV thriller *A Spy Among Friends*, which is based on Ben Macintyre's book about Kim Philby and



the rest of the Cambridge spy ring. Those already familiar with the story will probably give it a miss, but for those who aren't, this account is said to be as gripping as any fictional drama.

### Documentary

**Sunday**  
**Levison Wood: Walking with Lions, 8pm Channel 4**

This week, the explorer is in Namibia searching for some of the last 100 desert lions in the world, which involves trekking through a remote and beautiful corner of Africa.

### Drama

**Saturday**  
**Oppenheimer, 10.40pm and 11.45pm BBC4**

First screened in 1980, this BBC series about the brilliant US physicist who led the creation of the first atomic bomb takes a quite different approach to that of Christopher Nolan's Hollywood blockbuster.

**Sunday**  
**A Spy Among Friends, 9pm ITV1**

The series concludes with the aftermath of Kim Philby's 1963 defection to the Soviet Union, as his friend Nicholas Elliott comes under investigation by MI5 to determine whether he facilitated Philby's escape.

### Film

**Saturday**  
**Highlander, 11.45pm BBC1**

Christopher Lambert stars as a New York antiques dealer who is in fact a 16th-century Scottish clansman. After he's had some training in swordsmanship from Sean Connery, he must do battle with the evil Kurgan (Clancy Brown). This is preposterous stuff but loads of fun.

**Sunday**  
**The Sixth Sense, 9pm, 5 Star**

Bruce Willis plays a child psychologist in *M Night Shyamalan's* classic supernatural drama. Having been attacked by a former patient who claims he can see dead people, Willis's character takes on the case of a nine-year-old boy with the same symptoms.

### Music

**Saturday**  
**Concert for George, 7pm Sky Arts**

This memorial concert for George Harrison, which took place a year after the former Beatle's death, features version of his best-known songs by a host of stars including Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton and Jeff Lynne.

## What to miss

**Saturday: The Queens that Changed the World, 7.15pm Channel 4**  
 Last week's programme was about Elizabeth I, whose reign was packed with dramatic crises. This week, we get a portrait of Queen Anne as a shrewd political operator, but surely it's high time to move on from the monarchs-and-wars view of history.

Yesterday's sudoku

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



## ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER | DIARY



### ATTILA serenades us from the Free Fringe, and regards Rebellion with militant nostalgia

GREETINGS from the Edinburgh Fringe. Once a vibrant celebration of independent culture, now a bloated corporate trade fair where PR companies and venue cartels grow fat on the dreams of performers losing thousands of pounds chasing a review in the Daily Telegraph or the Daily Mail and a spot on a brain-rotting TV game show.

So hats off to Peter Buckley Hill who came up with a brilliant alternative. I'm doing the PBH Free Fringe at Bannermans Bar, get zero reviews in the right-wing press, zero spots on game shows, zero opportunities to advertise the urine of Satan masquerading as beer and don't give a flying dog's bollock.

Like all those who choose to become part of our co-opera-

tive performing at events all over the city under the Free Fringe banner, I have a brilliant time playing to those who want to see me and all the money people put in the buckets in voluntary contributions after our shows goes straight to the performers. No venue rents, no fees; the venues sell beer and food to the punters. What a brilliant, simple idea to return the Fringe to its original roots as a celebration of alternative culture where all are welcome regardless of ability to pay.

Cheers Peter, DIY originator: you did this for the punks! Now we have to sort out the accommodation, which is ridiculously expensive. I'm lucky, but not everyone has a mate's Auntie Evelyn to put them up. If you're around, I'm on at Bannerman's 1.30 today and next Saturday

and 4pm every other day until August 20, and I'm also doing my Early Music Show at St Cecilia's Hall at 2pm on the 18th. Support the Free Fringe. It's brilliant.

And I came here straight from Rebellion Festival in Blackpool, our yearly celebration of everything punk. It was the best one yet, which is saying something, and the line-up was so diverse and the atmosphere so brilliant this year that I decided to sum everything up in a poem, dedicated to organisers Darren and Jennie Russell-Smith and all those who make this brilliant weekend happen.

■ For further info please visit <https://www.facebook.com/attilathestockbroker> and/or <https://attilathestockbroker.bandcamp.com/merch>

### Rebellion

'I always look forward to Rebellion' said the taxi driver.  
'Everyone's so friendly.  
Some of you may look a bit scary  
But you're lovely.  
It's the stag parties and the like who give us hassle –  
never you lot'.

Blackpool Council agree – they welcome us with open arms suspend the street drinking laws and give us the Winter Gardens as a weekend home.  
But from the self-appointed arbiters of taste come the sneers.  
It's just nostalgia.  
Old people reliving their youth.  
Like tea dances in the old days.  
Like the cruise ship bands.  
The same tired old attitudes only louder and in bondage gear.

But Rebellion is far more than that. There are three generations here from all over the world. Bands a third of my age

A multitude of styles  
A cornucopia of interpretations  
because punk is simply being yourself while thinking of others  
and that's why the taxi driver likes us because that is what we do.

As for nostalgia – if the past looks better than the future as it certainly does to me who reaped all the benefits of the Welfare State in its prime who went to university on a full grant the first in his family to do so and remembers a vibrant NHS plentiful housing affordable public transport bulging libraries clean rivers and seas and streets where I could cycle happily without annihilating my testicles on the crossbar due to potholes the size of bomb craters...  
If the past looks better than the future Then rebellion isn't nostalgia. Nostalgia is rebellion. And Rebellion is wonderful.

## ALBUM REVIEW WITH SIMON DUFF

### Ryuichi Sakamoto

12  
(Milan Records)  
★★★★★



WHEN Ryuichi Sakamoto passed away in March this year, aged 71, after a long battle with cancer, he left a legacy of pioneering music.

From his ground breaking work with the Yellow Magic Orchestra in the 1970s to his prolific solo projects, jazz, sonic art, production work and film scores such as Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence. His brilliant song writing included the anti-war epic Zero Landmine.

As he approached his death he said of the final album: "I had no intention of composing something. I just wanted to be showered in sound." It consists of 12 pieces for piano, synths and bells with each title referring to the day it was recorded.

The opener 20210310 is a slow ambient dreamlike work, Atmospheres drifting in and out of focus, melancholy to the fore, deep reflective emotions as the composer looked to his final journey.

Other synth based works explore deep bass tones, as if plucked from the score of a

lost Blade Runner soundtrack.

20211130 works around simple winding piano refrains backed by distant harmonic synth drones. Understated and melodic, in places referencing the work of fellow pianist composer Harold Budd.

The sound of Sakamoto's breath is audible at times as he struggled with the energy to play. Later piano tracks take on more developed compositions, up tempo and optimistic.

Always with Sakamoto's unique signature approach to his piano composition. The closing track 20220304 is a one-minute field recording of bells ringing in the wind, sounding in parts like coins rolling in empty stone rooms, intimate and mysterious.

Modest, humble and haunting. Like the man himself, hugely missed.



## FESTIVAL REVIEW | HOWLIN' FLING

★★★★★ ISLE OF EIGG

### JAMES WALSH happily maroons himself at possibly the most-difficult-to-get-to festival in Britain

FROM the ferry, Eigg comes into focus slowly, gradually. It's a shimmering thing, dominated by the rocky outcrop An Sgurr. It barely looks real, but it is a basalt bastion of optimism: a community-owned Scottish island, the last landlord bought out by the people 26 years ago.

One of the hundred or so living on the island today is Johnny Lynch, or (as his wheelie bins proclaim) Pictish Trail.

Johnny runs Lost Map records, purveyors of a dizzying roster of folk, electronica, and genre-bending experimentation; a miraculously sunny weekend in August marks their Howlin' Fling, the best, and possibly the most-difficult-to-get-to festival in Britain.

All performances take place in or around the island's ceilidh hall, a short wooded walk up from the harbour/cafe/shop, with its exciting new shower block and old, free-wandering dogs. We're treated to a mix of Lost Map acts, guest stars, supergroups and superstar DJs.

Weird Wave, headlining Friday, are Johnny plus assorted pals and label mates, throwing everything into a prog-jam soup. Earlier, Both Hands (Hayley Beavis and Brian Pokora) are crunchy Mark Bell-era Bjork electronics meets beautiful, Kate Bush melodies and rich reminiscences from a singer not afraid to leave the stage and dance like no-one is watching, while singing of the North Sea and the wind in the trees.

After being treated to some tunes from the terrifyingly named DJ Dogshit, said DJ (actually from the brilliant eagleowl) turns up on bass with LT Leif – ukulele-led indiepop that brims with banging choruses. These are beautiful, life-affirming songs, about not getting what you want but maybe figuring out what you are.

After a break for food, your correspondent returns to the hall in time for something billed as Angus Binnie's Ceilidh Hot Tub Pope-Mobile which turns out, brilliantly, to be a traditional Gaelic folk dance, with pipes and fiddle and no thundering korg anywhere to be heard.

Three hours of dancing and swinging people around later, it's time for Weird Wave and, for some, dancing and drinking till the very late early hours. For others, shamefully, it's time to walk back to the tent, heart happy and eyes growing used to the darkness.

Saturday's line-up is similarly eclectic and if anything even stronger. Highlights include Martha Ffion's second Alisha's Attic album folk-pop perfection; Miki Berenyi Trio bringing soundscape beauty and the melancholy of the drum machine; and Brenda's brilliant bisexual disco-pop.

I want to say they're a bit Stealing Sheep, perhaps a tad Le Tigre, but this is joyous feminist anarchy of the highest calibre, particularly when their banner falls down mid-song.



STAR-STRUCK: Miki from Lush meets Walsh from Star

We need to talk about Alabaster DePlume. Jazz musician, spoken word poet and general activist and rabble rouser, his set brings one of the biggest and most emotionally charged audiences of the whole weekend. Wild-eyed and alive with possibility, DePlume intersperses beguiling saxophone jams with infectious enthusi-

asm and an amazement that he's even allowed to do this.

Bizarre, brilliant and clearly beloved, he's the spirit of the festival, the island – and of Johnny, who waves off every ferry, hugs every punter, and has made more friends than most of us will ever know.

■ Info: [howlinfling.com](http://howlinfling.com)



MUSIC REVIEW | **BARTOK AND KODALY**  
★★★★★ | EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

# Orban, Bartok and the national question

**ANGUS REID** interrogates the many contradictory faces of nationalism through the lens of classical concerts in Edinburgh

In the 1930s the composers Bartok and Kodaly both wrote music for children and created an education programme for musical instruction in all the primary schools of Hungary.

The Budapest Festival Orchestra, co-founded in 1983 by Ivan Fischer, who still leads it, have an astonishing record of community service: autism-friendly concerts, “community weeks” of free concerts, and projects for disadvantaged children.

So, how does this humanitarian ethos translate into performance at the Edinburgh Festival?

Classical concerts are almost never reviewed in the Morning Star because they are too expensive, but I have a friend, Donald, who works at the council and knows his classical music, mostly by collecting cheap CDs from charity shops. He's great company, and we've done a deal.

I get the press comp, and they give me a reduced price “plus 1.” When we go halves on that, the pay-off is that we can treat the concerts – these extravagant luxuries – as though they were affordable to ordinary people and not reserved for the elite. I hope it allows us to have a political perspective on this kind of culture, and unmoors our response from the good manners of the concert-going classes.

And the first thing to say about this concert is that it couldn't have happened in Budapest. Andras Schiff, the 70-year-



Pics: Lessormore/CC

(Above and right) House of Music in Budapest designed by Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, opened in 2022

old Hungarian virtuoso who is performing Bartok's 3rd Piano concerto, won't go back. But the orchestra must be funded by the Hungarian government. Support for culture must be



Here, the Tories haven't been willing to build a single new concert hall

part of Orban's nationalism and clearly, given all the new cultural buildings in Budapest, he throws money at classical music when here, the Tories haven't been willing to build a single new concert hall.

The piano concerto requires complex and sensitive call-and-response between piano and instrumentalists, each of whom Schiff makes a point of shaking by the hand afterwards. It's impossible not to read all this effusive camaraderie without wondering at the relationship between music and politics.

Bartok himself was profoundly committed to the

music of the underclass – the peasants, and the poor – and he was among the first to record them singing and playing, and to adopt that music as his primary source of inspiration. The choppy in-your-face rhythms and scales, the sudden swerves in mood and tempo derive from the identity he shared with folk musicians.

He was also a committed anti-fascist who left Hungary and died in unhappy exile in the US in 1945, a few weeks after the bomb.

The concert opened with a spirited performance of Bartok's Romanian Folk Dances on traditional instruments, followed by the full orchestral version. It



was an effective and disarming thing to do: rather than feel that Bartok pickled the people's tunes in middle-class aspic, you feel the symbiosis of two living traditions and the glee that Bartok must have felt in orchestrating these strangely confrontational and Asiatic melodies.

But I can't lose the nagging awareness that, despite the people-friendly panache of this remarkable orchestra, the whole event is a public relations exercise for Orban.

The piano concerto, not quite finished (though only 17 bars of orchestration remain to do) when Bartok died, takes this complexity further. Could I hear death in it, Donald asks me.

Could I?

Bartok had compositional tools that were uniquely his own, and it's not so much that he amplifies folk music in the way that Kodaly's Dances of Galanta achieve with gusto. This crowd pleaser was also on the programme. But, that's not Bartok's

way. Rather, he uses folk music to disintegrate classical norms. Altogether more interesting.

And death...? The ethereal 2nd movement sounded like a release, gratefully embraced, but then come sprinklings of birdsong, vitality, and by the end those rhythms have begun to feel like jazz.

This is why Bartok commands attention and is a complicated “national” composer. It itself, the music is a unity but you can hear the contradictory forces of class and politics, tradition and modernity going on within it. He is so accurate about the specifics and time and place that suddenly the dialectic is audible.

This insight is a surprise to me, and I'm not sure I would have been able to focus on the music so clearly without being at a live event.

Next up, Szymanowski, Poland's greatest gay composer, Donald informs me with relish. What on earth is that going to sound like?

THEATRE REVIEW | **ENGLAND AND SON**  
★★★★★ | SUMMERHALL, EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE

**MIKE QUILLE** relishes political theatre at its most entertaining, engaging and effective

HE's done it again!

A few years ago, Ed Edwards exploded into Edinburgh with *A Political History of Smack and Crack*, performed at the Fringe Festival. It was a brilliant piece of political theatre, setting personal stories of drug addiction in '80s Britain against the background of brutal Tory policies of deindustrialisation and the historical encouragement of the international drugs trade by the US, Britain and France in the course of their imperialist adventures.

Now he's back in Edinburgh, together with Mark Thomas, the actor, comedian and political activist, with the equally explosive *England and Son*, which could well have been called “The Political History of Toxic Masculinity.”

This time, the personal story in the foreground is about a boy's relationship with his father, named England. It's about his unmet childhood need for approval and parental love, and his chaotic descent into crime, drink and drug addiction.

This history of domestic abuse is framed by the bigger England – the political story of imperial exploitation and oppression.

His father is an ex-soldier scarred by experiences in the British Army, suppressing the communist-led insurgency in Malaya with torture, killing and mutilation in order to maintain the exploitation of bauxite and rubber by British companies. The parallel to this “legalised robbery,” as the boy

sees it, is his juvenile offending, as he becomes an expert at valuing and stealing jewellery and antiques out of well-off middle-class homes.

Ed Edwards's writing weaves comedy and tragedy together in a way which accentuates both elements. Right from the start, where the homeless, sleeping son is about to be emptied into a bin lorry, the viewer is immersed – or rather thrown into – a ferociously funny and thrilling drama, full of rage and hurt but also laced with humour, tenderness and empathy.

Edwards has overcome one of the pitfalls of the British tradition of social realism, whereby novels, plays and films sometimes come across as very worthy but as monotonous, bleak and despairing as the world



**POLITICAL:** Mark Thomas in *England and Son*

Pic: Alex Brenner

they portray.

Through skilful use of techniques such as flashbacks, variations of pace, comic asides, lively dialogue and arresting light and sound effects, he manages to convey both the horror of the personal and political stories, and the essentially warm humanity of the main

characters.

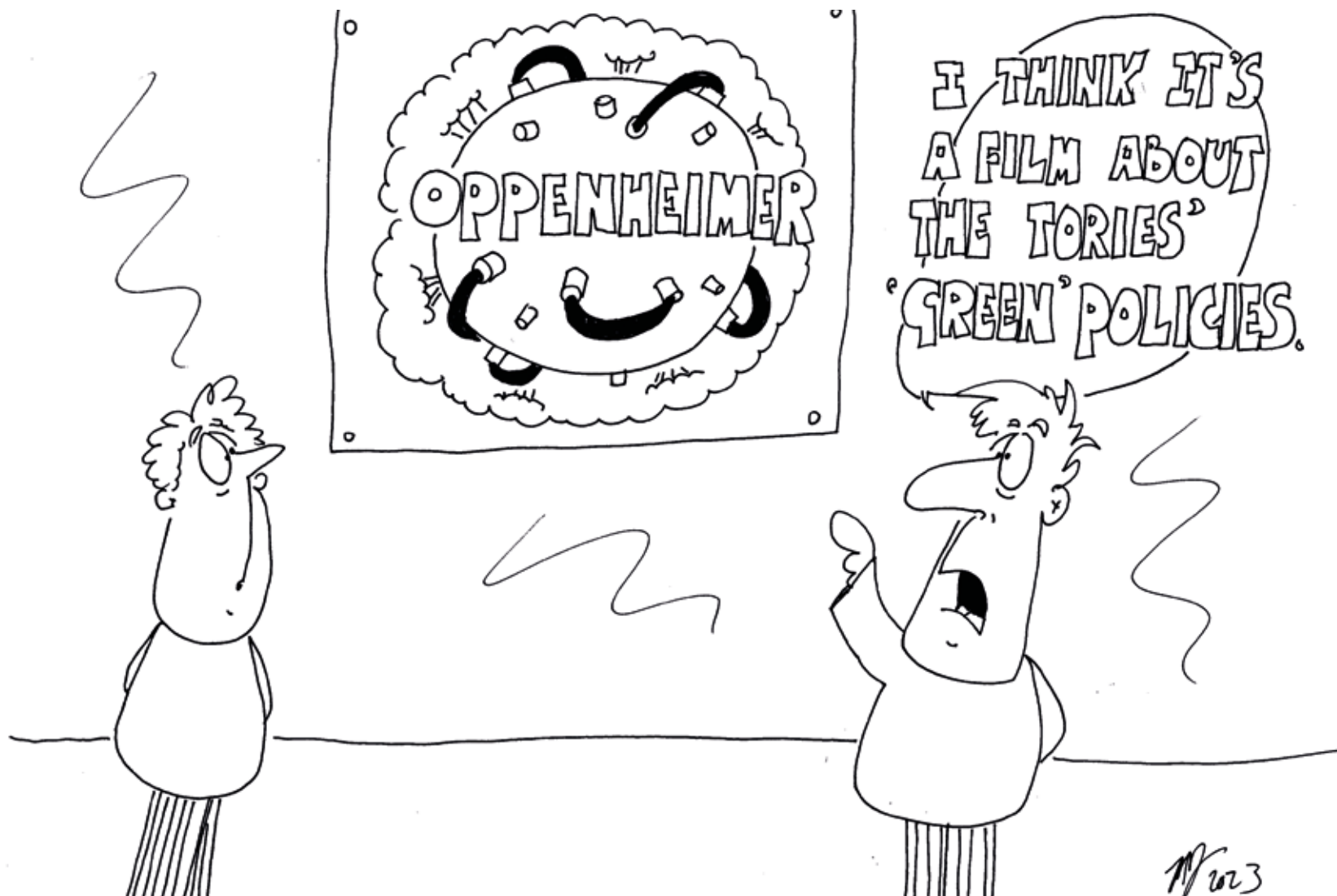
Edwards has also found the perfect expressive skillset in Mark Thomas, the sole actor in the play. For an hour, Thomas is in our faces, roaming around the circular stage in a tremendous display of acting, expressing both the sweaty, spitting rage and violence of the father

and the innocent, joking resilience of his son.

Amidst the frothy banalities of so much of the Fringe these days, this play stands out – political theatre at its most entertaining, engaging and effective.

■ *Runs until August 27; info: Summerhall.co.uk*





■ PRIVATE JETS  
**Sunak flies as we all suffer**

ACCORDING to the popular phrase, Roman Emperor Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Whether or not this is factual, the phrase is often used to show that a leader has ignored the sufferings of his citizens or is an ineffectual leader.

Fast forward to the present day when Rishi Sunak and his government decide to give new licences for oil and gas drilling in Britain, himself uses his private jet and helicopter for travelling round Britain and for his holiday flew himself and his family to California to his second home.

At the same time he and his government have increased funding for so-called defence, that is the military. Military manufacturing is a prime source of carbon emissions. And the world burns.

RAE STREET  
Littleborough



■ DEBANKING

## Star editorial did not pile praise on Farage

WITH respect to Chris Purnell (Letters, August 7), I really did not see a hint of "praise" for Nigel Farage in the Morning Star editorial that he references.

I don't think that significant problems about Farage's politics is a controversial position for the vast majority of Star readers, or for the editorial staff, but that was not the point of the editorial and I would advise Chris to reread it and perhaps point to any "praise."

The question of bank accounts being closed for political reasons is, as the editorial suggests, one that is far more likely to affect progressive individuals and organisations than reactionaries like Farage. Perhaps a reminder of what the Co-op

bank did to the Palestine and Cuba solidarity campaigns wouldn't go amiss? Are we happy for banks to make political judgements about who is and who is not allowed to have an account?

I would argue that the banks are sufficiently lacking in their own democratic accountability without keeping silent when they wield it even more. Finance capital is not an ally in the struggle against the right.

By the way, the only positive thing I can say about Farage when it comes to bank accounts is that he helped the finances of the RNLI by his nasty attacks on them for rescuing asylum-seekers!

EVAN PRITCHARD  
Manchester

■ COUTTS

## Banks only serve capitalism

THANK you for your very sensible editorial (July 28) on the dispute between Coutts and Nigel Farage. It is indeed ironic that an erstwhile City boy should have attacked a major bank, forcing the retirement of its chief executive. The banks, like other capi-

talist organisations, spend any amount of money on pinkwashing and greenwashing to try to obscure the central reality that they exist only to serve the interests of the capitalist class.

WILL PODMORE  
London E11

■ CO-OPERATION

# Humans have an urge to work well together

JOHN GREEN'S article on July 28 asks if there is a "rogue gene" which drives human beings to war with each other. He asks this because of conflicts going on around the world "since time immemorial," long before modern capitalism which, he agrees, is one of the "chief motors of war" now.

The argument that it is in "human nature" to be violent, greedy, acquisitive or devious is not new. However, this is not a rounded scientific view of human biological evolutionary history. The article is a half-baked analysis of why wars are fought.

In their excellent book on the origins, nature and future of humankind, *The People of the Lake*, Richard Leakey and Roger Lewin explain that wars must be seen in their socio-economic context. They say: "It is a political institution controlled by powerful people, whether waged between two neighbouring tribes or two super-states ... we should examine the structure and motivation of power politics ... gulfs that divide nations are cultural and political artefacts."



**NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN:** A detail of a fragment, dated to 2,450 BC, of the victory stele of Sumerian King Eannatum of Lagash, showing the first evidence of a phalanx  
Pic: Sting/Creative Commons

The authors describe their study of pre-history based on fossil evidence. They conclude that co-operation and sharing must have existed in the common biological origin of humankind for our species not only to survive, but to evolve over a long period of time.

What is needed they argue, is the correct motivation, based on our common origin and our shared destiny, to choose peace. "Just as the human urge for co-operation has in the past been exploited in the political motivated context of war, we can expect the same urge could be

harnessed in the political motivated context of peace."

Survival of our species is existentially threatened by anthropomorphic climate change and nuclear war. The choice for peace must be made soon.

CAROL AND DAVE STAVRIS  
Didcot



■ POLITICAL DIVIDE

# 'Man in the pub' cares about humanity

IN HIS letter of August 9, Sasha Simic observes that capitalism will end the planet unless we end capitalism. Truly said.

We must defeat capitalism, but I see it not so much as a struggle of the political left versus the right, but as a struggle between the people – no matter how they vote – and capitalism's destructiveness.

The man in the street may often vote Conservative, but he doesn't want to see the planet destroyed, as any bar chat in any pub will confirm.

He simply has a blind spot as to the connection between his vote and every aspect of life today going down the pan. But he's not on the side of corporate rapaciousness, exploitation and greed, and the left needs to get him on



**WORLD ON FIRE:** A wildfire in Kihei, Hawaii, on Wednesday  
Pic:Ty O'Neil/AP

board not to vote left, but to join the struggle for our continuing existence.

To do this, my feeling is that the left needs to broaden its parameters so as to include all those of goodwill and concern but who may not vote left.

The focus must shift from political divides, which can become tribal and which so many people are tired of, to mutual unity of aims. Such unity of aims can be discovered when looked for.

Some unions are at the cutting edge of such inclu-

siveness and do reach out to allcomers and the left movement as a whole needs to follow suit. This would prove to be a significant step towards the people's overcoming and dismantling of capitalism.

MARILYN WARBIS  
Plymouth



**LANDSLIDE:** Tony Blair is greeted by supporters as he arrives in Downing Street as prime minister for the first time in May 1997  
Pic: Adam Butler/PA Archive/PA Images

■ LABOUR

# Did Blair really fool anyone?

RICHARD RUDKIN (Socialists Can't Trust a Labour government, Letters August 8) draws comparisons between Labour's policies and electoral prospects in 1997 and now.

He argues that people were so desperate to get rid of the Tories in 1997 that they fell for a Labour Party that carried on with Tory policies, and in fact left this country a poorer place by undermining civil liberties.

There's plenty of truth in that argument, and by 2010 millions of people who voted Labour in 1997 came to the same conclusion. Richard's main point is that we shouldn't be fooled into voting Labour again, but is it really true that most people who voted Labour in 1997 were fooled? Did Tony

Blair really fool that many people? It would pay to go back further than 1997 if we want to compare Labour's victory then with its prospects now.

In 1992 the Tories got their highest ever vote, despite 13 years of cuts, unemployment and failed policies such as the Poll Tax. Labour lost that election mainly because it had distanced itself from the unions and social movements that were fighting the Tories for the previous 13 years.

Add to that the fact that the Tories had got their act together by seeing Thatcher off. The shock of the 1992 defeat pushed Labour members into choosing a leader who made no secret of his desire to put even more distance between

the party and its traditional sources of support.

In 1997 the Tories found it harder to get their supporters out for a variety of reasons, one of which may have been a perception among Tories that Labour no longer posed a threat to their interests. New Labour did manage to win some Tory voters over and they were not disappointed by the Blair governments' taste for war and neoliberalism. But Labour voters were increasingly disgusted by the results of the New Labour experiment, so once the Tories got their act together again in 2010 they didn't need to break sweat to see New Labour off.

HEDLEY BASHFORTH  
Bristol

■ SCOTLAND

# Sir Keir set for Tory alliance

THE left of centre, in the shape of the SNP, can still win the Rutherglen & Hamilton by-election. But the problem is the Tory vote in that constituency. In 2019, it was just over 8,000, which was 15 per cent of the total.

Now that Jeremy Corbyn has gone, many of that 8,000 will have no difficulty voting for Starmerist Labour in order to defeat the social democratic, anti-unionist SNP. A Tory/Starmerist alliance at the ballot box is the sort of tactical voting we can look forward to in Scotland for years to come.

ALASTAIR MCLEISH  
Edinburgh

SIMON RENTON  
explores the Star archives



## 80 YEARS AGO TODAY...

### Civil servants issued with threat

THE Daily Worker applauded the reinstatement of a woman who was dismissed when she was elected shop steward on August 12 1943.

It also reported the government's renewed attack upon the trade union rights of civil servants. The Union of Post Office Workers had applied to join the TUC. The response from Downing Street was to threaten its members with dismissal and loss of pension rights.

#### WOMAN SHOP STEWARD REINSTATED

The paper reported: "A part-time woman worker who, as recently reported in the Daily Worker, was dismissed from a Wembley factory after being elected as shop steward was yesterday reinstated and given wages to cover the period of her dismissal.

"The decision followed a works conference called for by the Transport and General Workers Union.

"Workers in the factory, who had regarded it as a case of victimisation, greeted the announcement as a noteworthy victory obtained through the official machinery existing for the purpose of dealing with such questions."

#### GOVERNMENT WARNS CIVIL SERVANTS: 'YOU WILL LOSE YOUR JOB'

"A warning to civil

servants that if they remained members of unions which affiliate to the Trades Union Congress they will lose their established position and accumulated pension rights as civil servants was issued by the government last night. The government statement said: "The union of Post Office workers has made application for affiliation to the TUC. It is understood that this application will be considered at the forthcoming conference in September. It is important that members of the service should realise in advance the position in which they would be placed if an association of which they are members were affiliated to the TUC."

If at the end of one month thereafter that established civil servant has not resigned his membership of the association, he automatically becomes 'disqualified from being a member of the Civil Service.'



## ★ Readers & Supporters

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**CROYDON** – We meet regularly at Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Road, Croydon CR0 1BD. For details e-mail croydonmornings-tarrsg@gmail.com.

**CYMRU/WALES** – New Welsh group established. Contact David at davidedwin.nicholson@gmail.com.

**DORSET** – New group. Contact Ruth Pitman at dorsetrsg@gmail.com.

**DUMFRIES** – Email Stuart Hyslop at stuart.hyslop@hotmail.co.uk.

**DUNDEE** – dylanmarshall1000@gmail.com.

**EDINBURGH** – Email Richard Shilcock at rcs@staffmail.ed.ac.uk.

**FIFE** – Email Tam Kirby at kirby1962@hotmail.co.uk.

**GOVAN & SW** – Email David Ferguson at david-ferguson23@hotmail.com.

**SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY** – Email Vince Mills at vpmills@outlook.com.

**LONDON** – Call Paul Clydes on 07969 321-657 or email paul@redstar.me.uk.

**MANCHESTER** – Requiring new members for relaunch, email Evan Pritchard at evanpritchard.ep@gmail.com.

**MARKET HARBOROUGH** – New group formed, email Peter at peterwhalen13@gmail.com.

**MERSEYSIDE** – Meets regularly. Email Helen at merseynews@gmail.com.

**MILTON KEYNES** – Meets regularly. Email Jimmy McIntyre at macintyrejimmy@gmail.com.

**NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK** – Contact Sean Meleady on smelea@hotmail.co.uk or call 0775 814 5671.

**NORTH-EAST ENGLAND** – Fund-raising barbecue, Sunday, August 27. Tickets: £11 (waged), £6 (low waged), £3 (unwaged) RSVP to martinlevey@gmail.com.

**OXFORDSHIRE** – New group formed, email Chesterton at oxonrsg@gmail.com.

**SHROPSHIRE** – Regular paper sales & monthly socials: Call Phil on 07816 641-884 or email shropshiremorningstar@gmail.com.

**SOUTHAMPTON** – Regular group: Contact Glynn Tudor, Glynt1951@gmail.com to get involved.

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE** – Email Carrie Hedderwick at hedderwickc@gmail.com.

**SUNDERLAND** – Email Alec McFadden at alec.stuc@gmail.com or call 07831 627531

**SWINDON** – Email Pete Webb at jackobadenski@yahoo.com.

**WATFORD** – Call Phil Brown on (01923) 239-512 or email leveller@myphone.coop.

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE** – Email George Kirkpatrick at george.kirkpatrick@hotmail.com.

**WEST YORKSHIRE** – Email westyorkmorningstar@gmail.com.



## The Red List

August 12-19

### ▶ SATURDAY 12

#### The Inglorious Twelfth

11am outside Dundee Airport, Riverside Drive, Dundee  
On the day that the grouse-shooting season begins, demonstrate to highlight the harm that grouse moor management does to wildlife and the high carbon emissions produced by the hunters arriving on private flights. Organised by Extinction Rebellion.

#### Peterloo Remembered 2023

Assemble from 12pm in Sackville Gardens, Manchester  
People Power: Join a Union is the theme of this year's commemoration, which begins with a march at 1pm to the memorial near the GMEX for a rally with speakers including Vik Chechi-Ribeiro of the National Education Union, Ian Hodson of the bakers' union and People's Assembly national secretary Laura Pidcock, plus music from Tom Long and Joe Solo. Organised Greater Manchester TUC, Bolton & District Trades Council and others.

#### Cost of Living Campaign collection at Leyton Orient FC

1.30pm by the bandstand in Coronation Gardens, Buckingham Road, London E10  
Join Leyton & Wanstead Cost of Living Campaign to help collect money for striking workers' hardship funds and raise awareness of local industrial disputes.

#### Picnic for Palestine

3pm at the small railway bridge in Gladstone Park (Cricklewood library entrance is nearest), London NW2

Brent & Harrow Palestine Solidarity Campaign invite you to bring family and friends, a blanket, some food and non-alcoholic drink. Please keep an eye on the group's social media for any weather-related changes.

#### Quirky Songs and Poems with Fun and Mischief

8pm (buffet from 7.30pm) at St John's Church Hall, High Road, London E11  
Performances by New Zealand singer, guitarist and songwriter Kath Tait, who sings about her life as a carer, hippy, itinerant bard, and wholefood freak, and highly trained musician Keith Bray, who also writes poetry and paints. Entry free but donations welcome. Organised by the News From Nowhere Club.

#### 12th, 16th and 19th: Free Julian Assange weekly protests

■ 12th: 12pm to 2pm at HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, London SE28  
■ 4pm to 6pm at Eros statue, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1  
■ 16th: 3pm to 5pm at the Australian high commission, Strand, London WC2  
■ 19th: 12pm to 2pm at HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, London SE28  
■ 4pm to 6pm at Eros statue, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1  
Oppose the WikiLeaks founder's extradition to the United States and demand his immediate release. Due to Assange's pending deportation,



**Monday 14**  
**Shenstone Six pre-trial hearing**  
10am-4.30pm at Stafford Crown Court  
Support protesters facing charges over their 2021 dismantling of an Israeli-owned drone-engine factory.

further action may be called at very short notice. Find out more at wiseupaction.info.

#### Until September 2: Windrush: A Voyage through the Generations

Every day at Clapham Library, Mary Seacole Centre, 91 Clapham High Street, London SW4  
A photography exhibition by Jim Grover exploring how the generations which followed the Windrush arrivals are living their lives in Britain today. For exact opening times and other information, go to mstar.link/44m2j1C.

#### Until September 5: Journeys to Hope

Any time at Autograph, Rivington Place, London EC2  
An outdoor display of pictures from the TopFoto archives, punctuated with the profound words of Professor Stuart Hall, showing the journey of those who arrived in Britain on the Empire Windrush in 1948.

#### Until September 10: Over A Barrel: Windrush Children, Tragedy and Triumph

10am to 6pm Thursdays to Saturdays, 12pm to 5pm on Sundays, at Black Cultural Archives, 1 Windrush Square, London SW2

An interactive exhibition exploring the incredible journeys of children who travelled from the Caribbean to Britain during the Windrush era. Entry £5, concessions £3. Find out more at mstar.link/3pkDNTE.

#### Until November 30: Windrush: It Runs Through Us

10am-3pm every week from Tuesday to Saturday at Mansfield Museum, Leeming Street, Mansfield  
An exhibition on what Windrush was, why it happened and how migration has shaped Britain.

#### Until December 30: 'That Impudent Little Party' - The Independent Labour Party 1893-1975

1-4.30pm on Wednesdays,

Thursdays and Fridays at Working Class Movement Library, 51 The Crescent, Salford  
An exhibition on the history of the ILP, using rare objects from the library's collection to examine how the party demanded social reform and a fairer, more peaceful society.

#### Until January 7: Northern Ireland: Living with the Troubles

10am to 6pm at the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1  
An exhibition allowing visitors to further their understanding of the Troubles through the multiple perspectives of individuals affected by the conflict.

### ▶ MONDAY 14

#### Shenstone Six pre-trial hearing

10am-4.30pm at Stafford Crown Court, The Combined Court Centre, Victoria Square, Stafford  
Show solidarity with six Palestine Action protesters facing criminal damage charges over the February 2021 dismantling of a drone-engine factory in Shenstone owned by Israeli firm Elbit Systems.

### ▶ TUESDAY 15

#### Women and Power in Westminster

2pm at Buxton Memorial Fountain, 1 Millbank, London SW1  
A free three-hour tour of Parliament Square and Whitehall, exploring highlighting the legacies of women who challenged the status quo and created the world we live in today. Find out more and register at eventbrite.co.uk/e/669082011307. Part of the Inside Out Festival.

### ▶ WEDNESDAY 16

#### Peterloo guided tour and archive open day

11.30am at People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester  
On the anniversary of the 1819 massacre in Manchester, uncover the stories of a defining day for Britain's democracy. For tickets, priced £10, concessions £6, plus booking fee, some free for those in economic difficulty, go to eventbrite.co.uk/e/654971686947.

#### Book event: Mad World - The Politics of Mental Health

6pm at Bookhaus, 4 Rope Walk, Bristol  
Micha Frazer-Carroll discusses mental health as a political issue and presents a radical and hopeful antidote to pathologisation, gatekeeping and the policing of imagination. For tickets, priced £5, go to mstar.link/44ZqTta.

### ▶ THURSDAY 17

#### Irredeemably Flawed? IPP Prisoners and the Public Protection Myth

7.30pm at the Casa Bar, 29 Hope Street, Liverpool  
Emma McClure, a solicitor who regularly represents IPP (imprisonment for public protection) inmates before the Parole Board, explains these sentences, which, although no longer imposed, have left a significant and troubling legacy. Hosted by the Merseyside Skeptics Society.

### ▶ FRIDAY 18

#### Traces of Immigration walking tour

2.30pm outside Aldgate Underground station, Aldgate High Street, London EC3  
Discover the clear traces left by the various immigrant groups attracted to the East End of London on this two-hour tour led by David Charnick. For tickets, priced £15, concessions £10, got to eventbrite.co.uk/e/685142849707. Find out more at charnowalks.co.uk.



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# Morning Star

## Coventry Supporters' Group

invite you to a summer fundraiser and bash on

### Saturday August 19

Kick off 2pm

If interested email [tony.conway@live.co.uk](mailto:tony.conway@live.co.uk)





## Racing Guide

with Farrington

■ ASCOT, NEWMARKET, HAYDOCK, CURRAGH

# Fantastic Fox set to lead the way at Haydock Park today

HAVE to admit that this afternoon is arguably my least favourite big Saturday of racing of the flat season with the Shergar Cup at Ascot a nonentity in my eyes as a format of racing. You could also argue that it places the punter at an even greater disadvantage than normal with several jockeys riding at a track they are unfamiliar with. To my eyes, and I'm sure many of you may disagree, the team ethic in our sport is a complete load of cobblers with absolutely no loyalty from any fans, even more so than the Racing Series, and boy that is saying something!

However, the bottom line is, there are still races to be

run and won and if I were to have one wager on the whole card, then it would come in the opening handicap sprint at 1.35 on **EXISTENT** (pictured). He has been running in races mainly over his head in the past 12 months including the Group Two Temple Stakes (running a fair fourth) and then ninth of 17 (beaten a shade over five lengths) in the Group One King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot.

He was finally dropped to a more realistic level last time out on the opening day of the Glorious Goodwood, when second to course specialist Lord Riddiford after getting a far from clear run through the middle section of the race. Having been dropped a further 2lbs to a mark of 98, he has outstanding claims here especially as he will have at least some dig in the ground. A clear run this time around could see him reverse recent form at the track with Intrinsic Bond and Bond Chairman. In fact the biggest danger to the five-year-old could come from the relatively lightly raced three-year-old Michaela's Boy trained by Mick Appleby.

Elsewhere on the card at the Berkshire track expect a big run from the well handicapped **ALRIGHT SUNSHINE** in the stayers event at 2.10, while **THE WIZARD OF EYE** may well be up to defying top weight at a big price in the mile handicap off a mark of 103, his lowest rating for some nine months now.

If like me, you are hardly endeared towards the team meeting at Ascot, then the other cards up and down the country may well be a better medium for punting – and in particular at Newmarket with the Group Three Sweet Solera Stakes the highlight at 3.40.

Surprisingly, this seven-furlong event rarely produces a filly that goes onto make waves in the classics the following season, but I suspect that **JABAARA** could buck that trend. I was at Newmarket (Rowley Mile course) when she made a winning debut in May, and I think we can readily write off her run in the Albany Stakes at Royal Ascot (went off at 6/1) when she was way too keen through the first quarter mile to enable her to last out the full 1,200-metre trip.

Given plenty of time to recover from those exertions by trainer Roger Varian, the daughter of Exceed and Excel is taken to see off the likely favourite Soprano and Queen's Reign.

The major handicap on the card is the Handicap at 4.15 also over seven furlongs. There is little doubt that Master Richard is better than his down the field run in the Hambleton Handicap at York, and he could be worth another chance here, but I want to be on the side of **THUNDER BALL** who ran an absolute cracker against his own age group when a three length third of 29 behind Docklands in the Britannia Handicap at the Royal Ascot meeting.

I think that this drop back



to seven furlongs off a fast pace will see him in an even better light, and he gets the nod over Ann Duffield's charge and the very well treated First Folio who is not fully exposed at the trip.

Fully 4lbs lower than when a one-and-a-half lengths second of nine to Indemnify at Sandown Park, **HELM ROCK** has returned to a very nice rating in the London Mile Series Qualifier at Haydock Park at 2.25 and anything around the 25/1 mark would make him a very interesting betting proposal.

The Listed Dick Hern Stakes

at 4.10 looks as competitive a renewal of this extended mile event for many a year but if back to her best **CRYSTAL CAPRICE** has excellent claims based her fourth to Al Husn at Ayr. She was very free and had to race wide of the pack when well down the pack in the Kensington Palace Fillies Handicap at the Royal meet, and is well worth another chance here and may have most to fear from Purplepay.

At the back end of the card, the three-year-old handicap over a mile (4.50) only has eight entries but looks tough to call, but I have been wait-

ing for **WIND IN YOUR SAILS** to run again following a run on softer ground than she cares for at Chester last time out. With Newmarket unlikely to get much rain she could easily bounce back here at a price.

Finally, over at the Curragh have a second glance at **SHARTASH** in the Phoenix Sprint Stakes at 3.25. The youngster is taken to reverse recent Hackwood Stakes form with the hugely consistent Commanche Falls, and looks a solid each-way alternative to the Michael Dods-trained runner.

### WEEKEND TIPS

#### Farrington's Doubles

##### Saturday

**FANTASTIC FOX**  
Haydock 2.25 (nap)

**SHALADAR**  
Redcar 3.13

##### Sunday

**ANGELIC APPEAL**  
Curragh 3.20 (nap)

**FOX MASTER**  
Leicester 3.58

#### Houseman's Choice

##### Saturday

**MIDNIGHT MILE**  
Haydock 3.00

##### Sunday

**AJYAD**  
Leicester 4.28

### ■ WOMEN'S CYCLING

## Deignan says she has 'nothing to lose' in road race

by Our Sports Desk

LIZZIE DEIGNAN (left) knows all about the prize on offer in Sunday's elite women's road race at the UCI Cycling World Championships.

The 34-year-old expects to be helping her Great Britain teammates on the streets of Glasgow rather than targeting a second rainbow jersey of her own this weekend, but she still treasures the memory of her year wearing the famous stripes.

"You're celebrated at every single race that you go to. It's quite a privilege, it's a serious

lap of honour... it's unique in that way," Deignan said.

"But it's also a constant reminder every single time you train. You look down and you see the rainbow bands and it fills you with pride, and also motivation to keep pushing hard every day."

Sunday's race will also be special for Deignan as she returns to Glasgow and the scene of her Commonwealth title in 2014, something of a breakout moment for her as national results began to translate onto the international stage.

"To be able to go into the race in Glasgow as favourite and dic-

tate how I wanted the race to go, and to pull it off, that gave me a massive amount of confidence going forward," she said.

"It was a bit of a turning point... I've got a lot of fond memories in Glasgow. I won the national title there as well [in 2013]."

Deignan's life has changed considerably in the decade since.

As well as her world title, she has recorded major wins at Paris-Roubaix, the Tour of Flanders, Liege-Bastogne-Liege, Strade Bianche, the Women's Tour, Tour de Yorkshire and more.

After giving birth to her

daughter last September, Deignan returned to racing in April, and last month experienced the Tour de France Femmes for the first time.

The race immediately became the biggest on the women's calendar when it was relaunched last year, and Deignan said the intensity of it – the racing and the media attention that followed it – surprised her.

"I've done a lot of big events... but even I was taken aback by the kind of exhaustion you get from just the day-to-day living at the Tour de France as well as the bike-riding part," she said.





in brief

**Batley face Halifax in Wembley final**

**MEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE:** Batley make their first ever visit to Wembley today when they take on Halifax in the 1895 Cup final. Their match concludes an action-packed day in north-west London that begins with the women's Challenge Cup final, making its first ever appearance at the national stadium, between holders St Helens and last year's runners-up Leeds. Salford take on Hull KR in the men's Challenge Cup final at 3pm.

**Ipswich brush aside King's Lynn 51-39**

**SPEEDWAY:** Emil Sayfutdinov was on song yet again, bagging 13+1 points, as Ipswich brushed aside King's Lynn 51-39 for a fifth successive win that keeps their play-off hopes alive. Nicolai Klindt top-scored with 15 for King's Lynn. In Thursday's other fixture the Sheffield Tigers led from the first tape to batter Leicester 54-36 with Tobiasz Musielak grabbing 13+1 points and Tai Woffinden weighing in with 12+2.

**Dygart claims first place in time trial**

**WOMEN'S CYCLING:** American Chloe Dygart followed up her individual pursuit gold medal on the track by taking first place on the road in the individual time-trial at Glasgow's World Championships. Australia's Grace Brown took silver, six seconds behind Dygart, with Austrian Christina Schweinberger a further minute and seven seconds further back in third. Dygart has now won the rainbow bands on nine occasions at five different championships.

**West Indies take on India in Florida today**

**MEN'S CRICKET:** The campaign to raise cricket's profile in the United States continues today when the West Indies take on India in a Twenty20 match at Florida's Central Broward Park. The Windies lead the best of five series 2-1 after Suryakumar Yadav clubbed 83 from 44 balls to give India a seven wickets win in Guyana earlier this week. The series concludes with another fixture at the same venue on Sunday.

# Victory off the pitch for USWNT is what matters

**JAMES NALTON** writes about how even in their Women's World Cup defeat, US footballers represent America better than their detractors



**DEJECTED:** US players react following their loss to Sweden

PRIOR to being knocked out of this year's World Cup by Sweden, the talk around the United States national team was of a "three-peat." Of a third World Cup in a row and a fifth in total. It was a little optimistic, given they had not always looked at their best, or the most convincing (despite still registering plenty of good results) since Vlatko Andonovski took over from English coach Jill Ellis, but it was far from an unrealistic aim for the team still ranked No 1 in the world. Under Ellis, the United States enjoyed World Cup triumphs in Canada in 2015 and France in 2019. Given their record, having never finished worse than third place and having won the trophy four times since the first edition in 1991, the US had every reason to be confident. Some saw it as arrogance, and these more negative insinuations became more frequent after their defeat on penalties to Sweden in the last 16 which, somewhat ironically, was one of their better performances at this World Cup but still saw them exit at the earliest stage in their history. Such confidence, coupled with ability, has seen them

become the most successful team at the World Cup and one of America's most successful teams on the international stage in any sport. This self-belief also underpinned the team's fight for equality, not just in women's football and for themselves and their colleagues, but in everyday life for people across the globe. These players have inspired people to take up the sports they want to play and do the things they want to do, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or identity, and encouraged them to be themselves. Megan Rapinoe has been one of the driving forces behind this movement, though it has been a collective effort – as any such movement needs to be. But, often seen as the face of the team, Rapinoe has, as a result, taken the most criticism during any backlash. She was one of the first to take a knee in support of former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick's stance against racism and police brutality, and has been regularly vocal in support of LGBT rights. There has been support from numerous teammates throughout the years and from many players from other teams. Their

collective power has undoubtedly led to increased equality in sports. These actions and stances posed a dilemma for the many politicians and pundits who use national pride to their own ends – as a guise and an excuse to discriminate against others and foster some intolerant ideology – in that one of the most successful and most high-profile representatives of the United States on the world stage was standing for the very people their sort look to exclude. It revealed their true colours and exposed the patriotism of these people in politics and the media as bogus. Patriotism of this sort isn't about the love of a country and the people in it. It is a front to hide prejudice and discrimination. Of course, these traits are not unique to America and can be seen throughout the rest of the world. Governments, politicians and leaders disingenuously use patriotism, often along with military pageantry, as a facade for something more sinister and to get others on their side. This fake patriotism is also exposed by the long history of poor treatment and marginali-

sation of indigenous peoples, and the denial of their human and civil rights. Again, not unique to the United States. This patriotism is not about being proud of any sense of Americanness, but about chauvinistic imperialism at home and abroad that spreads fear of supposed outsiders and anger towards them. America has plenty of which it can be proud, including its huge, diverse and varied landscape, home to some of the world's great natural wonders. An idea of liberty that, though distorted, often by a falsely advertised American Dream, still exists somewhere deep down in the roots of the land and the societies living on it. And civil rights campaigners plus other related groups and figures that have made progress against the odds and made a great impact for good on a global scale. The United States women's soccer team is now part of that history, and their contribution has perhaps been revealed even more in defeat. Their success in recent years was not just on the pitch, though it helped to some degree. The biggest impact has been made off it. A worst-ever performance in the World Cup is not the end of

this work, either, and there is a chance for another group of players to continue this fight. Where the team finished in a tournament is irrelevant to their struggle for equality. And it is a struggle because, as seen in the aftermath of this World Cup exit, much of the mass media favours the other side, or at least repeats their ideas uncritically, posing as reporters but in reality being a willing negative influence that reinforces intolerant, discriminatory views. It is ridiculous to suggest that only a winning team can fight for equality and human rights, but this is what some covering the team have actually suggested or alluded to. Others have even put forward the equally ridiculous idea that this work has merely been part of a brand rather than a sincere attempt by these players to use their platform to make things easier for people in everyday life. Rapinoe's life would have been much easier had she not been the spokesperson for this movement, but she and many of her teammates took the more difficult route of trying to change things for the better. These players are more representative of America than their detractors, in victory or defeat.



**O**VER these past couple of weeks the good, the bad and the ugly of boxing has been on display as never before in such technicolour detail.

The good was provided by the much anticipated welterweight undisputed clash between Terence Crawford and Errol Spence at the Fortress in Las Vegas on July 29. Both fighters climbed into the ring as products of the kind of adversity you would instantly associate with a cliched Rocky script.

From the unforgiving streets of Omaha, Nebraska, Crawford is a man who survived being shot in the head one night in 2008 while sitting in his car counting the cash he'd just won from shooting dice under a street lamp. The guy who shot him was a sore loser, clearly, yet as Crawford later tells it: "It was my own fault. I should've taken the money and gotten out of there, instead of waiting to count it in the car."

Interesting, and also enlightening, that one of the best to ever lace up the gloves places the blame for being shot in the head on his own failure to take the money and run rather than the fact he was shooting dice in the company of mad bastards willing to shoot people in the head over a game of craps – but hey-ho.

Errol Spence's travails came in the form of not just one but two car crashes, in 2019 and 2022 respectively. The first one was so serious that it completely totalled the Ferrari he was driving at the time. The Texan was lucky to survive, never mind be able to resume his ring career, yet resume it he did under the tutelage of 2022 trainer of the year Derrick James.

Backstories aside, the outcome on July 29 was an emphatic victory by TKO in the 9th round by Terence Crawford to claim not only the mantle of undisputed welterweight champion against his hitherto undefeated opponent, but also the status of the sport's undisputed pound for pound king.

No-one could have predicted how one-sided this battle would turn out. Indeed, to state that Crawford dominated is to be indicted on the charge of understatement. The Nebraskan was clinical and precise from the opening bell in the way he utilised Spence's much vaunted and usually feared front foot pressure against him in classic matador versus bull style.

By the third round Spence had already run out of ideas and was fighting on heart and will alone, continuing to bull forward behind a normally devastating jab to find himself being stopped in his tracks by Crawford's quicker jab and a thunderous right hook that couldn't miss.

There is no argument that much of Errol Spence's problems were down to him struggling to make weight. On the scales the day before he



**THE GOOD:** Terence Crawford (left) and Errol Spence Jr go head to head in Las Vegas

# The good, the bad, and the ugly sides of boxing

**JOHN WIGHT** discusses the intriguing recent action going on in the sport, including Crawford v Spence and Whyte's banned drugs test

appeared dry and depleted, but as Crawford's trainer Brian MacIntyre pointed out afterwards, "He signed the contract."

Regardless of any weight issues, Spence to his credit made no excuses afterwards and only alluded to his issues in this regard by stating that he would like a rematch at 154lbs. However, given how one-sided the first fight was, there seems little appetite for an immediate rematch among most pundits and commentators.

What is not in doubt is that the 154lbs middleweight division is where both Spence and Crawford are headed next. The prospect of them doing so is salivating for the much neglected sport's purists, who've seen themselves kicked to the kerb in recent years by promoters and broadcasters more inter-

ested in appeasing so-called "casual fans."

The "bad" in the triptych underpinning this offering is the banned drugs test registered by Dillian Whyte just one week in advance of his scheduled rematch against Anthony Joshua in London. It came as a depressing reminder that as things stand, top flight boxing is as dirty as a dog's arse.

The later revelations that Whyte failed not just one but multiple VADA tests in the lead-up to this weekend's scheduled bout should, if there remains a scintilla of credibility in boxing, mark the end of Whyte's career, given that he's failed two previous tests. If so, Dillian Whyte's legacy will be defined by his good fortune in operating in an era when the heavyweight division was historically weak in comparison to previous

times. More than that, it will be defined by him being a cheat in the one sport where to do so is to be potentially guilty of manslaughter.

This latest scandal demands serious reform, because clearly the status quo of multiple sanctioning bodies, lack of a uniform structure and governance, and with promoters wielding more power than is healthy, is in itself a scandal. The greed that has seen the likes of WBC heavyweight champion Tyson Fury being able to avoid facing a mandatory challenger in over a year, and instead face a UFC heavyweight former champion in Saudi in his next fight, is asphyxiating the game to the point where it is fast becoming a parody.

When it comes to ugly, look no further than YouTuber Jake Paul's continuing attempts to

present himself as a serious contender for a future shot at a legitimate world title. His most recent foray last weekend against a punch drunk and shot to pieces opponent in the shape of the UFC's Nate Diaz was hard on the eyes.

Diaz was unsteady on his legs even before the opening bell, making it incomprehensible that he was able to pass a pre-fight medical worthy of the name. He fought like a drunk man on a tightrope, so all over the shop was he. Diaz is the archetypal fighter who needs to be saved from himself, but sadly, not to mention grimly, when there are dollars at stake nothing else matters.

Though Paul came out on top of this 10-round affair, he did so with his reputation damaged. Even newly installed trainer Shane Mosley could not and

will not be able to polish this turd. Though anyone with the minerals to climb into a boxing ring deserves credit, they don't deserve opportunities that fighters who've come up the hard way never get.

Paul's form under the lights is woeful, with his throw so wide from his body they need air traffic control to guide them in. His feet and his hands are like strangers, they operate so completely detached from each other, and his chin hangs in the air like his mother's washing. If Jake Paul's a boxer then I'm a banana, yet judging by the attendance at this circus in Dallas last weekend, there are thousands of bananas out there with more money than sense.

Overall, when it comes to boxing, things need to improve – and fast.





**WOMEN'S FOOTBALL**

# EARPS WARNS COLOMBIA: OUR BEST IS YET TO COME

Lionesses ready for quarter-final in front of a sold-out crowd in Sydney

by Our Sports Desk

GOALKEEPER Mary Earps (pictured) vowed that "the best is yet to come" from England as they prepare to face Colombia in today's Women's World Cup quarter-final in Sydney.

The Lionesses will need to reach the final four without forward Lauren James, who has contributed three goals and three assists this tournament but will be serving the first of her two-match ban for the red card she was issued in England's last-16 encounter with Nigeria.

While Sarina Wiegman's side have battled their way into this round, dominance has been largely replaced by dogged determination to grind out wins and keep the dream of lifting a first World Cup trophy alive.

Earps said: "I think it's an exciting time to be an England player for sure, but we have to earn that right every day.

"And I think that we're constantly looking to improve and drive performance and drive our standards and I think that that's the best thing about it. We're not sitting here, of course we're happy that we're here and grateful that we're here, but we're not satisfied, we're not done, and there's still more



levels we want to go.

"I really believe the best is yet to come. I think there's so much talent in the group, and so many more levels we can go, I really do believe that."

Earps has so far conceded just one goal across four World Cup matches this tournament, save for the two spot-kicks that went past her in England's dra-

matic 4-2 victory on penalties against Nigeria to set up this Colombia meeting.

The 10-woman Lionesses survived 30 minutes of extra time to force those penalties after 21-year-old James was sent off late in the second half for stepping on the back of Nigeria's Michelle Alozie, an act for which she later apologised.

The red-card incident triggered an automatic one-match ban which was extended to two games on Thursday night by Fifa's disciplinary committee, a decision which would make the Chelsea prodigy available for a potential England final on August 20.

Wiegman confirmed the other 22 members of her squad are fit to play against Colombia, who boast their own youthful weapon in Real Madrid's 18-year-old forward Linda Caicedo.

While the Lionesses have benefited from solid defending, they have looked less convincing in attack outside of their 6-1 victory over China in the group stage, with just one other goal – indeed from James – from open play.

Earps' feels her faith in her side to find another gear is justified by what the Fifa Best award-winning keeper sees from her team-mates every time they train at the Central Coast Stadium.

Earps added: "I think the most important thing to note about that is the fact that we've been winning games.

"We're in a results business, and we've earned the right to be in the position we're in today. But obviously I experience training every day, I know the players personally, and I've

had the privilege of working with them for some time.

"I can see it just day to day. I just can see the talent in the team. Don't get me wrong, I don't think we've been bad by any means, but I think you have seen glimpses of what we're capable of.

"We as a team know the standard we want to get to. Our efforts have been 110 per cent and we've driven out and we've grinded out those results.

"However, in terms of the way that we'd like to dominate games and the way that we'd like to go about our business. I think as a group, we're excited by that challenge of knowing that we think we can do more."

Nigeria head coach Randy Waldrum hoped his side's ability to hold England to a goalless draw for 120 minutes could serve as a "blueprint" for the Lionesses' future opponents.

That baton has now been passed to Colombia boss Nelson Abadia, who said: "To know all the history that England brings with football, this is important, but for me it's important to perform on the pitch.

"The optimism is the same that we have been having for every match. We know the conditions, we know the ability, we know what our team has and how they can face this match."



**MEN'S FOOTBALL**

Arsenal boss relishes return to the Premier League today

ARSENAL host Nottingham Forest today as the Premier League returns this weekend, with boss Mikel Arteta (top) relishing the prospect.

While Steve Cooper's side ended Arsenal's hopes of winning the title back in May, handing the trophy to Manchester City in the process, Arteta is full of anticipation for the new season, while underlining he still enjoys his job as manager of the North London giants.

"I love it," the Basque-born 41-year-old told the Morning Star, adding: "Easier? I wouldn't say it's easier, especially with all the other managers [improving their squads] in the Premier League."

However, Arteta is full of energy and has a burning desire to go one better during the forthcoming campaign, and steer Arsenal to the title for the first time since the Invincibles, 20 years ago. "I love my job," said Arteta, adding: "I love what I do, I feel so grateful for what I do, and I want to continue improving this club."

Record signing Declan Rice will make his Arsenal league debut, while Kai Havertz and Jurrien Timber should feature, with Olexsandr Zinchenko and Jorginho also in contention. Gabriel Jesus is out as he recovers from surgery.

Forest may hand a start to ex-Gunners goalkeeper Matt Turner, while Anthony Elanga could make his first Forest appearance after moving from Manchester United.

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**MEN'S RUGBY UNION**

# England 'want to have a ruthless scrum' against Wales



by Our Sports Desk

ENGLAND want to develop their scrum into a "ruthless" weapon in time for the World Cup as Wales provide another important test of progress at Twickenham today.

A major improvement in the scrum was evident during the Six Nations, when it emerged as the most effective in the tournament just months after being statistically the worst among tier one sides.

It wobbled in the opening Summer Nations match in Cardiff, however, and England are looking to bounce back in the second instalment of the double header.

Adding to the stakes for today's showdown between the old rivals is that should England fall to a defeat of any

description, they will slump to ninth in the global rankings – their lowest position since the standings were introduced in 2003.

"We want to have a ruthless scrum. England want to scrummage," scrum coach Tom Harrison said.

"Joe Marler and Dan Cole are in the squad and those two players want to scrummage.

"What we're working on is if it doesn't go right or there is a problem, how can we solve it quickly?

"How can we be so ruthless that if a team tries to do something against us, we can solve the problem?"

"Against Wales I thought there were some good bits with our scrum and some bits to improve.

"I hope you'll see a pack that's going to work and one that will show physicality.

"Everything we're doing is building towards the World Cup and we want to have a good performance against Wales."

England are fielding a team that is close to their strongest XV as preparations for their opener against Argentina on September 9 ratchet up.

Owen Farrell (left) leads the side and is joined by fellow big guns Maro Itoje, Jamie George and Billy Vunipola, with Elliot Daly and Henry Arundell adding finishing ability on the wings.

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