

INSIDE YOUR TUC BUMPER EDITION

With Paddy Lillis, Jo Grady, Zita Holbourne & more – as well as your usual news, culture and sport



TUC's **Frances O'Grady** tells Ben Chacko the pandemic has exposed terrible inequalities: p14

Unite's **Len McCluskey** on why and how our movement can put justice on top of the agenda: p16



Bakers' union's **Sarah Woolley** speaks to Bethany Rielly about the importance of unions: p16

Unison's **Roger McKenzie** on black lives mattering every day and not just when it is fashionable: p23



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STOP THE JOBS MASSACRE

TUC challenges government to stand by working families

by Peter Lazenby

THE TUC will lead calls today for ministers to abandon plans to dump the furlough scheme on which 9.6 million workers depend.

Trade unions, the Labour Party and business organisations are united in opposition to the Tory government's plans to abolish the job retention scheme on October 31.

The TUC, along with the Commons Treasury committee, the Labour Party, employers' groups the Confederation of British Industry and the Federation of Small Businesses and manufacturing body Make UK, warned the government of the "shock to the economy and the resulting job losses that will

come with the abrupt end of the job retention scheme.

During the annual TUC Congress, which is being held online today and tomorrow, general secretary Frances O'Grady will make a direct appeal to Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

Speaking on behalf of six million trade union members, Ms O'Grady will say: "Unions pushed for the jobs retention scheme. Millions of livelihoods were saved – both employees and the self-employed.

"From this Thursday, it will be just 45 days before the scheme ends. That's the notice period that companies have to give if they intend to make mass redundancies.

"If the government doesn't act, we face a tsunami of job losses. So

my message to the Chancellor is this: 'We worked together once before. We are ready to work with you again, if you are serious about stopping the catastrophe of mass unemployment.'

Ms O'Grady will call on Mr Sunak to "stand by working families – don't walk away."

She will add: "The pandemic isn't scheduled to end in October, so neither should state support for jobs.

"It's so much better to keep people working, paying their taxes, spending and helping to rebuild the economy.

"The price of unemployment is always too high. And it's always paid by ordinary working families."

The TUC is urging the government to follow the examples of Austria, France and Germany, which

have adopted a "short-time working" scheme in place of furlough.

Ms O'Grady will say: "When the crisis began, the Chancellor said he would do 'whatever it takes.' He must keep that promise. Some will ask can the country afford to do it? The answer is we can't afford not to."

An initial 450,000 redundancies have been predicted by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) when the furlough scheme is abolished, rising to 700,000 in the coming months.

IES director Tony Wilson said: "This data lays bare the scale of the jobs crisis that we're facing in the autumn, with half a million people likely to lose their jobs in the coming months.

"Our top priority must be to support those facing the prospect of losing their

jobs to find new, secure and good-quality work as quickly as possible.

"We also mustn't accept that all of these redundancies are inevitable."

Mr Wilson warned that although most of those who were furloughed by their employers were now back at work, there were still "many parts of the economy where perfectly viable businesses cannot bring people back because of the ongoing disruption caused by the pandemic."

He called for "tightly targeted support" to help firms ride out the next few months, enabling them to commit to avoiding redundancies.

Workers can follow the TUC Congress at tuc.org.uk/Congresslive

news@peoples-press.com

▶ Star comment: p14

TUC

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find the best one for you: <https://findyourunion.tuc.org.uk/>

SCOTLAND – COVID-19

Leonard blasts Amazon's tracing role

SCOTTISH LABOUR leader Richard Leonard hit out yesterday at a decision to involve online retail giant Amazon in work on Scotland's new Covid-19 tracing app.

Amazon's computing arm AWS will be paid £15 million under a contract for services to the NHS that include assistance with the new contact-tracing app.

A report in the Sunday Mail suggests that AWS is working with the Scottish government on the new Protect Scotland app, which was launched last week.

The decision has been criticised as "short-changing the taxman," following concerns over the lack of tax paid by US billionaire Jeff Bezos's firm.

Mr Leonard said: "The

fact that such a contract was awarded to this internet shopping company highlights the dearth in our own infrastructure and shows just how unprepared the Scottish government was for a public health crisis.

"The state should instead be playing an entrepreneurial role in supporting technological development for the public good."

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Unite victorious over Green's workforce-sacking wheeze

by Peter Lazenby

A COMPANY owned by billionaire tax exile Sir Philip Green has dropped plans to halve payments to sacked staff after the Unite union challenged the legality of the decision.

Mr Green, who lives in the tax haven of Monaco, is the boss of retail group Arcadia, which includes Topshop, Topman, Wallis, Evans, Burton, Miss Selfridge, Dorothy Perkins and Outfit.

Arcadia was to sack 500 of its 2,500-strong head office workforce, after exploiting the taxpayer-funded furlough scheme to keep them employed.

The company told the sacked workers that they will receive only half of the notice money to which they are entitled.

Unite consulted its legal advisers with a view to taking court action, but the company backed down on Saturday, handing the union what it hailed as "an amazing victory."

Regional officer Debbie McSweeney said: "We understand that it is

almost without precedent for Arcadia to apologise for such behaviour towards employees, but this situation should have never been allowed by Sir Philip Green, one of the country's richest men.

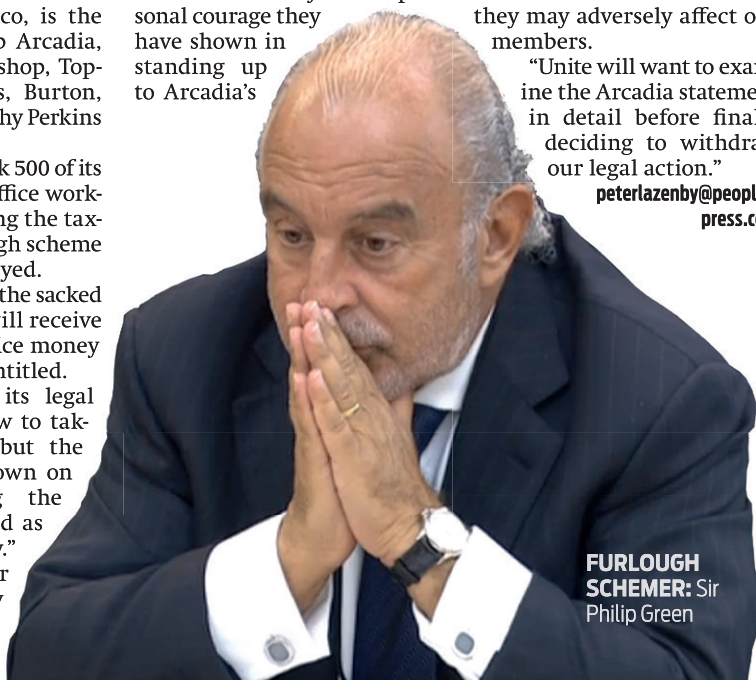
"Unite would like to sincerely thank our members for the solidarity and personal courage they have shown in standing up to Arcadia's

management and playing their part in righting a flagrant pay injustice. It is an amazing victory.

"This is also a warning to other employers who may be thinking of taking advantage of the government's furlough scheme – Unite is on high alert for such cases and how they may adversely affect our members.

"Unite will want to examine the Arcadia statement in detail before finally deciding to withdraw our legal action."

peterlazenby@peoples-press.com



FURLOUGH SCHEMER: Sir Philip Green



SCOTTISH LABOUR

Proposals for key staff and women to be lead candidates

by Niall Christie
Scotland editor

WOMEN and keyworkers could be leading candidates for Scottish Labour at next year's election after proposals to do so were approved by the party's executive.

Labour's Scottish executive committee (SEC) met on Saturday, with plans to reform how candidates are selected by the party among the issues discussed by members.

The proposals, unveiled by party leader Richard Leonard last week, would see a woman top each of the eight regional lists of candidates for the Scottish Parliament.

It is understood the plans would also see those with other protected characteristics, including disabled and BAME women, prioritised.

The proposals were "unanimously" approved by the SEC, and will now be subject to legal advice.

Mr Leonard said: "I am pleased to report that Scottish

Labour's executive has agreed to principles set out by me which would increase women's representation, extend diversity, and encourage key workers to come forward and stand for our party in 2021."

The new rules could see some rebel MSPs who sought to oust Mr Leonard in recent weeks replaced.

Scottish Labour's deputy leader Jackie Baillie had joined calls for the Scottish leader to step down and reportedly gave her backing to an SEC motion signed by MSPs Mark Griffin and Jenny Marra of no confidence in Mr Leonard.

However, the proposed motion was withdrawn during the SEC meeting on Saturday morning, with those opposing the socialist leadership failing to get enough backing.

Mr Leonard said: "There must be an end to the internal plotting and we must

unite to hold the Scottish government to account and to offer a real alternative.

"It's time for Scottish Labour to stand together and to stand with the Scottish people at a time when risks caused by the pandemic are rising again and when the economy is on the edge of a deep recession with jobs and livelihoods in peril.

"I firmly believe that I am the best person to lead us into next year's elections with a plan for jobs and real economic and social transformation which I know is shared by [Sir] Keir Starmer.

"I have listened to the concerns expressed about me, I will treat those with respect and humility, and I will fight with every ounce of my being to improve the fortunes of the party in the run-up to next year's election. We need unity, not division."

niallchristie@peoples-press.com

Morning Star

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CASH NOT CLAPS: NHS staff and supporters march on Regent Street in central London as part of a series of marches and rallies from across the country calling for a 15% pay rise for NHS workers and an increase in NHS funding



HEALTHCARE

ACTIVISTS RALLY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND

ALARMING: Trade unions and health staff warn of more private-sector involvement in NHS

by Peter Lazenby

UNIONS and health professionals have condemned the government's abolition of Public Health England (PHE) to replace it with an NHS management body.

The government's decision followed PHE criticism of the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and other issues.

Eleven trade unions and professional groups with members in the NHS have condemned the decision, and have written to Health Secretary Matt Hancock today expressing "alarm."

The government is replacing PHE with a "National Institute for Health Protection."

Unions warn that the institute has been created without consultation and with no clear plans for the future of the NHS. It raises the risk of fur-



ther private-sector encroachment on the service.

The letter reads: "We urge you to ensure that we have an adequately resourced national public health system with sufficient capacity, resilience and access to data, research and analysis over the long term to address all domains of public health effectively."

"We seek a binding commitment to the independence of the National Institute for Health Protection and public health professionals and their

vital ability to speak truth to power and to the public at a national, regional and local level."

Prospect general secretary Mike Clancy said: "We are in the middle of a pandemic which is having a devastating effect on the economy and the nation's health and instead of dealing with it the government is abolishing the very body responsible for public health."

The Royal College of Nursing's Susan Masters said: "The expertise and professionalism

within the organisations being brought together are outstanding in their own right and of critical national importance, especially at this time.

"It is vital that the government engages appropriately and plans effectively to ensure staff are supported and empowered, now and in the future."

Unite national officer Jackie Williams said: "Serious questions need to be asked about the political decisions behind why PHE has been axed in this disgraceful fashion."

Public and Commercial Services union general secretary Mark Serwotka said: "The decision to abolish PHE and set up the National Institute for Health Protection without consulting unions and considering the staff is another reckless move by a dangerously incompetent government."

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PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Corbyn: Tories using global pandemic to privatise NHS

by Lamiat Sabin
Parliamentary reporter

JEREMY CORBYN has warned that the Tories are using the coronavirus crisis as an excuse to privatise "large elements" of the NHS.

In an online Rally for Socialist Change on Saturday, the former Labour Party leader criticised the government for hiring private companies to provide services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He said: "The dangers of the privatisation of the NHS have never been greater than during the Covid crisis."

"There have been massive contracts already handed out to Serco and many other companies to deal with [contact tracing or other elements]."

The Islington North MP criticised the mainstream media for having derided his efforts last year to expose a Tory government plot to put the NHS on the table in post-Brexit trade negotiations with the United States.

At a packed press conference in November, copies of 451 pages of uncensored trade negotiation papers, which Mr Corbyn said proved that the



government was ready to sell the NHS to US firms, were handed to journalists.

Mr Corbyn said: "What was the response from our [mainstream media]?"

"Was it to thank me for releasing these documents and for putting them in the public domain and showing just what a threat to the NHS a Tory government was and a sweetheart trade deal with Donald Trump would be?"

"No, they claimed that they were a Russian plant and [in] some way or another Russia was involved."

The rally, watched by more than 1,400 people, was held exactly five years since Mr Corbyn was elected to lead Labour.

Looking back on his record, he said he was "proud" of government policy changes won during his leadership and his party's apology for the Iraq War, as well as Labour's policies for economic transformation, social justice, human rights, greater democracy, community organising, the environment and refugees' welfare.

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WORKERS' RIGHTS

Kent council 'victimised' GMB union rep

A COUNCIL in Kent has been accused by the GMB of victimising a union representative after he lodged a complaint about bullying.

The union said that managers at Thanet Council have twice suspended the union activist, who raised grievances in June and July last year.

GMB is accusing the council bosses of trying to "gag" the trade unionist by instructing

him to sign a non-disclosure agreement on the issue.

The union has written to the council stating that the trade unionist's email account has been hacked and his personal belongings have been removed from his office.

GMB and public service union Unison have written to the council asking for an investigation of the management's actions.

Their letter states: "The joint trade unions believe that by carrying out a truly independent investigation, and ensuring that the recommendations come from someone independent of the council, Thanet District Council will be able to close this very bad chapter in its history."

A spokesperson for the council said that it "will not discuss human resources matters in public."

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NASUWT
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The NASUWT sends greetings to everyone at TUC Congress

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Completed forms should be sent to Sherene Nelson-Cruddas, snelson-cruddas@stuc.org.uk

The closing date for receipt of application is 12 noon on Monday 14th September 2020.

We anticipate that interviews are likely to take place in early October 2020.

POVERTY

Foodbanks see 61 per cent surge as first-time users rise

by Our News Desk

FOODBANKS are expecting a 61 per cent surge in demand this winter, with a charity fearing a “catastrophic rise in poverty” if urgent support is not made available.

New research released by the Trussell Trust today lays bare the devastating impact of the coronavirus crisis, particularly on families and children, with tens of thousands driven to use foodbanks for the first time.

Earlier this year, the charity reported a surge in foodbank use, recording an 89 per cent increase in emergency packages given out compared with the same month in 2019.

Many of them were given to first-time users, as 100,000 households joined the ranks of those surviving on foodbank aid between April and June, the latest research reveals.

The trust, which runs a network of 1,000 foodbanks nation-



If we don't act now we will see further catastrophic rises in poverty in the future

wide, has warned that the need for such help could soar even higher if unemployment rises as high as predicted following the end of the job retention scheme.

Chief executive Emma Revie said: “Our research finds that Covid-19 has led to tens of thousands of new people needing to use a foodbank for the first

time. This is not right.

“If we don't take action now, there will be further catastrophic rises in poverty in the future.

“With the furlough scheme set to wind down, we must act now to put in place protection for each other.

“The Budget and comprehensive spending review present a pivotal opportunity to put things right.”

The research, carried out by Heriot-Watt University, estimates that 670,000 additional people could be classed as destitute by the end of this year, meaning that the charity could face a 61 per cent surge in need this winter.

The government has provided an extra £9.3 billion in welfare support, including increasing universal credit payments by £20 a week, but many housing groups and trade unions have warned that this is not enough.

news@peoples-press.com

FULL STEAM AHEAD: Midland 4F 43924 hauls the first Pullman service along the Keighley and Worth Valley since March. After local restrictions were lifted in the Keighley area, this Saturday the railway operated two steam services but pre-booking was essential along with a number of Covid safety measures.
Pic: Neil Terry Photography



RACISM

FAR-RIGHT GROUP TARGETS YOUNG ON SOCIAL MEDIA

FASCISM ON THE INCREASE: New British Hand calls for violent attacks on refugees and Muslims

by Bethany Rielly

A NEW far-right group that has called for attacks on refugees in Dover is recruiting minors through social media.

Members of the British Hand have posted information on how to modify, make and acquire weapons and pledged to infiltrate the army.

The leader of the 15-person “cell,” believed to be a 15-year-old living in Derby, has repeatedly called for “urgent and extreme” violence against refugees in Dover and Muslims, with other members expressing willingness to carry out such acts.

The group, which emerged in July following Black Lives Matter protests, has been exposed by anti-racist monitoring organisation Hope Not Hate in a report published today entitled Hitler Youths: the Rise of Teenage Far-Right Terrorists.

The report details how the group's members use social media platforms Instagram and Telegram to share material glorifying the perpetrators of white supremacist massacres including last year's mosque



RIISING TIDE OF RACISM: An anti-migrant protester in Dover

shootings in Christchurch, New Zealand, with its leader boasting that the British Hand is “gonna be bigger than them.”

Lead author Patrik Hermanson said his research exposed a “dangerous and tragic emerging trend within the far right,” in which minors as young as 12 are being recruited by hate-mongers.

“Schools, security agencies and the police must prioritise this growing threat,” he said. “We are seeing minors being groomed, radicalised and

organised online, sometimes by adults, sometimes by each other.”

“This isn't a distant possibility – we have already seen a string of high-profile teenage terror convictions; the danger is real and we need action on and offline before serious harm is done.”

The warning follows the conviction last year of a 16-year-old from Durham, who had written about race war. He was jailed after attempting to order bomb-making materials from

a contact in the United States.

This autumn, two teenagers are due to face trial on terrorism-related charges over their alleged involvement with an outlawed neonazi group.

British counterterrorism police have also highlighted the growing fascist threat, revealing in a report last September that a third of all terrorist murder plots since 2017 were motivated by far-right causes.

Hope not Hate's report warns that the British Hand is one of many explicitly violent far-right groups forming rapidly online.

While most are thought to have very few members, or even just one, the authors pointed out that it only takes one individual to carry out an attack.

Weyman Bennett of Stand Up To Racism commented: “Small but dangerous fascist groups are growing in an atmosphere built by racism from the top coming from [US President Donald] Trump, Boris Johnson and our present Home Secretary Priti Patel, who is scapegoating refugees and migrants to misdirect anger against the impending economic crisis.”

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INDUSTRIAL

Hospital staff welcome real living wage pay rise

CLEANERS, porters and caterers on outsourced contracts at three Hertfordshire hospitals hailed victory yesterday after they were given the real living wage.

The move means that 400 NHS-support staff, employed by Mitie, will receive a pay increase from the minimum wage of £8.72 to £9.30 an hour.

The decision by West Hertfordshire NHS Trust follows months of campaigning by members of GMB, who work at Watford, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead hospitals.

The pay rise will also be back-

dated from November 2019.

Welcoming the decision, GMB London regional organiser Hilda Tavolara said: “This pay rise will help our members to feel that they are now recognised with as much dignity and respect as their NHS colleagues.”

A porter employed at West Herts said that workers have had to rely on overtime shifts because the minimum wage was not enough. “It's been so tough for all of us and while a bit of extra cash is welcome – we deserve the same as every other NHS key worker.”

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■ DIPLOMACY

Official calls Dunn a 'bad guy' in email

A DOWNING STREET staff member labelled Harry Dunn's family spokesman a "bad guy" in an internal email after the latter voiced concerns of a potential cover-up over the teenager's death.

Mr Dunn's mother Charlotte Charles has demanded an urgent meeting with PM Boris Johnson and a personal apology to the spokesman Radd Seiger.

The email was in response Mr Seiger's statement on Twitter after a meeting with United States President Donald Trump in October, in which he wrote that the family were intent on exposing "misconduct ... on both sides of the Atlantic."

Commenting on the email from the unnamed staffer, a Downing Street spokeswoman said: "We apologise for the content of this email, which was inappropriate."

Mr Dunn was 19 when he died in a crash involving his motorbike and a car outside RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire last year.

The US asserted diplomatic immunity for his alleged killer Anne Sacoolas, the wife of a CIA officer working in Britain. She returned to the US almost three weeks after the crash.

She was charged with causing death by dangerous driving in December, but the Home Office's extradition request was rejected by the US State Department in January.

■ NASUWT

'Schools failing on safety'

TEACHING union NASUWT has warned that schools in Glasgow are failing to ensure teacher safety amid the coronavirus pandemic.

A survey of members found evidence of a lack of protections in the city's schools, the union said on Saturday.

No teacher said that pupils were fully respecting social-distancing measures and just 6 per cent reported that managers were "modelling and reinforcing messages on the need for physical distancing."

More than half of staff (62 per cent) said that they felt unsafe or very unsafe in their workplace, rising to 80 per cent of extremely vulnerable teachers.

The number of teachers testing positive for coronavirus in Scotland has continued to rise since schools returned last month.

NASUWT Scotland national official Jane Peckham said: "School and college employers must ensure that physical distancing, PPE and effective cleaning measures are implemented."

■ EU WITHDRAWAL

Starmmer says party may back Johnson's new Brexit plans

by Lamiat Sabin

LABOUR leader Sir Keir Starmer said yesterday that he could back Boris Johnson's new Brexit legislation if the PM addresses "substantial cross-party concerns" over the Internal Market Bill.

Mr Starmer raised further objections over the Bill that the government proposed last week, that seeks to override parts of the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) that relate to Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is currently supposed to adhere to some EU regulations after the transition period ends on December 31, in a bid to stop a "hard border" with the Republic.

The Bill, which would axe requirements for new customs arrangements in the six counties and would end the WA's legitimacy in areas such as state aid, will be debated today in the Commons.

Amendments are expected from both sides of the house.

Senior chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Rachel Reeves confirmed that Labour would vote against the Bill as it stands.

But, writing in the Sunday Telegraph, Sir Keir said that Labour is "prepared to back" the proposed legislation with substantial changes to help ministers to "get on with Brexit."

Mr Starmer said: "Labour



is prepared to play its part in making that happen."

He added: "But if they do not [make changes], and the talks collapse, then it is their failure and incompetence that will have let the British people down."

Mr Starmer accused Mr Johnson of having "turned the clock back" in UK-EU negotiations and of "reigniting old rows" by introducing the Bill.

Last week, Labour and the SNP raised concerns over the Bill potentially breaching international law and enabling a "power grab" from Scottish and Welsh administrations.

The Communist Party has argued that the Bill "ups the ante" in negotiations with the EU.

CP international secretary

John Foster wrote in the Morning Star last week that the Bill could have long-term ramifications for industrial policy in Britain.

"The Bill explicitly withdraws powers delegated to legislatures in Scotland and Wales to provide financial aid to industry – for Scotland as long ago as the Scotland Act of 1998," he wrote.

"And it similarly blocks any attempt to secure parallel powers for regional authorities in England."

Mr Johnson's official spokesman has claimed that Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff Bay would benefit from powers returned from Brussels.

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■ SCOTLAND

Concerns grow over construction

by Niall Christie
Scotland editor

SCOTTISH LABOUR has raised concerns about thousands of potential job losses in the construction industry, calling for targeted financial support for employees in the sector.

Party leader Richard Leonard said that those working in construction must be included in any Scottish jobs guarantee scheme to prevent a "tidal wave" of redundancies.

Over 164,000 people in Scotland are employed in the construction industry and the sector has the second-highest uptake of the furlough scheme.

About 73 per cent of all construction jobs have been furloughed, accounting for around 89,200 roles.

Scottish Labour stressed that the industry is "vital" and will be needed to play a key role in Scotland's economic recovery from the pandemic.

With the sector facing difficulty reopening due to coronavirus-related legislation and social distancing, Labour

MSPs are calling on the Scottish government to provide targeted support and to ensure that construction workers are included in any scheme safeguard jobs.

Mr Leonard said: "With the furlough scheme coming to an end, we simply cannot allow so many construction workers to be made redundant."

"These are vital skilled jobs that will be incredibly important in the building projects and infrastructure development that is needed for Scotland to recover from this crisis."

Scottish Labour also reiterated calls for the Westminster government to extend furlough in other badly affected sectors.

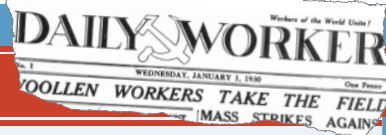
Mr Leonard added: "The UK government must extend the furlough scheme for the hardest-hit sectors of the economy, and the Scottish government must also implement targeted support for the construction sector."

"If we are to build back better, we must ensure that Scotland's builders are ready to do their part."

niallchristie@peoples-press.com

Exploring the Morning Star archives

80 YEARS AGO TODAY...



Communists pay a visit to 10 Downing Street

THE Daily Worker's splash on September 14 said: "Communists in Whitehall demand action for relief now."

More than 1,000 dead and 4,300 seriously wounded was reported in what the Worker called "a very incomplete report."

The feeling among the "tens of thousands of people seeking to 'camp out' in the Tubes" was that the government ought to act to protect the public, the paper said.

To this end London communists sent a delegation to see the prime minister himself in order to force this "urgent, life-and-death demand" on the government.

The Worker said that this was the first time that anyone had brought the "real voice of suffering people" to the attention of Downing Street.

The deputation handed in a memorandum to No 10. The response was a covering letter from the PM's secretary asking them to go to the Home Office.

The delegates went there and spent two hours pressing the demands for Londoners.

The team was composed of men and women who held "responsible positions in the trade union and co-operative organisations, many of them were themselves homeless as a result of the raids."

It was pointed out that many families had been wiped out in Anderson shelters, basements were dangerous and surface shelters were of no use against bombs.

The demand was for vacant shelters to be "thrown open" and for the Tubes to be open pending the construction of "Haldane shelters."

What was needed, the delegation said, was for all empty flats, houses, mansions and luxury hotels to be requisitioned to be used to house the homeless.

You can read editions of the **Daily Worker** (1930-45) and **Morning Star** (2000-today), online at mstar.link/DWMSarchive
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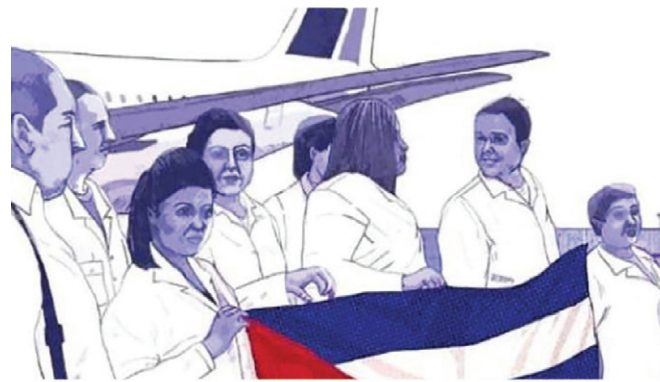
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Monday September 14, 6.30pm-7.30pm, via Zoom

with Prof. Keith Ewing (IER President); Andy McDonald (shadow employment rights secretary); Dave Ward (CWU general secretary); and Janet Williamson (TUC). Chaired by IER's Carolyn Jones.

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UNISON North West sends greetings to all delegates and observers to TUC Congress 2020

Ireland Region, Unite

Solidarity greetings to delegates at TUC annual conference 2020



Jackie Pollock
 Jeff Robinson

Regional secretary
 Irish-executive chair

■ GERMANY

Cops swoop on far-right arms stash

GERMAN police confirmed on Saturday that they had seized about 250 firearms and thousands of rounds of ammunition from a man believed to be a far-right sympathiser.

The arms cache was found in the Seevetal area just south of Hamburg in the north-western state of Lower Saxony on Friday evening.

Investigations are continuing, but police said they believed the suspect to have far-right sympathies "because of the overall circumstances."

A police statement said: "In addition to long, short and war weapons, several thousand rounds of ammunition were seized.

"Due to the ongoing investigations, no additional information can currently be given on the matter."

Far-right violence and links to the police and military have caused increasing concern.

The four-year National Socialist Underground trial, which involved the brutal murders of Greek, Kurdish and Turkish immigrants along with a series of bombings and bank robberies by a far-right terror cell, shocked German society.

It raised allegations of collaboration between the underground fascist organisation and German intelligence services, whose informants are said to have known about the killings and other criminal acts.

This information was not shared with police and other information is alleged to have been deliberately suppressed.

■ TURKEY

POLITICIANS JAILED AS ERDOGAN STRIVES TO SILENCE OPPOSITION

MP gets 10 years for tending 'terrorists' in Sur, HDP warns of politicised judiciary as 17 leading ESP members are jailed

by Steve Sweeney

KURDISH politician Remziye Tosun was sentenced to 10 years behind bars by a Turkish court on Friday for membership of an armed terrorist organisation, as pressure on opposition intensifies.

The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) MP for Diyarbakir, in the largely Kurdish south-east, was handed the jail term after being accused of links to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), specifically "treating wounded Kurdish militants from the outlawed PKK during a 2015 Turkish army operation in the south-eastern district of Sur."

Turkish forces held the district under siege for more than three months, moving to crush "Kurdish militants" who had declared self-autonomous rule after the collapse of peace talks being held between the government and jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan.

According to a report from the Kemalist centre-left Republican People's Party (CHP) at least 80 per cent of Sur district was flattened, leading to a mass exodus. According to the HDP, as many as 200 people were killed during the operation, the majority of them civilians.

Prosecutors said that seven



SENTENCED: Diyarbakir's HDP MP Remziye Tosun faces years in jail

former PKK members had testified to say that Ms Tosun had treated their injuries at home; one claimed that she had helped facilitate his transfer to "the

mountains," to a PKK base.

But her lawyer Muharrem Sahin insisted that the confessions were given under duress, with no concrete evidence to

back the claims.

"There is no evidence that supports the verdict. It is based on statements that were taken by force from individuals who

were there during that period," he said, adding that Ms Tosun lived in the area and did not have the expertise to treat people.

The MP remains free at present, but if her sentence is ratified by the upper court, her case will be heard in parliament, which will vote on whether to lift her immunity.

HDP co-leaders Pervin Buldan and Mithat Sancar warned of a "politicised judiciary" as the jailing of 17 members of one of its constituent bodies, Figen Yuksekdag's Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP), was also confirmed late on Friday.

They accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government of "taking hostages" but vowed to continue the fight against the "political massacre" of political opponents and revolutionaries.

"You can be thousands of people with your politicised judiciary and law enforcement forces, but we are also millions of hearts fighting against tyranny," they said.

"While you are fighting for [parliamentary] seats, we are the people who fight for democracy and rights.

"As you cling to the fascist experiences of the past, we will increase our determination for the democratic struggle – and we will surely win."

international@peoples-press.com

■ MEDITERRANEAN

40-day nightmare voyage ends for group of refugees

by Ben Cowles

THE nightmare journey for 27 refugees blockaded from Europe for 40 days and left in limbo on a merchant vessel finally came to an end this weekend.

Twenty-six men and a pregnant woman fled Libya in a wooden boat on August 3.

Their boat was spotted by Moonbird, a reconnaissance plane operated by German rescue charity Sea Watch, inside Malta's search-and-rescue zone the next day.

Rather than launch a rescue mission, the Maltese authorities ordered the Maersk Etienne to change course and assist the wooden boat and on August 5, the chemical tanker brought the cast-

aways on board after their boat began to sink and then headed to Malta.

But despite co-ordinating the rescue, Malta refused to allow the Etienne to disembark the refugees in any of its ports, forcing the ship to wait indefinitely in international waters.

Then, as the Star was going to press on Friday night, Italian rescue group Mediterranean: Saving Humans announced it had received an urgent request for assistance from the Etienne and had transferred the 27 onto its ship the Mare Jonio.

"Europe shamelessly looked away for 38 days in disregard for international law and human rights," Mediterranean said in a social-media post on Saturday.

"Thirty-eight days in which the castaways slept on the ground, without being able to change their clothes, without medical assistance, putting their physical and mental health as well as their lives at risk.

"They wanted nothing more than to die. Three of them got into the water, more than one attempted suicide. They are all in devastating psychophysical conditions.

Early on Saturday the Italian coastguard evacuated the pregnant woman and her husband from the Mare Jonio.

Later that evening the Italian authorities finally allowed the refugees ashore on the island of Sicily. international@peoples-press.com



GREECE: Authorities have been scrambling to find a way to house more than 12,000 people left in need of emergency shelter on the

island of Lesbos after fires on Tuesday and Wednesday night gutted the huge Moria refugee camp.

STILL BURNING: A refugee holds her baby as she flees a small fire in a field near Mytilene town, on the north-eastern island of Lesbos on Saturday

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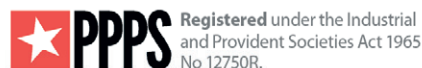
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Solidarity with the TUC's annual conference

INDIA

Opposition figures targeted over February CAA protests

by Our Foreign Desk

COMMUNIST Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury has accused the Indian government of abusing its power after he was one of several opposition figures linked to riots in Delhi in a police charge sheet on Saturday.

He said that "illegitimate and illegal actions" by Delhi police were being directed by the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"They are scared of legitimate peaceful political protests by mainstream political parties and are misusing state power to target the opposition," he said.

A supplementary charge sheet was filed by the Delhi police crime branch relating to an anti-Muslim pogrom that

took place when armed Hindu chauvinists went on the rampage during US President Donald Trump's visit in February.

At least 53 people were killed and hundreds injured as homes and businesses were burnt to the ground.

The riots took place as the country was swept by mass protests against the introduction of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which is has been widely criticised as a threat to India's sizeable Muslim minority.

But the latest charge sheet alleges that the pogrom was part of a "deep-rooted conspiracy" by anti-CAA protesters.

Along with Mr Yechury, the document names other high-profile opposition figures including economist Jayati Ghosh and documentary filmmaker Rahul Roy, who Delhi police say encouraged the protests as part of a plan.

The charge sheet was partly based on "disclosure statements" by activists interviewed by police in detention.

Although purportedly given independently, the statements are written in identical language – including the misspelling of "massage" for "message."

The opposition figures are accused of insisting that the CAA is anti-Muslim and using their education to influence people.

The statements contain handwritten text stating that the individuals had refused to sign them.

Police also claimed that the activists had informed officials that Mr Ghosh and Mr Roy had co-ordinated with the Islamist Popular Front of India group to mentor those protesting against the CAA.

Mr Yechury, one of those named by police as having

"aided the conspirators of violence," warned of an attempt by the government to "silence the political opposition by such blatant misuse of state power."

"The BJP's illegal intimidation won't stop people from opposing discriminatory laws like CAA. To assert that all Indians are equal irrespective of their religion, caste, colour, creed, region, gender and political affiliations is not only our right but our duty. We will exercise it," he said defiantly.

Mr Yechury referred to hate speeches by figures who had instigated the violence and led the mobs being ignored by the government "because it is hell-bent upon destroying democracy."

A Delhi police spokesman claimed: "The disclosure statement has been truthfully recorded as narrated by the accused person."

international@peoples-press.com



VENEZUELA

Fully loaded ex-CIA saboteur captured

by Our Foreign Desk

VENEZUELAN President Nicolas Maduro said on Saturday that authorities had detained a former United States marine and CIA operative after he was caught spying on two oil refineries.

Speaking on national TV, the Bolivarian leader said: "He was captured with heavy weapons, speciality weapons. He was captured with a great amount of cash in dollars and with other elements that we have sent directly to the Public Ministry, the prosecutor's office."

The arrest was made in the north-western state of Falcon on Thursday, Mr Maduro confirmed.

He explained that the day before the spook was detained, Minister of Petroleum Tareck el-Aissami had foiled a plan to set off an explosive device at the El Palito oil refinery in the northern state of Carabobo.

Mr Maduro issued a call for extra vigilance and heightened security measures by workers at the country's refineries.

"It's a war of revenge of the gringo empire against

Venezuela to impede Venezuela from producing all of the derivatives of oil, petrol, etc," he said.

"This spy has been captured. This plan was detected, the plan was disassembled. We are 100 per cent activated to guarantee the physical security of strategic facilities, our petroleum plants. In the coming hours, I am sure that we'll find out more about this capture," he said.

Washington has intensified pressure on Venezuela as it seeks the ousting of the democratically elected president. A series of bungled coup attempts have been spearheaded by hapless opposition politician Juan Guaido.

After they ended in failure, the US tightened sanctions on Venezuela, branding it a narco-terror state. It put a bounty on the head of Mr Maduro and other key officials and deployed warships to the region.

Last month, former US marines Luke Denman and Airan Berry were jailed for 20 years after being caught launching a coup attempt from neighbouring Colombia.

international@peoples-press.com



FACE TO FACE: Taliban representatives arrive for intra-Afghan peace talks in Doha on Saturday

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban talks: plea for humanitarian ceasefire

TALKS between representatives of the Taliban and the Afghan government opened in Qatar on Saturday with the aim of ending nearly two decades of war.

More than 111,000 Afghans, including civilians, soldiers and militants, and 3,500 foreign occupation troops are estimated to have been killed in the conflict.

The much anticipated face-to-face negotiations between the parties started with a ceremony at a Doha

hotel attended by Afghan government negotiator Abdullah Abdullah, Taliban deputy leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Mr Abdullah called for a "humanitarian ceasefire," adding that his team hoped to "close the gates of war and pain forever."

The Taliban did not commit to such a call, insisting that the group's aim was for a future Afghanistan run

in accordance with Islamic law.

"We want Afghanistan to be an independent developed country and it should have a form of Islamic system where all its citizens see themselves reflected," Mr Baradar said.

The US, which struck its own peace deal with the Islamists in February, encouraged both sides to reach an agreement. The talks are due to continue today.

CHINA

US report countered with a few home truths

CHINA warned yesterday that the United States is the biggest threat to the international order and world peace as it condemned a Washington report on the People's Liberation Army's military ambitions.

Defence Ministry spokesman Colonel Wu Qian called the 150-page report, which examined the Chinese army's aims and capabilities, "a wanton distortion" of the relationship between the army and the country's 1.4 billion population.

The US Defence Department insisted that China's military developments would have "serious implications for US national interests and the security of the international rules-based order."

But Col Wu said that it was the US that posed a threat to global stability.

"Many years of evidence shows that it is the US that is the fomenter of regional unrest, the violator of the international order and the destroyer of world peace," he said.

"US actions in Iraq, Syria, Libya and other countries over the past two decades have resulted in the deaths of more than 800,000 people and displacement of millions," he continued. "Rather than reflecting on itself, the US issued a so-called report that made false comments about China's normal defence and military construction."

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Sending greetings and solidarity to all taking part in the TUC events. We celebrate the contribution and commitment working people make to society and thank the trade unions for helping to lead the way.

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TUC CONGRESS 2020

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Ali Gul Ozbek MRpharmS (Eczaci)
Dr. Orhan Eskici Ent Surgeon FRCS (Kulak, Burun, Bogaz Doktoru)

Greetings to TUC delegates



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The Shrewsbury 24 Campaign send greetings to the TUC Virtual Congress 2020.

Thank you for supporting us over the years in our efforts to achieve justice for the Shrewsbury pickets. Please continue to do so as the pickets' case goes to the Court of Appeal.

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Greetings to the 2020 TUC Conference

Work for the end of all anti-trade union legislation

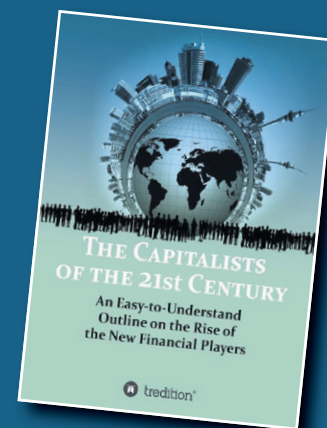


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Werner Rügemer The Capitalists of the 21st Century An Easy-to-Understand Outline on the Rise of the New Financial Players



For the first time, Rügemer presents a typology of the new capitalist players who became dominant since the deregulation of the 1990s and the last financial crisis. Capital organisers like BlackRock, private equity funds like Blackstone and KKR, hedge funds like Bridgepoint and Elliott, venture capital investors and elitist investment banks like Macquarie and Rothschild became much more influential than the traditional banks. These new financial players organise worldwide selling, buying and restructuring of banks, stock exchanges, companies and public enterprises, financing and buying start-ups and having dominance in the digital economy of Facebook, Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Apple, Uber, Deliveroo and Airbnb. Influencing governments and international financial institutions, they lower labour incomes and increase private gains — systematically using financial havens. They are an active part of America First, impacting key areas of the coronavirus crisis — public health, economics, politics, media — and now as counselors of the central banks are managing the rescue programs. They act in collaboration with, as Rügemer calls them, the civil private army of the transnational capitalist class: rating and PR agencies, law firms, management consultants, chartered accountants and central banks. Rügemer outlines the relations between the EU and the US and shows the other way of operating an economy, as in the People's Republic of China, and how imported capitalism in the process of socialist transformation — raising labour incomes, health, social prospects, security and technology innovation China is shown with his alternative way of globalisation, which is not accompanied by military expansion. Finally, Rügemer imagines what the future will be if we follow the international law of the UN and protect human, social and labour rights.

trdition 2019

307 pages,

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Dr. Werner Rügemer, philosopher, investigative journalist, political activist. Cologne, Germany. www.werner-ruegemer.de

★ Star comment

Organising to deliver a new settlement – the task before the TUC

THE Trade Union Congress opens today with a resounding demand for action to prevent mass unemployment.

General secretary Frances O’Grady points out that, since the logic of programmes like the Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme was to protect jobs during the pandemic, withdrawing them next month when coronavirus is again on the rise is perverse.

Trade unions were instrumental in negotiating these schemes in March, and held back the “tsunami” of job losses of which O’Grady warns. It would be catastrophic if all we have managed to do is delay the impact for six months.

And for many the blow has already fallen. Whether to apply for furlough subsidies was always up to employers, while in a workforce riddled with insecure jobs – zero-hours contracts, bogus self-employment, outsourced labour – there were legions of loopholes through which individual workers and their families could fall.

Millions of people have taken a big hit to their incomes. Millions have had to apply for universal credit.

The big household-name firms – British Airways, British Gas, Boots, Lloyd’s Bank, Pizza Hut, the list goes on – announce job cuts by the thousand. Smaller-scale employers don’t make the headlines but these have been folding or downsizing too.



Unemployment ruins lives. When concentrated, it can scar whole generations and suck the life out of entire communities; the Thatcher and Major governments visited this fate on whole regions of Britain. There are towns today staring this fate in the face.

And as we’ve seen at a number of employers already, unemployment or the threat of it empowers management to attack workers.

Firms demand that staff agree to take a pay cut in return for keeping their jobs. On a broader scale, the increased competition for jobs allows bosses to drive down wages.

That is the logic of the misnamed “labour market.” It is what “the market” will do to us, unless we stop it.

But a few short months ago, millions of us were coming to our doors and windows each Thursday evening to “clap for carers” and the NHS. Ministers were singing the praises of the “key workers” who are so important to our society that they could not stay at home despite the terrible risk of contracting Covid-19.

These were not the City slickers idolised by Tony Blair or the “business leaders” who promote their poisonous ideology on second-rate shows like *The Apprentice*.

It turned out that the people who kept the wheels turning were the transport workers, the cleaners, the shop assistants, the delivery drivers, the factory and food-processing workers, the fruit-pickers, the carers.



People paid, in the main, low wages and often employed on insecure terms – though in truth the “gig economy” in which a secure job and a guaranteed income are things of the past has been extending its tendrils into every sector, and a university lecturer is as likely to be on zero-hours now as a courier.

The demand for a new deal for these workers – a recognition that enough is enough and the relentless casualisation and immiseration of the workforce has to be reversed – is in a better position than ever to command mass support.

Instead of unemployment and further downward pressure on pay, we need a new settlement.

This week trade unionists must look at how to mobilise for one. How is the maximum industrial and political pressure to be applied? Can unions co-ordinate at sectoral level to drive up pay and conditions in a sector, rather than compete for members within it?

Can they work through regional TUCs and trades councils to build leverage at community level? As the pandemic has made the importance of joining a union clearer than ever, could the movement mount actions and campaigns that promote trade unionism itself to Britain’s mostly unorganised workforce? For workers, organisation is power.

“**A**T EVERY level this virus has exposed the injustice of inequality and the impact of class, gender and race.”

TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady is blunt about the government’s responsibility for Britain being hit harder by Covid-19 than any other country in Europe, with the highest number of deaths and the deepest economic recession.

“A decade of cuts left us unprepared, and governments allowing health and safety to become a subject of mockery, cutting inspectors and Health and Safety Executive budgets – and local authority budgets – has led directly to some of the sweatshop scandals we saw in fast fashion and food processing, where, as we know, there were outbreaks of the virus,” she tells me (virtually) from her TUC office.

“And I think there’s something deeper going on as well, behind all the policies we could list, the ‘austerity’ cuts and the attacks on labour standards and unions – something about values.

“Go back to that famous assertion that there’s ‘no such thing as society.’ What’s now very clear is that there has to be.

“You cannot separate people’s health from the economy. You need strong unions to look after people’s rights. You can’t exclude people from decision-making. This is about decency and dignity, at work and in the community.”

O’Grady says the disproportionate impact of Covid on black and ethnic minority people “tells a terrible story, not just about racism but about class in Britain today.

“We see that black workers are much more likely to be working in the ‘key jobs’ more exposed to the virus. But more than that, they’re more likely to be on insecure contracts, zero hours and the rest of it.

“And we saw in the social care sector the way that meant agency workers were being sent from home to home, taking the virus with them.”

That example, the TUC general secretary points out, shows in a nutshell how contempt for workers’ rights is “a key reason why Britain has ended up with one of the worst rates of – that horrible phrase – ‘excess deaths’ and has been among the big economies hit hardest.

“Who pays the price for that? It’s clear there are some who think the natural order of things is that the poorest pay the highest price.”

A number of trade unions have reported surging membership over the course of the pandemic as workers realise that without union representation they are more likely to be made to work in dangerous conditions. Is this an opportunity for the labour movement to assert its relevance to a new generation?

“I’m happy to use that word opportunity because I believe

‘The pandemic n... the case for a m... democratic, gree



Trade Union Congress general secretary **FRANCES O’GRADY** speaks to editor Ben Chacko about the labour movement’s response

that trade unionism is the best way to protect working people.

“The evidence is clear. If you’re organised at work, you’re much more likely to be safe and avoid accidents and injuries – and, in this case, avoid being exposed to the virus.

“And you’re more likely to get training opportunities, stuff that doesn’t get a lot of attention but really matters to careers and quality of life.

“One issue that is common at the moment is flexible working. We’ve seen trade union membership rising for a few years and the majority of those new recruits are women.

“We recently released a report on what’s happening to working mums during Covid, picking up the majority of the childcare responsibilities, having to take early morning or late shifts to try to manage or being stuck working in the kitchen with kids running round your feet. Very often having no choice but to ask for a cut in hours – which of course means a cut in pay.

“Those are the issues that really matter, day to day, week to week and you have a much stronger chance of getting a fair deal at work if you’re part of the union.”

But there’s nothing automatic about this translating into a bigger and stronger trade union movement.

“We’ve got some unions putting on quite significant numbers. We’ve got other unions facing massive redundancies. So nobody knows quite how this is going to wash out in terms of numbers.

“We’ve got to keep our foot on the pedal of organising. In the end, that’s the best way we as working people can protect ourselves.

“There’s some fantastic work going on by digital campaigners, lay leaders and full-timers across the movement to meet that challenge and maybe this was the disruption we needed to make us try out new ways to organise.”

Aside from protection at workplace level, unions were also instrumental in negotiating job protection schemes like furlough. But furlough hasn’t prevented many of Britain’s biggest employers from announcing sweeping job cuts, and – as the Institute of Employment Rights’ Keith Ewing has written in the Morning Star – it gave no rights to workers and took

the form of a subsidy to businesses if they wished to take it up, of which workers were “secondary beneficiaries.”

O’Grady is forthright in defending unions’ achievement in negotiating the scheme. “Both the job retention scheme and the self-employed support scheme were by no means perfect, but the first thing I would say is nobody should be in any doubt that if it wasn’t for the trade union movement, nine million jobs would have been in peril.”

It was a case of “speed over perfection,” she argues, noting that while trade unionists were in talks in March with the Treasury and the Chancellor, “we were all very conscious that there were some very big names who were going to cut their losses, as they would put it, within 24 to 48 hours. It was vital for us to get an announcement to stop what would have been a tsunami of job losses in the spring.”

Seeing it as simply a business subsidy also ignores what trade unions were able to make of it: “Unions used that scheme imaginatively in bargaining with various employers. Negotiating for staff to be paid up to 100 per cent of their wages

makes more equal, greener world'



O'GRADY speaks to Morning Star in response to the challenge of Covid-19

[rather than the 80 per cent reimbursed by the state], negotiating work-sharing rather than people being made redundant. Unions aren't just spectators.

"I'm clear in my own mind that without the unions, we would not have had those schemes. It's the first time we've ever had wage-subsidy schemes in Britain. There are often handouts for business. This was the first time the money was tied to an obligation to use it to pay wages."

One of the biggest threats now is what happens to jobs when the government pulls the plug, as it plans to.

The TUC is calling for a job protection and upskilling deal that would see the government subsidise wages with employers allowed to bring back workers on short hours, using the rest of the time for training and upskilling. "This is what's happening in France, Germany, Austria. It's under active consideration in Ireland.

"Let's be honest – many of us were hopeful that we'd be through the worst by now with the pandemic. It's clear we're not. It would be criminal to

see good jobs go to the wall. When we're through, we'll still need manufacturing, aviation, a strong steel industry, arts and culture and many more things.

"There is no greater threat now than mass unemployment. And mass unemployment allows bad employers to set worker against worker, to drive down wages and conditions.

"And it has a scarring impact on a whole generation. We saw it in the 1930s and the 1980s, to some extent in the 1990s, what happens to people in families and communities if unemployment is allowed to let rip.

"This is going to be about political choices for government, industrial choices for employers. Some employers with cynical opportunism are using the crisis to make workers pay the price. We've seen that in a number of companies. But we've also seen unions fighting back.

"For me personally, one of the most inspiring episodes was when unions, Unite in particular, led the call to switch production and manufacturing to PPE and ventilators," she notes, raising the way in which unions made

the practical case for creating meaningful, useful jobs to meet the threat of Covid, and the way jobs that were previously not respected had their value recognised.

"People want dignity at work, in manufacturing, in shop work. We saw it with porters and refuse collectors – that they felt the value of their work was being recognised for the first time ever, and they could feel proud of the job they do.

"We're determined that people should be rewarded for that, in terms of respect, but also in terms of their pay packets. It's outrageous that so many key workers, seven out of 10 in social care, earn less than £10 an hour. It's shameful. And I sense that the public supports us on this.

"I'd like us to learn as a society the value of collectivism from this experience. That we're not just individuals, socially distanced from other individuals.

"Those Thursday nights, no-one was coming out to clap for hedge fund managers or private equity partners. People were turning out for health workers, social care workers, transport workers, all the key workers. We can't allow that to be a moment. It has to be a real shift.

"And how about remembering how many workers from other countries have worked in our public services throughout? The virus did not respect borders. If we're going to beat it, we need international co-operation.

"And I'd like us to demonstrate that spending should not be seen as a cost but as an investment. Even if the pandemic was over tomorrow, surely we've learned we need more investment in public services. We've got to tackle the big challenges like climate change.

"There have been winners from coronavirus – corporate winners who've done very well, and in some famous instances they're the ones who pay least tax here. So the pandemic makes the case for a more equal, more democratic, greener world."

O'Grady says she will miss the buzz of a TUC Congress in normal times. "This is our parliament, where side by side you've got shopworkers, footballers, engineers, factory workers, scientists, you know, everybody from all walks of life finding the common threads that bind us and figuring out what action we're going to take to win for working people."

But she is also hopeful that the first online Congress, to which thousands have signed up who would not normally be in a position to attend, will raise the profile of the movement and draw in new activists.

"It opens up possibilities of participation by people we may have struggled to reach. It's exciting. I hope it shows how we can make a difference and proves that it's worth everybody joining us."

The legal view: Covid-19 and our workplace rights

The coronavirus has demonstrated that workers' rights are a public health issue – and British labour law is not fit for purpose, write **KEITH EWING** and **LORD JOHN HENDY QC**

WORKPLACE rights have been crucial from the very beginning of the pandemic, as arguments raged about workers being expected to self-isolate on statutory sick pay for £95 a week – the price of a bottle of wine in some households. It was evident in the government's failure to provide PPE for front-line workers, many of whom then became infected and some of whom died.

And it is evident now as we watch the unfolding disaster of the testing regime, with workers once again expected to self-isolate without wages being guaranteed.

Covid-19 has also conclusively demonstrated that British labour law is not fit for purpose and has failed those it is designed to protect.

It has failed to provide income security for the ill, to protect the health and safety of front-line staff, or meaningful job security for all workers.

These problems are about to be compounded by the scrapping of the emergency Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme by which the government has underwritten the wages of some 9.6 million workers.

But that of course is only to scratch the surface. At root the Covid-19 crisis has exposed deep systemic failures of contract law on which worker protection is based.

Contracts are written by employers. This means they unilaterally dictate the terms and conditions of employment on a take it or leave it basis. It allows employers to dictate that the worker is to be engaged on a self-employed basis and so has no rights.

Contracts often even allow the employer unilaterally to change the terms and conditions. And contract law allows the employer to fire and rehire on inferior terms with apparent impunity. This is the reality of deregulation and labour markets.

Workers have become commodified; and in a health pandemic they have become vulnerable and

disposable commodities, as made clear by the transport select committee's inquiry into the conduct of British Airways and other airlines.

Having made a pre-tax profit of £1.1 billion in 2019 and with cash reserves of £2.6 billion, the committee was unsurprisingly excoriating in its criticism of BA's "plans to consult on a reduction of up to 12,000 jobs (out of a workforce of 42,000) and downgrade [by 'fire and rehire'] the terms and conditions of the bulk of its remaining employees."

These problems are well known, though it has taken a global health crisis to bring them into sharp focus. The bottom line is that economic liberalism and deregulation have led to almost complete employer power as to the forms of employment, the terms of employment, and the duration of employment.

There is no trade union in most workplaces, there is a lamentable state presence to enforce what miserable rights legislation provides, and the tribunal process, never very fair, has atrophied as a result of underfunding and Covid-19. If anyone is looking for a metaphor for modern British labour law, try the Leicester garment industry.

How different it would have been had we in place the kind of labour law offered by the Labour Party at the general elections in 2017 and 2019. Inspired in part by the International Labour Organisation

(ILO's) commitment to a "just share of the fruits of progress for all," this offered a vision for rebuilding labour law that would control the power of the employer by giving workers a voice through their union in setting terms and conditions of employment by collective bargaining.

It would also have greatly enhanced the power of the state with the proposed Workers' Protection Agency, well-funded to ensure compliance with labour standards.

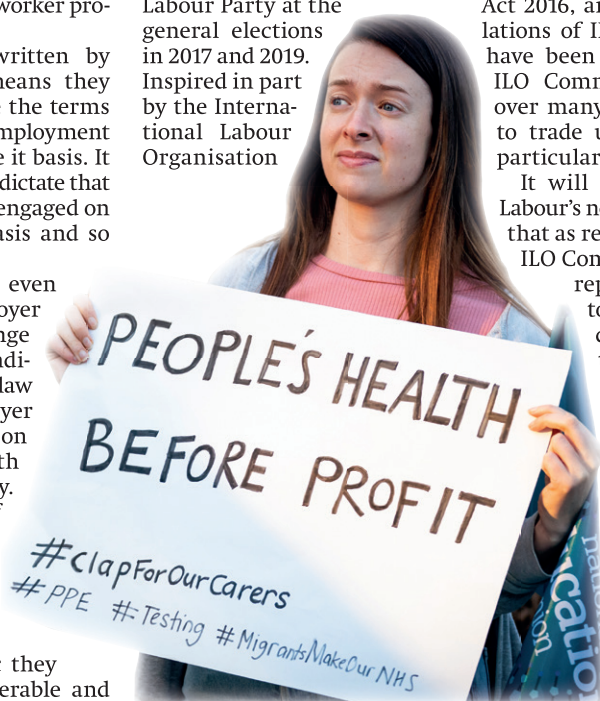
Instead we have the almost non-existent local authority inspectorate and the wholly deficient Health and Safety Executive, the failures of which during the pandemic were laid bare by another parliamentary committee, the work and pensions committee.

Rooted in ILO standards, Labour's framework would have been cemented in international law, imposing binding obligations to promote collective bargaining, as well as to ensure a "just share of the fruits of progress for all."

At a time when the Johnson government is being rightly attacked for its failure to comply with international law, Labour will undoubtedly wish to reaffirm the party's commitment to the Britain's ILO obligations.

Which brings us of course to the controversial Trade Union Act 2016, and indeed the violations of ILO standards that have been identified by the ILO Committee of Experts over many years in relation to trade union freedom in particular.

It will not have escaped Labour's new leadership team that as recently as 2019, the ILO Committee of Experts repeated its request to the United Kingdom "to review section 3 of the Trade Union Act with the social partners concerned and take the necessary measures so that the requirement of support of 40 per cent of all workers for a strike ballot does not apply to education and transport services."





SARAH WOOLLEY has spent the last four months running a trade union from her garden.

It's not the way she had envisioned starting her new role as general secretary for the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers union (BFAWU), and tells me it still doesn't feel quite real.

"It's been crazy, I mean I don't feel like our general secretary because I'm working from home," she tells me over the phone.

"And as much as I'm doing Zoom meeting after Zoom meeting and all of that background work for the union, it still doesn't actually feel real."

Woolley took over the reins from Ronnie Draper in May after his retirement following 33 years in the role.

She is BFAWU's first female general secretary – a long overdue step for one of Britain's oldest trade unions (founded in 1847).

Although the fresh new face of BFAWU has so far been a virtual one, Woolley's tireless work and that of the unions' reps has made a very real difference on the ground.

The majority of members have worked throughout the coronavirus crisis in food production factories, keeping the national fed, she tells me.

During this time BFAWU's efforts have centred on ensuring employers are keeping their workers safe.

"Putting in plastic visors and masks, moving tables out, marking the floors, waste systems and all sorts – that's pretty much been our lives for the past six months, adapting those [health and safety regulations] and making sure they're in place," Woolley tells me.

"Our health and safety reps on site, I have to say, have done an excellent job of making sure that our members are safe."

Having reps challenge and put pressure on employers at

'People are seeing unions do have value, they do make the workplace safer'

Bakers' Union leader **SARAH WOOLLEY** talks to Bethany Rielly about her steep learning curve in the pandemic, the importance of union recognition and why statutory sick pay is not fit for purpose

every step along the way has been vital for workers' safety especially in the absence of proper guidance from the government, Woolley claims.

She says the importance of trade unions during this time can be seen by looking at the impact of Covid-19 on recognised and unrecognised workforces, highlighting the scandal at a Greencore factory in Northampton.

Last month 324 out of 834 workers at the sandwich factory, a supplier to M&S, tested positive for the virus.

In mid-August the factory was finally forced to close temporarily by the government, after Greencore insisted that the site stay open despite rising cases.

Although BFAWU has recog-

nition at some units, Woolley believes that had the company recognised the union across its Northampton site and listened to its employees' concerns, the spread could have been curtailed far earlier.

"I think one thing that's come through loud and clear throughout all this is that for those who are working in recognised workplaces, certainly in our industry that has been open all the way through, it has been much safer," she tells me.

"I know there has been a small outbreak at Greggs in Leeds but they nipped it in the bud, they closed the site within 24 hours in order to keep Covid positive tests to a minimum and did the right thing.

"Whereas unrecognised workplaces like Greencore for

the workplace safer," she says. Woolley also thinks that workers have rushed to join unions because they are "seen as the only people challenging the government."

"We're saying we need to extend the furlough scheme, statutory sick pay is not enough, and it's not happening anywhere else, unfortunately not even the Labour Party are shouting loud enough."

The Greencore case not only highlights the value of trade unions, Woolley says, but also the desperate need to have a sick pay scheme that's fit for purpose.

When hundreds of workers were sent home to self-isolate last month, many were tipped into poverty.

Greencore workers are only eligible to receive £95.85 a week in sick pay – the derisory sum offered by the government's statutory sick pay (SSP) scheme.

This has forced some workers to resort to using foodbanks, while families who have multiple members at the factory have seen their household income almost disappear overnight.

"We've always said SSP is not fit for purpose but I think it's just been highlighted more over the last six months," Woolley tells me.

"Hearing people who work for a company that makes £55 million in pure profit talking about how their income has dropped to £240 a week to £95.85 is just horrific."

"Because how the hell are they supposed to pay the bills, feed themselves, it just made the bad situation even worse."

The case has partly spurred on BFAWU's new campaign launched last week to demand the government increase SSP – a motion also being brought to TUC Congress this week.

The union argues that SSP has not only pushed more workers into poverty but has also undermined the public health effort.

BFAWU has documented cases where people self-isolating were forced to return to work because they were unable to live on the derisory payment.

The campaign, organised by left-wing think tank Don't Leave, Organise and supported by the Fire Brigades Union, calls for employers to pay workers' full wages for the first six weeks before returning to the SSP rate for the following 22 weeks.

The campaigners argue that the scheme should start on day one and be open to everyone by removing the lower earning threshold which currently blocks 1.8 million people from accessing the scheme, according to the TUC.

Though Woolley is still coming to terms with her new position, she adds that she feels "very privileged" to head the small but powerful union.

In recent years, BFAWU has made huge gains in traditionally challenging places to organise such as McDonald's.

Under Woolley, who at 33 is also one of the youngest trade union leaders in Britain, I can only see that momentum continue to drive forwards.

HAS the Covid-19 crisis really given us no option other than to brace ourselves for a "necessary period of adjustment"?

Andy Haldane, chief economist at the Bank of England, seems to think so but, as our class knows to its cost, one economist's adjustment is certain to mean another person's unemployment.

We've been here before, unfortunately, when Margaret Thatcher and her fiscal hawks set about "adjusting" our communities into mass unemployment, with all the attendant social ills from which many may never recover.

It is always our communities that are "adjusted," our jobs and people who suffer.

So once again, we find ourselves in a fight for our futures.

This year's Congress, forced mainly online, is another reminder of the hulking presence of this damned virus and all the health, economic and social ruin it trails in its wake.

The task for Congress and our movement is to push against the prevailing government tide to ensure that the many troubles before us are addressed with the principles of social justice firmly to the fore, not the opportunism of those who, to borrow from Churchill, "never allow a good crisis to go to waste."

More than that, however, we will need to shout some sense into this government.

According to the BBC, 300,000 workers were placed on notice of redundancy in July: if November dawns with no sign of a shift

IT IS staggering that so many people think it is OK to abuse, threaten and assault workers in the middle of a pandemic and the greatest national crisis most of us have ever experienced.

Usdaw's survey of shopworkers during the coronavirus emergency found that abuse of shopworkers had doubled as compared with last year.

Many of our members identified that the main triggers are enforcing safety measures like social distancing, limiting the number of customers in-store and the wearing of face coverings.

Key workers delivering essential services are going into work to keep the country fed.

They are obviously worried about contracting the virus and taking it home to their family, but they regularly suffer abuse for simply doing their job and keeping the store safe.

We know that it is a minority of customers who behave this way, and shopworkers welcome the support and appreciation of the majority.

However, this is not a new problem and it is long overdue for the government to take action by strengthening the law to protect retail staff.

That is why we have launched a parliamentary petition, which is fast gaining support.

That is no surprise, because

Congress must speak as one on Covid – our class will not pay for another crisis

The task for our movement is to push against the prevailing government tide to ensure that social justice is to the fore, writes Unite leader **LEN McCLUSKEY**

in government thinking, that figure could be the low-water mark as businesses descend into a financial tailspin.

Yet still the Chancellor digs in about not modifying the jobs-retention scheme.

This is our greatest challenge, this government's dogged reluctance to invest in our communities and industries.

We were forced to dismiss the government's "support" for the aviation package as jam tomorrow, given its unambitious plan to build back the sector by 2025 – far too late for the workers whose jobs hang by a thread, or for the businesses that need aviation for trade.

We are also locked in an epic battle to try to persuade the government not to turn its backs on the UK's manufacturing workers.

The signs out of government are worrying as they talk in doe-eyed terms about the high-tech R&D jobs of tomorrow,



CLASS DIVIDE: Boris Johnson inspects an ambulance

ignoring the hundreds of thousands of workers of today currently engaged in everything from aerospace engineering to vehicle manufacturing.

These jobs matter because for every one manufacturing job, a further four are supported in retail, hospitality, distribution – in fact right

across the economy – paying the taxes that support our NHS and public services, and providing decent, stable work across the nation, a rare asset in this, the most economically unequal country in Europe. To abandon UK manufacturing is to abandon our people.

Other nations – France, Germany, Spain and even Trump's US – understand that the scale of this crisis is such that they are maintaining their job-retention programmes well into next year.

The signal that this gives to workers and employers is important – it says we will back you up.

Contrast this economic activism with the absence of energy on this side of the Channel.

We have taken the heaviest hit in terms of deaths and the hurt to the economy, with chaotic U-turns aplenty as the government fails to offer leadership of the calibre this hour requires.

The Prime Minister's colossal failure to step up to the task was only confirmed when he told the nation last week that, no, there would be no further jobs-retention action because an ounce of the confidence of his shambolic government is worth more than a ton of investment.

No, Prime Minister. Unite members don't want your admiration. They want to stay at work, doing what they do to help this country recover and put food on their tables.

Your job is to make sure that they keep their jobs. Listen to the rest of what Andy Haldane says – that modification of the jobs-retention scheme should not be written off and shorter hours should be brought in to keep people economically active.

Over the summer, the consensus that there must be a new phase of investment in job retention has become fixed across our movement, the Labour Party and even business.

And it is popular with the voters too: a Unite/Survation poll found that one in two backed some form of extension, rising to six in 10 in the 18 to 54 age group.

We were promised, when

this crisis took hold, that this was a time for "whatever it takes," not ideological purity.

But unless there is a serious move from government in the next few weeks to put a solid floor under rocky workplaces, then the mass unemployment that will surely follow will be a consequence not of Covid-19 alone but abetted by Conservative ideology.

Johnson, the historian, should think hard. Is he to be yet another Tory who forces the working class into capitalism's unstable crucible with all the destruction and hardship this brings to our people, confirming his ideological hard-right credentials?

Or will he face up to the crisis sitting on the horizon and move urgently to protect UK workers?

At Congress this week, our job is to speak as one, to say we will not let our class pay once more for a crisis not of our making.

Let's send a message to the rogues seeking their moment: get your robbing hands off our jobs, our NHS, our public services and our wages. Never again means exactly that.

■ Len McCluskey is general secretary of Unite the Union.

Job security, respect and pay are Usdaw's priorities

Retail staff have a crucial role in our communities and that role must be valued, says Usdaw general secretary

PADDY LILLIS

this is a hugely important issue for our members. They are saying loud and clear that enough is enough – abuse should never be just a part of the job.

The petition can be signed at petition.parliament.uk/petitions/328621 and Usdaw continues to campaign for the 100,000 signatures needed to trigger a parliamentary debate.

Our members would very much appreciate the support of Morning Star readers.

I urge the government to respond positively, listen to the voices of shopworkers and commit to legislating for stiffer penalties for those who assault workers.

We need a simple standalone offence that is widely recognised and understood by the public, police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the judiciary and, most importantly, criminals.

Retail staff have a crucial role in our communities and

that role must be valued and respected, they deserve the protection of the law.

Job security is also deeply concerning, with retail now suffering more job losses than any other employment sector.

The government must act before it is too late. They really have to decide whether they are going to intervene to save our high streets or let them go to the wall.

What the retail sector needs is a tripartite approach of the government, unions and employers working together to develop a much-needed retail recovery plan. We have long called for an industrial strategy for retail to help a sector that was already struggling before the coronavirus emergency. Now the situation is much worse.

The government has launched a consultation about the future of business rates, but this review is low-key and the concern must be that the government is look-

ing at tweaking the current system as opposed to adopting the radical changes needed to reflect how consumers buy goods in the 21st century.

Alongside business-rates reform, there must also be an immediate and comprehensive review of rental values and lease arrangements.

Long overdue is a reform of British tax law to ensure that companies pay their fair share of tax.

The government must tackle tax avoidance and the use of offshore havens, with the aim of creating a level playing field between online and high-street retailers.

We cannot revive our high streets if core services continue to be undermined, so there needs to be significant funding available for local authorities to invest in their local economy, transport networks and shopping areas.

Improving productivity



requires investment in skills for retail workers, through union learning and high-quality apprenticeships.

This should include an in-depth assessment of emerging trends and potential skills shortages and gaps within the sector.

That investment in staff must be accompanied by a new deal for retail, distribution and home-delivery workers based around a real living wage, an end to insecure employment

and a fundamental reform of workplace rights.

As Usdaw looks past the Covid-19 crisis, it is time for the government, employers and the public to recognise that too many workers have been undervalued for too long.

Retail staff have a crucial role in our communities and that role must be valued.

They deserve dignity and respect at work, secure employment and better pay. They deserve a new deal.

Why the UCU is calling for your support for its Fund the Future campaign



Education has to be at the heart of our recovery from this crisis, but it can only deliver with proper support, says UCU leader **JO GRADY**

THIS week at TUC Congress, the University and College Union (UCU) will call on the wider trade union movement to back its Fund the Future campaign. The campaign aims to secure funding to guarantee the future of our colleges and universities, protect jobs and deliver a better post-16 education system underpinned by fairness, equality and co-operation.

The campaign stems out of a

Covid crisis that has seen colleges and universities on the front line.

UCU members have been training and supporting thousands of key workers, working to develop a vaccine to beat the virus and ensuring students could continue with their education.

The pandemic has brought the inherent failings of the marketised post-16 education system into sharp focus.

The market economics imposed on education have

led to record debt for students, financial vulnerability for colleges and universities, and poorer pay and conditions for staff.

There are huge numbers of staff teaching in both our colleges and universities on casual contracts, who are often taking jobs at multiple institutions at a detriment to their mental health, yet still struggling to pay the bills.

Those in more secure employment have also suffered as university staff have received a real-terms pay cut of around 20 per cent over the past decade, while funding for further education fell by 27 per cent between 2010 and '19.

The marketised system has also left colleges and universities badly prepared to deal with the fallout from the crisis.

Staff have worked hard to support students under difficult conditions throughout the pandemic. Yet they have had to do so under a cloud of cuts and job losses because the government failed to guarantee funding lost due to the pandemic.

At a time when universities should have been pulling together, they were forced to compete against each other in a scramble to attract students.

Instead of working together to consider how and when to restart teaching and activity on campus, universities have doggedly said they will provide a normal campus experience and in-person teaching beginning this term, even though the risks associated with massive numbers of students crossing the country have always been apparent.

UCU called for universities to move teaching and other activities online to avoid a second wave.

Since then, the government's own scientific advisers have raised concerns about the likelihood of increased cases at universities.

Meanwhile students are worried about returning to campus and some have complained that promises of in-person teaching disappeared once they signed up for their accommodation. As confusion and fear

increases, the government and universities have insisted nothing is going to change, yet we have also seen Health Secretary Matt Hancock suggest students could be at fault for any Covid surge. For ministers and universities to rely on the behaviour of students, rather than deploying the public-health infrastructure needed to control the virus, is a complete shirking of their own responsibility.

Students have been told to move, live, study and socialise together, at the same time the rest of the country was told to go to the pub and "eat out, to

help out." What we need now is a serious response from universities and government, not a pre-emptive blame game.

Further education faces similar challenges. The Westminster government only released guidance for how to reopen colleges in England hours before many of them began reopening.

A study released last week said that two-thirds of college teaching staff do not feel safe returning to in-person work.

There are also fears there will be more students applying for courses than colleges have the capacity to teach.

A decade of austerity has led to around 24,000 teaching roles being cut from English colleges, leaving them poorly equipped to control class sizes, and protect staff and students from Covid-19.

Instead of incorporated colleges competing with each other for students and funding streams, while increasing workloads and pushing down wages, we need to see colleges brought back into public ownership and given more funding.

This way colleges can concentrate on supporting staff and students as part of a national recovery plan.

We hope union members and the wider movement will join our efforts to create an education system that delivers for staff and students, and can provide the opportunities for all those who would benefit.

Education has to be at the heart of our recovery from this crisis, but it can only deliver with proper support.

It is time for ministers, universities and colleges to provide the clear guidance and support that will secure institutions' futures and keep staff and students safe, so they can lead our recovery.

Full details of the campaign are available at Fund the Future where you can also write to your MP and ask them to back the campaign.

■ Jo Grady is general secretary of the University and College Union.

THE global Covid-19 pandemic has altered just about every aspect of our daily lives and compelled trade unions to find new ways of working, embracing technology more than ever.

This move online has opened up opportunities for union members to engage with the key issues and challenges we face – some of them new and some depressingly longstanding.

EIS' Motion 25 deals with such an issue but one that has taken on increasing global prominence in recent months – the need to tackle racism and address the barriers faced and discrimination endured by many from black and minority-ethnic communities.

The growth of Black Lives Matter into a truly global movement has shone a light on the levels of inequality that continue to exist.

The killing of George Floyd and the shooting of Jacob Blake in the US have sparked a surge of protest that has spread around the world.

In this country too, what happened to Stephen Lawrence and Sheku Bayoh are painful reminders that prejudice and inequality can have devastating consequences for individuals, families and communities.

A key aspect of building

THE spotlight that was shone on poverty during Covid-19 is not something we can forget or brush to one side.

With schools and colleges returning this month, education is returning to some sort of normality.

What has not changed is the way that poverty is impacting on the education and life chances of far too many children and young people.

In 2018-19 some 4.2 million in the UK were trapped in poverty. Shockingly, this means nine children in every class of 30.

By Christmas, 200,000 more children will be pushed below the poverty line.

Our members tell us heart-breaking stories of areas pushed to breaking point.

Schools running foodbanks to feed pupils and their families. Washing facilities opening in schools to clean uniforms. Children with holes in their shoes. Pupils pretending they don't feel the cold because their families can't afford to buy them a coat.

Given these experiences, it is no surprise that these children found it more difficult to learn during lockdown without the support and structure schools give.

Poverty leaves a myriad of problems in its wake. Poor, overcrowded or insecure housing, a lack of heating, never having enough to eat all impact on children and young people's learning.



FIGHTING UNION: The UCU and student supporters taking action over pension cuts, Leeds 2018

How can we challenge inequality in these most challenging times?

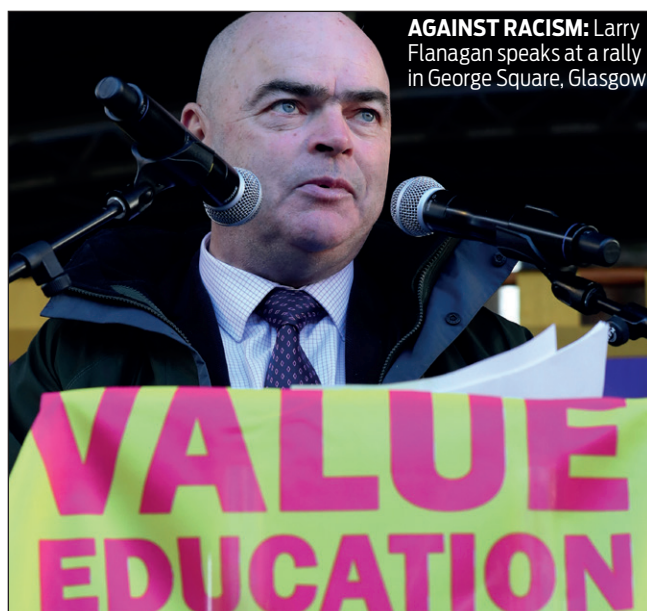
Unions must act when racism and sexism still blight many lives, says **LARRY FLANAGAN**

equality in society where the trade-union movement can make a real difference is in addressing inequalities in the workplace.

It is important for each sector to identify and confront institutional and cultural barriers to diversity and genuine equality, whether conscious or unconscious, and not shy away from addressing racism, racial discrimination or harassment wherever they exist.

In education, people from BAME backgrounds are significantly under-represented in the teaching profession.

In Scotland, where the EIS operates, the number of teachers from a BAME background is only around one-third of the proportion of BAME pupils in Scottish schools.



Teachers from these groups are also under-represented in promoted posts such as principal teacher, deputy head and head teacher. Indeed, BAME teachers are invisible in the statistics for head teachers.

These are serious issues which can only be addressed by unions working together against inequality, the basis of this EIS motion to Congress.

The second EIS motion at Congress, Motion 28, relates to the serious and long-lasting impact of poverty and, specifically, its disproportionate impact on women.

Women remain more likely to live in poverty than men; tend to earn less than men; have lower incomes over their lifetime than men, and are more likely to live in poverty

in old age. The vast majority of single parents are women, with almost half of them living in poverty as they struggle to balance their responsibilities of caring for their children with the ability to work and earn a living wage that can support their family.

Women continue to be disproportionately represented in lower-paying occupations, such as cleaning, caring, catering, cashiering and clerical work.

Often these jobs are part-time, may be based on zero-hours contracts, and frequently do not pay enough to lift families out of poverty.

The impact of Covid-19 has struck particularly hard in the types of industries that employ women in greater proportion.

Many of these jobs cannot be

done from home, making them highly vulnerable to the types of cost-cutting measures that continue to blight employees across the country and which have been exacerbated by the economic impact of the pandemic.

The EIS urges Congress to support this important motion and to issue a call for the Westminster government to invest in improved retraining opportunities for women, including within further education, and to invest in free provision of child and social care to enable more women to access education, training and quality jobs.

■ *Larry Flanagan is general secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland.*

No child should live in poverty if our society is truly civilised



KEVIN COURTNEY explains why the NEU is making a series of calls upon the government over child poverty

We know all these things because our members are on the front line, doing their best every day in sometimes impossible circumstances.

But these issues existed before lockdown and will continue after Covid-19.

Measures such as the two-child cap on child benefit and the five-week delay to the first payment of universal credit that have had such a devastating impact on children, young people and their families were all voted through by the same politicians who now express concern about the impact of poverty on those families and children's education.

Cuts to school, college and local-authority budgets again have all been pushed through with no consideration to the impact this has on the ability to ensure children get the education and support they need.



Given these experiences, it is no surprise that these children found it more difficult to learn during lockdown

Closure of libraries and youth clubs. Services teachers relied on to help vulnerable children were cut to the bone or disappeared and Sure Start

was decimated Child poverty is not something we have to live with – its effects are real, life-long and pernicious. A truly civilised society would not

tolerate hungry, badly clothed children living acutely stressful lives, resulting in debilitating mental and physical problems.

Our children get one chance at education. Be under no illusion – schools and colleges are in a dire situation and real solutions are needed.

To ensure no child is left behind the NEU is calling

upon government to expand eligibility for free school meals for every child on universal credit, for free school meals to be expanded year-round to end holiday hunger, and to ensure school uniforms are affordable.

Some 700,000 young people live in homes without internet access. To counter the digital divide and make sure no young person is left behind, the government must step up its scheme to provide free wifi access and laptops for disadvantaged children who don't have this access and give schools a dedicated tech budget to combat the digital divide.

All of this is readily achievable. All of this is something that many in Parliament became aware about and greatly concerned about.

The NEU will not let them forget and we will campaign tirelessly for change to ensure no child is left behind.

■ *Kevin Courtney is joint general secretary of the National Education Union.*



'We need a programme to rebuild in the interests of working people'

GMB union will be arguing for a more just and equal society at TUC conference, says **REHANA AZAM**



EMERGENCY MEASURES: Staff at a coronavirus testing centre in Southwark, south London

IN THESE extraordinary times the trade union movement will need to step up like never before in our history.

On the eve of TUC 2020 we are facing wholesale attacks on jobs, pay and conditions, and the assaults on public services continue to gather pace.

A resurgence in Covid-19 cases means that health and safety in the workplace will continue to be at the forefront of every worker's mind.

At the onset of the pandemic GMB union led the way in ensuring safe systems across workplaces and we hope TUC can join our call for mandatory individual workplace risk assessments.

This pandemic has lifted a veil from people's eyes that we can't allow to be pulled back.

Trade unions have had a surge in new members joining as more working people recognise that trade unions are the only organisations offering guidance and leadership during the biggest national emergency since the second world war.

We have seen the true value of our key workers, from supermarkets to care homes, who

have kept the entire country running and kept us alive, safe and well.

In the absence of a plan from government it's workers who have had to work out new ways of working, often with very little guidance.

Health workers in the hospitals and care workers tended to those who were the most vulnerable, unwell and dying of the virus while unprotected themselves.

We must not only protect these workers but we must protect and promote the pride, respect and recognition that have returned to these jobs.

Conditioned but outdated attitudes towards skill, economic, social and intrinsic value have to be challenged loudly and clearly.

Our disingenuous government will publicly advertise that it shares all of our concerns while privately and deliberately destabilising our members' lives and imposing the conditions of service that we see in economically developing countries.

There has been chaos and needless deaths as a direct result of years of fragmentation of services due to privatisation and cuts to our public services, but government fund-

We must unite to defend collective bargaining

FOUR years ago, the Tory-Lib Dem government passed the 2016 Trade Union Act.

Despite important concessions won by our movement, the law brought in draconian restrictions on the rights of workers and their unions.

It was the latest in a long line of attacks from Tory governments – attacks that, for 13 years of government, New Labour kept on the statute books.

But, to the Tories and the ruling class, their work has just begun – and with each new Conservative prime minister, a fresh wave of attacks soon loom.

That much was clear when, in December's general election, Boris Johnson threatened our transport worker comrades with "minimum servicing agreements," a brazen attempt to undermine the effectiveness of industrial action.

Likewise, after months of faint praise for key workers, the government and the right-wing press have vilified teachers and

their unions for the crime of demanding safe schools.

In January of this year, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services issued its first annual report.

After more than a decade without independent inspections, when the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) was often the sole voice defending standards in the fire and rescue service, the inspectorate chose to make a highly politicised attack on our union.

The chief inspector, Thomas Winsor, claimed the FBU's influence "goes too far and is sometimes contrary to the public interest" and baselessly accused us of putting public safety in "peril."

His solution? To attack our collective bargaining arrangements and recommend an "independent" pay review body be imposed on firefighters and control staff.

We've seen how unions in other sectors have had their wings clipped by pay review bodies.

FBU general secretary **MATT WRACK** argues for Motion 59 – Defend National Collective Bargaining in the Fire and Rescue Service

While collective bargaining has not always delivered the pay rises firefighters deserve, they have had more of a voice at the National Joint Council, where the FBU and fire service employers negotiate pay, than they would in a submission to a so-called "independent" body. Additionally, as noted in Motion 01, Covid-19 and the Fire and Rescue Service, collective bargaining was fundamental in helping to shape and deliver an effective national firefighter response to Covid-19.

When coronavirus took hold

in our NHS and our health and social care colleagues were up against it, firefighters stepped up to help.

They have moved the deceased to mortuaries; delivered food, medicines and PPE; driven ambulances; assembled and face-fitted masks; and more besides.

But they weren't thrown defenceless into the front line by government – it was a safe, negotiated intervention, jointly co-ordinated by the FBU, fire chiefs and fire service employers.

That allowed us to insist on



the strictest health and safety terms, ensuring activities were properly risk assessed.

And, from the outset, we made sure that all non-essential, non-emergency work was paused to limit cross-contamination between firefighters and the public.

When issues arose in individual brigades, we had a clear process through which to raise our concerns – and, with tens of thousands of firefighters and control staff behind us, a clear mandate to demand that they

be addressed.

Firefighters and control staff have made it through the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic and, like our comrades in other unions, can be proud that we have done our bit for our communities during this crisis.

But they have done so safely, with a response negotiated through collective bargaining.

Across the world, there have been a number of tragic firefighter Covid-19 deaths – and we have seen too many of our brave comrades in other sectors

ing is being diverted to dubious private companies who are failing us on provision of PPE and rolling out test, track and trace.

In spite of the glaring failures of privatisation, billions more are being handed over to private companies with close links to government ministers and their advisers while health workers are being told “there are more important calls on public finances” than giving them the pay justice they need and deserve.

Our members want skilled, well paid jobs, they want an end to the injustice of the two-tier workforce and they are angry that they are left to eke out a miserable existence on statutory sick pay if they fall ill.

We need investment in a programme to rebuild the economy in the interests of working people.

We have to make clear that we are the authority on these issues, the guardians of the truth of these matters, and it is not without our consent that they will be honestly asserted.

Many of our workers who died during the pandemic were Black, Asian, or from minority ethnic backgrounds and we call on the TUC to get behind the demand for a public inquiry into the government’s woeful response to the pandemic.

GMB union will be arguing for a more just and equal society at TUC conference and in light of the GMB inquiry this call is more relevant than ever before.

The GMB report has shone a light on sexism in our movement and in an era where work-

ing women are turning to trade unions for the help and support they cannot get elsewhere, the trade unions must not let them down. We must ensure their voices are heard at every level of our movement.

As we fight to end labour market discriminatory practices we will do the difficult work necessary to get our own house in order and we intend to set an example for all organisations and employers to follow.

On the eve of TUC Conference and standing at the brink of great change we send our sororal and fraternal greetings to all of our affiliated brothers and sisters and offer all of you our solidarity.

■ **Rehana Azam** is national secretary of GMB - head of public services.



In the absence of a plan from government it’s workers who have had to work out new ways of working



lose their lives. While there have been isolated outbreaks in some UK fire and rescue services, the FBU is not aware of any currently serving UK firefighter who has died from coronavirus.

If we are to change society for the better after this pandemic, we must defend the few processes and structures in our current system that deliver for workers.

Collective action is a central pillar of our movement – and we must rally together to condemn any attempt to undermine it.

Every Tory government has attacked our movement and the first major assaults of Boris Johnson’s premiership are already brewing.

We know their tactics and we must be ready, but the first step begins at this virtual Congress, with a clear vote in favour of Motion 59, Defend National Collective Bargaining in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Today, we must tell Downing Street that collective bargaining works – and we’ll fight any attempt to undermine it.



NEVER has there been a more important time for trustworthy news than during this global pandemic.

People needed information on dealing with the deadly virus and to keep on top of the various (and often conflicting) advice and edicts from government and its scientists.

It has been journalists who have shone a light on what Covid-19 has revealed – many people living in a precarious economy where their livelihoods disappeared overnight and austerity-hit public services were left unable to pick up the pieces.

The media has reported on how we are not all in it together; with the poor, self-employed and BAME people being disproportionately affected.

Like other industries, the media is having a tough time, largely caused by the underlying health issues the virus has exposed and amplified.

At the NUJ, we are engaged in redundancy consultations with over 4,000 jobs at risk, across all sectors of the industry.

Predominantly, those cuts and redundancies are targeted at grassroots journalism roles.

We are dealing with a BBC under attack from Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings, who would like to see it emasculated and hobbled.

This is the same BBC which worked around the clock, providing local and national news coverage, current affairs and investigations as well as creating unrivalled content and programming to support families home-schooling during this unprecedented period.

This is why the NUJ launched its News Recovery Plan in April, setting out a bold set of interventions to support and protect jobs and quality journalism and reboot a future media – one

We need a media fit for the future

Boosting trust in journalism is more important than ever in the era of ‘fake news,’ says NUJ leader **MICHELLE STANISTREET**

that is fit for purpose, bolder and much more rooted in the public good.

Key to the plan is forcing the tech giants, which have helped themselves to newspapers’ content while sucking up virtually all the digital advertising, to pay their way.

We are saying “enough is enough.” The union is calling for a digital service tax, or a digital information levy, to fund the measures set out in the plan, with a one-off windfall charge followed by an annual levy based on company profits.

They can well afford it. While most other companies have been feeling the pain of this crisis, they have been coining it with Facebook posting a double-figure revenue growth over the summer.

It will be a fight. Australia has introduced a code of conduct that aims to make Google and Facebook pay news outlets for content, threatening them with fines if they don’t.

Facebook has retaliated, saying it will pull all news from its platform there.

These tech giant heads did not become trillionaires by paying for news content or taxes

when they can get away with it.

That’s why we need a united stand against them, their greed and exploitation.

These platforms also try to avoid any responsibility for the crazy conspiracy theories and downright untruths people peddle on their sites and messaging services.

That’s why our plan calls for a wide-scale media literacy campaign to tackle disinformation and fake news which pollute democratic discourse.

Have you heard there are plans afoot to create new Fox-style news outlets, based on Donald Trump’s favourite TV station? Because there just aren’t enough right-wing media pundits and publications in Britain. Right?

That is why we are also calling for greater plurality in the media and tighter ownership regulation.

To do this, we have proposed a government-funded, arm’s-length Journalism Foundation to invest in local news and innovative journalistic projects and to promote new media start-ups.

And we are proposing free vouchers for online or print subscriptions for all 18 and

19-year-olds and tax credits to all households with subscriptions to reputable news outlets.

We need to boost trust in journalism and create the environment in which quality ethical reporting is strongly rooted in line with the NUJ’s Code of Conduct.

All citizens should have access to easily understood reporting of important decisions taken on our behalf – about defence, health, education and social care services, as well as the administration of justice, provision of transport, and economic planning.

The year-on-year cuts that have plagued newsrooms, particularly local journalism, has meant we aren’t always getting this information.

The NUJ is fighting for local news and we hope comrades can support our members at the Bullivant weekly newspapers in the Midlands who have been taking strike action to stave off poor pay and compulsory redundancies.

That is why we are asking the TUC to support our plan for a media fit for the future.

■ **Michelle Stanistreet** is general secretary of the NUJ.

WE ARE waiting, with some trepidation, for the publication of the much-delayed Williams rail review and an indication from the Department for Transport of what it has in mind for the future of our railway.

There have been signals – Grant Shapps has been busy briefing his friends in the right-wing papers – of what he might have in mind.

Adrian Quine was prompted to write a piece in the Daily Telegraph asking, plaintively: “Are our trains to be nationalised in all but name?”

Now he came not to praise Caesar, but to bury him, as he thought – as you might imagine – that this would be a jolly bad idea.

Funnily enough, we don’t. We think it would be a rather good idea.

Aslef campaigned, successfully, for the nationalisation of Britain’s railways during the great post-war Attlee governments. And we campaigned, sadly, unsuccessfully, against privatisation, under John Major, in the early 1990s.

We think, as most people in the Labour Party, and the labour movement, think, that Britain’s railways should be run as a public service, not for private profit.

That goes for the Royal Mail, the Post Office, and our public utilities – gas, water and elec-

We need to run our own railway

Grant Shapps has admitted that 26 years of rail privatisation hasn’t delivered for passengers, staff or taxpayers. Aslef leader **MICK WHELAN** argues that it’s time to bring our railway back into public ownership



described as “a privatisation too far” – simply hasn’t worked.

Shapps is proposing to end the “failed franchise system” and replace it with management contracts.

Instead of bidding for a franchise, and taking the fare box, operators will receive a fixed fee for running a service while the Treasury will collect the cash and the government will own the routes.

The system will be overseen by a new board of control, which is likely to be chaired by the transport secretary, giving the DfT greater control of timetables and fares.

It will also give the network the “guiding mind” which Williams will call for in his rail review and which includes strong criticism of the “fragmented nature of our privatised railways.”

That review was ready to be published before last Christmas – when Williams briefed Aslef in November he told us that the structure he would propose

would work whether the railway was in public ownership, under Labour, or in private, under the Tories – but the general election, followed by a three-way dog fight between Williams, the DfT and Downing Street, as well as the Covid-19 crisis, put his report on the back-burner.

His proposals will provide Shapps with cover if he comes under attack from the train operating companies, the Rail Delivery Group or some of the ideologically driven, uber-free market, “swivel-eyed loons” on the government’s back benches.

The Transport Secretary told the transport committee he wants to “bring the railway back together” – ironically, nicking a phrase from us, as we have often called on the government to “put the wheels and the steel back together” – and compared it to the Transport for London model where an operator is awarded a contract to run London Overground.

I suppose we should be happy

that a Tory government has finally admitted what those of us who work in the rail industry have always known – that privatisation doesn’t work.

But what this Tory government will, we think, suggest is just another commercial model.

It might put the wheels and the steel back together but they should be in the public, not the private, sector – because the railway is a natural monopoly.

It should be run as a public service, not for private profit, for passengers, for businesses, for taxpayers, and for all of us who work in the industry.

Rail is the transport of the future. It’s clean – and, when all our lines are electrified, carbon-neutral – and a much better way, in the 21st century, to move freight as well as people around this country.

But to achieve everything we want to achieve as a green economy we need to own – and run – our own railway.

AMONG the many things we have learned from this awful pandemic is that our labour movement is the beating heart of our country in a crisis – wherever we turn there are ordinary working people, true heroes, who have saved lives and kept our country moving in dark days.

Ahead of TUC Congress – this year mostly online, of course – I pay tribute to each and every one of these brave workers for all they have done.

As trade unionists, we have and continue to rise to the challenge, as always, not for ourselves but for the good of all.

What the coronavirus crisis has also demonstrated, without doubt, is the undeniably joined-up nature of our society.

How, for instance, would it have been possible for our National Health Service heroes and other key workers to get to their jobs without our rail network continuing to run as it has done throughout?

The millions who stood on their doorsteps in solidarity with our key workers week after week knew this – and there can be no turning back.

In short, faced with a national emergency, the whole notion of privatised railways was shown up as the sick joke it has always been.

These services are not a plaything for profiteers, they are fundamental to our country every day of the year and must

Privatised rail has been shown to be a sick joke

Our railways are not a plaything for the rich – they are fundamental to our country every day of the year, says TSSA leader

MANUEL CORTES

be treated as such.

Let’s face it, even before coronavirus, many train-operating companies were reliant on direct and indirect taxpayer subsidies which guaranteed regular profits.

Some, like London North Eastern Railway and Northern, have already come under public ownership.

Faced with a house of cards toppling under the weight of the virus – and near zero passen-



gers – the Tories came up with a fudge for England’s railways.

This was a six-month emergency measures agreement (EMA) in which the state would take on all revenue and cost risk for running rail services while guaranteeing profits for fat-cat shareholders.

The move amounted to a short-term nationalisation of our railways to stop private companies going to the wall.

Now the EMAs are up for review and sadly are very likely to be extended.

There is only one realistic way forward: if the government truly respects our front-line workers, the vital role of our railways and our wider public, we must eliminate the leech of the private sector altogether from rail services

by taking our trains fully into public ownership.

Anything less would amount to allowing privateers to hold our taxpayers to ransom.

Ridding ourselves of the failed dogma of rail privatisation is one lesson – but there are many more we need to learn from these past months.

The government’s public-health response to the Covid-19 pandemic was calamitous, delivering the worst excess deaths rates in Europe, with Britain topping global tables for per capita deaths from Covid-19.

People needlessly died and families suffered unnecessarily because of many abject failings of Tory ministers.

Lockdown was delayed, protective equipment was

nowhere to be seen, testing was non-existent and there was a widespread tragedy in our care homes which amounted to a national scandal.

Much of this could have been avoided by a reasonably competent government with even a modicum of foresight.

However, it’s also impossible to overlook a decade of politically driven austerity which left our NHS and our care services so threadbare there simply wasn’t the required capacity to deal with a pandemic.

It’s not just Boris Johnson, but the governments of Theresa May, David Cameron and his Lib Dem co-conspirators who are to blame.

We must see an immediate public inquiry into the handling of the pandemic – not least because we need answers ahead of any second or future outbreaks.

We also need to understand better how the populism of Johnson and his Tory predecessors got us into this terrible mess, with their simplistic belief in the market rather than our people.

That is their legacy – but our labour movement knows better and will always stand together for the workers of our country, for ordinary working people, in good and bad times.

Sadly, difficult times are ahead but our socialist principles have a world to win – let’s do it!

■ Manuel Cortes is general secretary of TSSA

Black Lives Matter is not a 'fashion accessory'

by Roger McKenzie

IT'S hard to go anywhere on the left without hearing someone mention how Black Lives Matter should move from a moment to a movement.

This is often from people who have done virtually nothing – never attending a march, never spoken at a rally, never prioritised race equality in bargaining.

Yet still they proclaim a long-held commitment to something they have never really done anything about.

Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against people arriving late to the party. Better late than never, I say.

But I really wish they wouldn't treat anti-racism or the Black Lives Matter movement – because, yes, it's already a movement and has been for some considerable time – as some sort of fashion accessory.

An accessory to be paraded and then, as with all other fashions, to be discarded when a new fashion emerges.

I remember how not so long ago I was hearing constantly from some people on the left that anti-racism was the most important issue facing humankind.

It was then decided – by

whom I do not know – that in fact anti-racism was not now the most important issue because that was now climate change.

In fact it really had been climate change all along. How foolish I was to think that black lives mattered that much!

Then George Floyd was murdered and, lo and behold, black lives once again mattered more than anything. I was obviously relieved that my life mattered again.

It's obviously a false comparison to place black lives either above or below climate change as a campaign.

For black people, in any case, our families in the Global South will be among the first to suffer from climate change.

My point in raising this is simply to illustrate how some

people are using the Black Lives Matter movement for their own ends rather than demonstrating a real commitment to anti-racism.

Taking a knee in honour of George Floyd is one thing, but actually making a sustainable and long-term commitment to anti-racism is another thing entirely.

The trade-union movement needs to remember this as we meet at Congress to debate our motions.

Not only will we debate motions specifically on anti-racism but we also need to make sure that we illustrate how black lives matter throughout the agenda.

On the economy, education and Covid-19, to name but a few. Black lives matter on

everything and not just those items that carry a black or anti-racist label.

We also need to do this beyond Congress itself. We can't make tackling the institutional racism that still exists in the UK, including the trade-union movement, a temporary or fashionable affair.

It's one of the reasons that I fully support the re-establishment of the TUC Stephen Lawrence Task Group.

We need to inject some new energy across our movement into tackling institutional racism and, most importantly, to turn it into a key organising and bargaining issue.

We know how to march against racism and the rise of the far right. Many, though not all of us, have experience of actually doing it.

However, we need to do much more than march. We

need to organise black workers, promote black self-organisation and bargain in the workplace.

We must continue to march but we must also move beyond the slogans, badges and placards to bring about real change in the lives of black workers.

Real change for black workers includes paying some credence to the struggles that black workers have to endure to reach any position within the trade-union movement as well as in any workplace.

I know few black workers who have not faced a struggle to achieve any position with the trade-union movement.

To have these struggles ignored or dismissed as either careerism or tokenism, as I have heard, or to have black workers held to a higher standard is not good enough for our movement.

So black lives have to matter every day and not just when it's convenient or fashionable.

The trade-union movement can show the way. We can continue that journey at Congress this week.

■ Roger McKenzie is a candidate to be the next general secretary of Unison.



Racism in the arts and culture sector must be addressed

Black artists face the effects of not just the racism that already exists but cuts to funding streams and socially engaged work, says **ZITA HOLBOURNE**

I AM proud that my union, Artists Union England, as one of the newest and youngest unions, has a strong track record in tackling and standing up to racism and for race equality with black representatives in leadership positions in it.

I use the term black throughout this article in its broadest political sense to encompass those from the African and Asian diasporas which we use in the trade-union movement including both of my unions, AUE and PCS and at TUC level where we hold an annual black workers' conference.

We recognise the importance of race equality, not least because black people experience institutional racism in the arts and culture sector.

This historical racism has been amplified first by 10 years of austerity and now by the coronavirus pandemic.

Black artists face pigeonholing of their art and labelling – on one hand if they produce art that speaks to their lived experiences as racialised people or relating to their culture and identity, they

are told their art is "too black." Or on the other hand they are told that their art is only suitable for black audiences or for Black History Month.

Austerity has impacted disproportionately on black workers and this has meant that black artists face the effects of not just the racism that already exists but of cuts to funding streams and socially engaged work as artists – which a majority of AUE members are involved in.

It was for these reasons that the TUC race-relations committee established the Roots Culture Identity art exhibition which has now developed eight years down the line into a collective as well as touring evolving exhibition.

It was first established to meet one of the TUC Stephen Lawrence Task Group recommendations – to use the Marble Hall at the TUC HQ, Congress House as a space to promote the creative talents of young black people in recognition that Stephen had wanted to become an architect.

I am proud to have co-ordinated and curated this exhibi-

tion since its inception and I have sought to bring the exhibition to venues and institutions that have not always readily engaged in the lived experiences and creative productions of black people.

The coronavirus pandemic has hit our members in AUE hard, and many have fallen between the cracks when it comes to government measures – leading to deepening poverty as all work has dried up.

This is even worse for our members who are black and women.

Many of our members are engaged in community art, working with vulnerable people, those who face discrimination and barriers and who bring a lifeline to those they work with through arts therapy, for example.

This in turn affects the most marginalised communities, including black, migrant and refugee communities and individuals who used the services provided by our members before lockdown.

Black and migrant workers are more likely to work precariously and in turn this means

less job security, low pay, worsened terms and conditions and jobs more likely to be at risk.

Our sector is one of those that have been hardest hit by the pandemic, and the economic crisis to follow is already hitting black workers and those in the culture sector disproportionately, with members of my other union, PCS working at Tate Modern already facing threats to their jobs with a disproportionate impact on race grounds and forced to take strike action.

This year's TUC Congress will be a quite different event from previous ones as it will largely be virtual.

We chose to submit one of our two motions on Black Lives Matter, race equality and the impacts of coronavirus on black communities for several reasons.

Equality is supposed to be at the heart of trade unions.

The brutal murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the US led to global protests by the Black Lives Matter movement this summer and we issued a statement of solidarity with the family of George Floyd and the



wider movement.

The past few months have been a painful traumatic time for all of us, but for black communities who have contracted and died from Covid-19 disproportionately and for those of us with a lived experience of racism, it has been tough, really tough – those protests are a rallying call for change, for recognition of our experiences and for action to tackling the root causes of the everyday, institutional and systemic racism we experience.

These are human-rights issues and AUE, in its short lifetime in comparison with many other unions, also has a proud track record of standing up for human rights.

It was important for us to put forward a motion and recommendations that seek to address these issues, that show solidarity with black workers and communities and not just symbolically but in physical solidarity.

For many years in my roles as a human-rights campaigner, trade-union and community activist I have campaigned and sought to raise awareness

of the legacies of enslavement and colonialism, and it is crucial that these legacies are addressed if there is to be real change.

I was proud to give this year's International Slavery Museum's Dorothy Kuya Memorial lecture to mark this year's Unesco Slavery Remembrance Day – which was virtual so can be watched at mstar.link/SlaveryRemembrance.

In the lecture I talk about how those legacies have led to the oppression and discrimination we still face today, such as the Windrush scandal, deaths at the hands of the state, racial profiling, discrimination in the labour market and education and more, but also the everyday racism and microaggressions we encounter.

If the protests over the summer were the rallying call, then the trade union movement has a key role and a responsibility in answering that call and to engage with and support black communities and in particular young black people who have been leading protests in cities across Britain.

There must be nothing about us without us.

ECOCIDE

DAVID WHYTE | MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS, £12.99

Kill the corporations before they kill us, is the rallying cry of a book arguing that they are a structural disaster for humanity

IN ECOCIDE, David Whyte seeks not to dole out blame to specific corporations for climate change but instead to show that the structure of a corporation is inherently deadly to humanity – and in this he succeeds.

The book covers what a corporation is, traces the history of corporate capitalism and critiques modern attempts to control corporations through regulation. Throughout, Whyte threads in the story of the first recorded profit-making corporation, which serves to illustrate

his central thesis.

The Swedish mining corporation Stora Kopparberg came into being in 1288 and has existed continuously until today as the paper-producing firm Stora Enso, which is now involved in destroying the Amazon rainforest.

Whyte argues that the “legal person” of a corporation is not just a convenient fiction but a structural disaster for humanity.

An emotive writer, his book is a compelling read. The modern corporation is the perfect vehicle for devouring nature, he con-

tends, and it is “the loom” that braids together colonialism, genocide and ecocide – even imposing regulatory limits means only that it has been licensed to kill.

A professor of socio-legal studies, Whyte ranges across many fields. He employs concepts from political economy, legal theory and environmental studies with a fluency that is easy to admire.

He doesn’t just dump jargon on the reader but explains the relevance of the ideas to societal issues, as when he outlines how



a corporation can employ multiple “personalities” to circumvent any attempt to constrain its power.

Ecocide contains some arresting observations about modern capitalism and in one passage Whyte notes that Marx was writing at a time when the corporate economy had not yet fully developed, which helps to explain why socialist rhetoric that finds inspiration in Marx can appear

old-fashioned, with a rhetorical focus on bankers and CEOs more typical than corporate entities.

Of course, attacking individuals is politically powerful but this perhaps is ultimately an unhelpful reflex. Yes, the system is rigged for individuals but the bigger picture is that it is rigged against all humanity.

As a diagnosis, Ecocide changed my perspective on the problem of climate change. Our true existential antagonists may not be powerful human billionaires but sprawling emergent beings – they never eat, drink, or sleep and only care about profit.

Future historians may wonder why 21st-century humans spent so much time speculating about hypothetical artificial intelligence while every day they worked in the service of real immortal beings to bring about the destruction of the natural world.

Whyte argues that if we try to reform the current system, “all we will be left with are solutions that someone can make a profit from” and the only ultimate solution is to “kill the corporation.”

It is difficult to argue with that. But how to do so is left as an exercise for the reader.

LIAM SHAW

FROM LUCIFER TO LAZARUS: A LIFE ON THE LEFT

MICK O'REILLY | LILLIPUT PRESS, £17.53

An inspiration and an example

ANDREW MURRAY recommends the life story of an outstanding Irish trade unionist

MICK O'REILLY, leading trade unionist in Ireland, sometime communist and always man of the left, has done the movement a service by committing his story to paper.

This clear and well-written book takes its author from working-class origins in Dublin and Ballyfremont through to the present as a campaigner and activist in “retirement” in the Irish Republic.

Along the way, we read sharply observed tales of industrial struggles, trade unionists – good, bad and ugly – encountered on the way and confrontations with employers.

These accounts are a portrait in class consciousness and recall days when the Irish trade union movement, like the British, had a strength and a militancy to a large extent absent today, if only because the factories that seeded that outlook have long disappeared for the most part.

O'Reilly's account of his life pivots on two things: his engagement with communism and Marxism and his dismissal and reinstatement as an official of the T&GWU, a traumatic episode.

To take the last first. O'Reilly, after many years on the shop floor, became an official of what was known throughout Ireland as the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers Union (AT&GWU), not to be confused with the Irish T&GWU.

The latter, now known as SIPTU, was an Ireland-only

union originally associated with James Connolly.

The AT&GWU, however, formed part of the London-based T&GWU, the union of Ernest Bevin, Jack Jones and, relevant to the matter in hand, Bill Morris. Formally, the AT&GU had the status of a region of the union, organising in both parts of divided Ireland.

Against the desires of Bill, now Lord, Morris – O'Reilly was appointed the regional secretary in Ireland, the first official from the Republic and the nationalist tradition – “culturally catholic” as he describes himself – to be so.

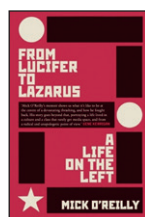
He was not very long in office before Morris used his deputy Margaret, now Baroness, Prosser to whip up a case for O'Reilly's suspension and then dismissal by the union, a manoeuvre that was not only entirely unjustified on its merits but represented an unprecedented interference in the Irish region which, by tradition and common sense, not to mention law in the Republic, had enjoyed a broad autonomy from London.

The ostensible reason was a round-up of alleged administrative inefficiencies and mis-steps. While it might be allowed that procedural niceties are likely not the first thing that O'Reilly thought of on waking up each day, this was a brazen stitch-up, designed to remove a principled and widely respected official who Lord Morris had never wanted in post to begin with.

“I ran the union from a rank-and-file perspective,” O'Reilly



EVER THE ACTIVIST: Mick O'Reilly speaking at a recruitment rally for the Communist Party in Dublin, 1973



writes, and that surely was his real sin.

The case of O'Reilly and his deputy Eugene McGlone,

likewise sanctioned, became a cause celebre, attracting support through Ireland and among T&G officers in Britain.

Eventually, both were reinstated and restored to their posts, largely thanks to the courage of Tony – now not a lord – Woodley, who ultimately succeeded Morris as T&G general secretary.

The AT&GWU, like the rest of its parent union, now forms part of Unite and has long since moved on, although echoes of the understandable bitterness the episode aroused can still occasionally be heard.

But there are larger lessons

to be remembered from the story, including the danger of bureaucratic authoritarianism in trade unions and the importance of the recognition of the special place of Ireland in the structures of those British-based unions that organise on that island. O'Reilly details this with understandable passion.

Perhaps one of the reasons Morris disliked O'Reilly is to be found in the latter's own words towards the end of his narrative: “I've spent my life trying to be a good communist, even though for most of that time I wasn't paying any party dues... I owe everything to joining the Communist Party back in the 1960s.

“I know all the shortcomings of communism but I still retain a faith in Marxism and a fundamental belief in the self-organisation of workers, which is the only thing that

can change the world.” Not an advocate of social partnership, then.

O'Reilly was a leading member of the Irish Workers Party in the Republic and then of the united Communist Party of Ireland from the 1960s through to the mid-1970s, when he resigned for reasons which are perhaps not as clear as all that, and his outlook did not seem to change in any significant way.

He paints vivid portraits of the party's campaigning in the communities and trade unions in an Irish Republic then still heavily scarred by Catholic anti-communism and of its celebrated leader Michael O'Riordan, who he only chides for working unremittingly to reverse the CPI's original condemnation of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

There are judgements here

that can be questioned – the view that Ernest Bevin was not anti-communist and that his T&G was left-wing in the 1930s is not one widely shared – but there is only one factual error: the ending of the ban on communists holding office in the union was lifted in 1969, not 1957.

This is a good tale, well told, of a class fighter. O'Reilly asks the right questions about the movement's future and how it grapples with the new preponderance of high finance in the economies of Ireland and Britain.

He remains centrally involved in left politics in Dublin and continues, in his role as a lay branch official, to both campaign for working people and trouble union officialdom with his occasional administrative originality.

A recommended read for every trade unionist.

PICTURE THIS | STEALING FROM THE SARACENS

DIANA DARKE | HURST AND COMPANY, £25

Revelatory account of how Islamic architecture shaped Europe

WITH this book, Diana Darke will surely alter the way many look at the great European cathedrals of Notre Dame in Paris, Canterbury, Cologne or Burgos.

In highlighting that the elementary design features and construction methods of their spectacular architecture were “borrowed” lock, stock and barrel from Islam at the time of the Crusades, Darke opens our eyes to evidence of a colossal cultural cross-fertilisation.

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, albeit with the proviso that it is accompanied by an acknowledgement of provenance. Yet recognition of this wholesale architectural borrowing in the West seems conspicuously absent in more recent times.

But then, imperialism depends on denigrating the cultural identity of peoples it seeks to plunder while simultaneously fostering a sense of exceptionalism among those it tasks with its conquests.

Even so, as Darke points out, the Crusades led to brutal military confrontations but equally to periods of coexistence, political dialogue, complex civil and military alliances, sharing of revered and sacred places and extensive trade.

Crucially, the period of the Crusades saw significant exchanges of ideas in philosophy, the sciences and the geometric underpinnings of architecture.

When the Crusaders reached Jerusalem in 1099 the Dome of the Rock, designed and built by Raja ibn Haywa and Yazid ibn Salam in 692CE – the oldest extant Islamic place of worship – must have dazzled with its size and immaculate proportions, much as it does today.

The breathtaking mid-16th

century dome of the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul was designed by the legendary Mimar Sinan and it influenced his contemporary Michelangelo when he was tasked with configuring the dome of St Peter's Basilica in Rome.

And today, the northern Paris skyline is dominated by the Sacre Coeur basilica. Completed in 1914, its domes and mosaics are all Islamic in provenance.

A consequence of the Crusades was that trades were learned across a plethora of building specialisms and guilds and fraternities formed upon

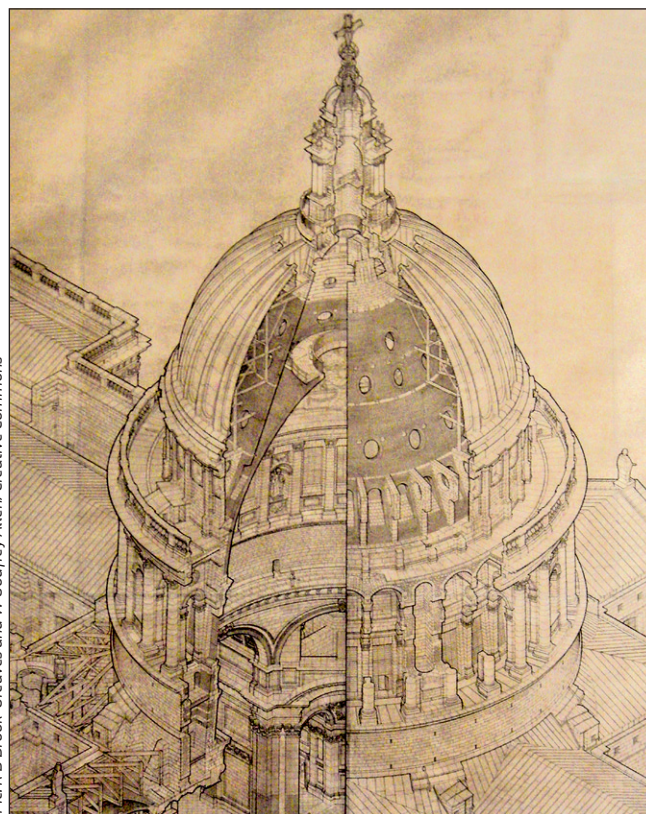


the return to Europe of masons, carpenters and glass workers.

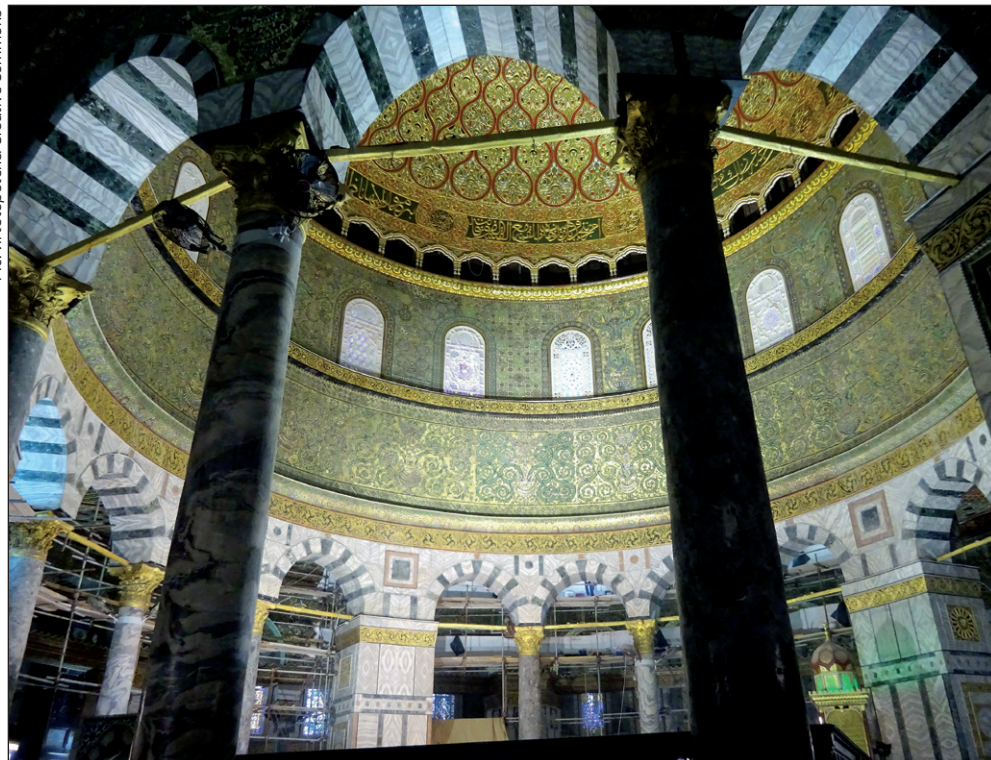
They provided expertise, protected employment and assisted in passing on skills from fathers to sons in early versions of trade union closed shops.

The extent of the Islamic influence on architecture in this country is revealed in a letter the 81-year-old Christopher Wren wrote to the Bishop of Rochester in 1731 as he was about to embark on the repair of Westminster Abbey.

Setting the record straight, he commented: “After we in



BORROWINGS: The architecture of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (top right) and other Islamic buildings influenced the design of St Paul's Cathedral (above) and (right) the basilica of Sacre-Coeur in Paris



the West had lost both [arts and learning], we borrowed again from them, out of their Arabic books, what they with great diligence had translated from the Greeks.”

Such buildings, he stated elsewhere, “have been vulgarly called Modern Gothick but their true appellation is Arabic, Saracenic or Moresque.” When Wren designed the dome of St Paul's cathedral, he used the “Saracen” vaulting method because their geometry of hemispheres was “evidently the lightest... and it is of agreeable view.”

That nugget is typical of Darke's narrative. Sumptuous, elegant and erudite, it is complemented by rich illustrations revealing fascinating vistas on every page.

In its stupendous celebration of diversity and difference, this has to be a contender for book of the year, architecture-wise.

MICHAEL BONCEA



FICTION | SHOULD WE FALL BEHIND

SHARON DUGGAL | BLUEMOOSE BOOKS, £9.99

Engrossing commentary on the woeful state of the nation

SHARON DUGGAL'S captivating debut novel *The Handsworth Times* was so successful because of its precise detailing of place and time.

For her second book, the author shows true creativity in doing quite the opposite but with equal success.

From the working-class south Asian community in Birmingham facing endemic racism in the 1980s in *The Handsworth Times*, Duggal shifts location to a nameless but vaguely contemporary city somewhere in England.

Precisely, but without resorting to exhortations from the pulpit, she demonstrates the linkages that ultimately bind the working class together in the external and internal struggles they face.

With chapter headings named after each of the principal characters, *Should We Fall Behind* begins in a subway where Jimmy and Betwa, both homeless and escaping from their family circumstances, strike up a warm friendship among the cold of the streets and society's sadistic indifference



and hatred.

In penetrating writing, analogous to the films of Ken Loach, Duggal remorselessly articulates those realities, nowhere more so than when she describes what it feels like to be hungry for days on end: “Any joy associated with it [food] was intangible, like remote satellites high in the sky. Food-talk became disassociated from the act of eating... food-talk was dreaming.”

The action shifts to another part of the city once Betwa disappears and Jimmy, distraught at their separation, tries to

locate her in her old neighbourhood, where he sleeps in an abandoned car.

Duggal is forensic in developing her characters' unique backstories, strengths and vulnerabilities and the young woman Ebele and Nikos, the latter both employer and landlord to her, are the most challenging to like, at least initially.

Ebele is both aggressively protective of her young daughter Tuli and relentless in avoiding any emotional connection with people, while Nikos emanates a sourness and lack of sympathy seemingly symptomatic of his being petit bourgeois.

Yet through the attritional interactions caused by Jimmy's unwanted presence in their lives, both begin to reveal the life stories that explain much about their current predicaments.

Through them, Duggal makes the point that it is often those with very little by way of prospects and resources who are least in solidarity with those who have nothing.

By contrast, the characters Rayyal and Daban are more instantly sympathetic, the former still in love with her husband, now totally immobilised by Parkinson's, and the latter showing a strong humanity in spite of being at the front end

of the pitiless gig economy.

Ebele's downstairs neighbours Grace and Mandy are only sketches by comparison and by far the weakest elements in the otherwise impressive portfolio of characters.

The concluding chapters are impeccably paced and, as befits a writer of Duggal's calibre and sensitivity, offer some, but not total, closure and reconciliation.

Should We Fall Behind asks many questions of today's dysfunctional economic and social system but it also reminds us of the essential importance of our shared humanity on the front lines of the class struggle.

PAUL SIMON

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

Most areas dry with plenty of warm sunshine, conditions hotter than yesterday across England and Wales. Cloudier with rain at times over far north-western Scotland.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Many places dry and warm tomorrow, hot across the south-east. A few showers possible in the north and west. Turning cloudier and cooler from the north on Wednesday and Thursday.

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Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

16 days left

YOU'VE RAISED: **£6,945** WE NEED: **£11,055**



USUALLY I listen to the radio while pulling this column together, which is how I heard about the rise of Tik Tok and its creation of "influencers."

Tik Tok, which has annoyed Trump by being Chinese-owned, describes itself as "an interactive world of videos that lets you connect with friends and admirers through likes, comments, and even duets,"

so now you know.

The "influencers" are mostly, it seems, young people, who make "shows" that go out on social media, building up a following that attracts the attention of those with things to sell, who then pay for their products and services to be promoted on these platforms.

A very few make a lot of money from this but, as fash-

ions change, they fall like Icarus. It seems that we've been ahead of the times here at the Morning Star, having influenced progressive ideas, policies and promoted those on the side of working people and their families, while calling out those who exploit at home and abroad.

Having been doing so for 90 years must indicate some degree of success, as does us still being

around to keep doing what we do. Selling the idea that exploiting folk is wrong is unlikely to garner financial support from the exploiter but we have something greater than their wealth: we have all of you, who ensure our target is hit, and, one day, there'll be an end to exploitation. Until then, we'll give you the ammunition to influence others that you're right.

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DAILY SUDOKU (easy peasy)

5		8				9		
8		4	5			3		6
7	6			4				2
2	3							
			1		5			
							7	3
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1		2			8	6		9
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Solution tomorrow...

Previous solutions

Weekend crossword 1,359

T	S	S	P	I	P								
F	U	R	N	I	T	U	R	E	K	N	E	A	D
R	I	R	E	V	E	N							
Z	E	I	T	G	E	I	S	T	J	E	T	T	Y
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F	L	E	E	T	C	E	E	N					
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Y													

Saturday's sudoku

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

TV & radio preview with Neil Jenkin



DESPERATE: Image from a reconstructed scene in tonight's Panorama

Panorama reports on an evil and brutal trade that exploits vulnerable refugees

FIRST and foremost, the **TUC Congress** is being streamed live at www.tuc.org.uk/Congresslive from 10am, with debates on safety for front-line workers during the pandemic and the unequal impact of the coronavirus, fringe meetings this afternoon and general secretary Frances O'Grady's keynote speech at 11am.

Tonight's **Panorama** (7.35pm BBC1) investigates one of the world's most brutal trades: the buying and selling of human organs. The programme meets the African migrants who have been exploited for their body parts by criminal gangs. Some have agreed to sell a kidney to finance their journey to Europe, only to be ripped off by the traffickers after the operation. Other victims have their organs taken without consent.

Panorama also tracks down the criminals running the trade to find out how they arrange illegal operations in hospitals and clinics.

More telly: **Tour de France Highlights** (7pm ITV4), rest-day recap on the second week of racing; **Canals: the Making of a Nation** (7pm BBC4), historian Liz McIvor's series could serve as a social history of Britain's industrialisation in microcosm; **Des** (9pm ITV), episode one of a nightly three-part true-crime drama focusing on the case of serial killer jobcentre worker Dennis Nilsen, played by David Tennant; **The Sky at Night: Special Report** (10.30pm), investigating some exciting new developments in astronomy.

Radio: **Vaccines, Money and Politics** (11am Radio 4) first of a two-part examination of the vast

ecosystem needed to deliver a vaccination programme to the world in record time and what plans are in place to make it happen; **Composer of the Week: Johann Pachelbel** (noon Radio 3), Donald Macleod sets out to convince us the German baroque composer wasn't a one-hit wonder; **No Longer at Ease** (12.04pm Radio 4) serialisation of Chinua Akebe's 1960 novel, which looks at the tensions between traditional and European culture through the experiences of a young Igbo man as Nigeria nears the end of British colonial rule; **Crossing Continents** (8.30pm Radio 4) report on the Netherlands, where its farmers, some of the world's most successful food producers, are in uproar over a call to get rid of half their animals to curb toxic nitrogen emissions.

QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- Who was the author of the Barchestershire novels?
- Which annual televised pop music competition was due to be held in the Netherlands this year but cancelled because of the pandemic?
- Chambre, a French word, refers to which alcoholic beverage served at room temperature?



SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

- It was recently discovered that which items used to make drinks contain small amounts of plastic? **Tea bags**
- Which town near London has given its name to a species of warbler? **Dartford (the Dartford warbler)**

3. In which London railway station is there a statue (pictured) of Nigel Gresley? **King's Cross. Unveiled in 2016, it honoured the railway engineer, designer of the Flying Scotsman and the 120+mph Mallard (hence the duck)**

WOMEN'S TENNIS

OSAKA SAYS US OPEN WIN KEEPS KOBE BRYANT'S LEGACY ALIVE

by Our Sports Desk

HAVING found her voice off the court, Naomi Osaka returned to the top on it with her third grand slam title.

The 22-year-old from Japan was comprehensively outplayed by Victoria Azarenka in the first set but recovered brilliantly to triumph 1-6 6-3 6-3.

The trophy goes into her collection alongside ones from the 2018 US Open, where her achievement was overshadowed by the infamous row between Serena Williams and umpire Carlos Ramos, and the 2019 Australian Open.

Already the highest-earning female athlete in the world, Osaka adds another £2.3 million in prize money to her fortune, while she becomes the first Asian player to win three grand slam singles titles, surpassing Chinese trailblazer Li Na.

But this is a story about more than just tennis, with Osaka using her platform to promote Black Lives Matter and honour victims of violence and brutality.

Her seventh facemask bore the name of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old boy killed by a policeman while playing with a toy gun in 2014, while Osaka's boyfriend, rapper Cordae, sat in the stands with a T-shirt bearing the words "Defund the police."

Asked at the presentation ceremony what message she had hoped to send, Osaka replied sharply: "Well what



CHAMPION: Naomi Osaka, of Japan, kisses the US Open trophy on Saturday

was the message that you got was more the question. I feel like the point is to make people start talking."

Osaka has certainly done that and, in playing for a cause bigger than herself, has rediscovered the clear-mindedness that characterised her first two titles.

She said: "My life was always go, go tennis-wise, especially after the previous US Open that I won. It definitely accelerated things, and I've never had a chance to slow down."

"The quarantine definitely gave me a chance to think a lot about things, what I want to accomplish, what I want peo-

ple to remember me by. I came into this tournament with that mindset. I think it definitely helped me out."

Also on Osaka's mind was Kobe Bryant. She was friends with the basketball superstar, who was tragically killed in a helicopter crash in January.

"I feel like at this point there are certain things that I do that I hope can make him proud," she said.

"It's keeping his legacy alive for me. I think it's amazing how one person can inspire so many people. I just want to be the type of person that he thought I was going to be. He thought I was going to be great,

so hopefully I will be great in the future."

Many people would argue Osaka is great right now, and the way she turned around a match that looked to have got away from her was hugely impressive.

Osaka lost the first set in just 27 minutes and was a point away from being 3-0 down in the second but she slowly began to play the contest on her terms and survived a late wobble when Azarenka fought back from 4-1 to 4-3 in the decider.

Asked how she turned the match around, the 22-year-old added: "I just thought it would be very embarrassing to lose in

under an hour so I just have to try and stop having a really bad attitude."

After her moment of victory, Osaka lay on the court soaking in her achievement in the cavernous surrounds of an almost empty Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"I was thinking about all the times I've watched the great players collapse onto the ground and look up into the sky," she said.

"I've always wanted to see what they saw. For me, it was really an incredible moment. I'm really glad I did it."

Azarenka had to digest a third US Open final defeat but, after her on and off-court struggles of the last three years, becoming a grand slam contender again seven years on from her last title was a huge victory.

"I think it's definitely been a great three weeks of tennis," said the 31-year-old. "I haven't had such results in quite a long time, so I'm very excited for it."

"Today, it's a loss. It doesn't change for me much. Of course, I would have loved to win. I gave everything that I could. It didn't come my way. But I'm very proud of the last three weeks. I felt that I progressed a lot. I've played a lot of great matches. I felt that I've tested myself physically, mentally on very difficult stages."

"It's been great. I want to continue to keep going the same way, enjoy myself. It was a lot of fun for me to play, to be in the final of the US Open. I'm very grateful for this opportunity."

in brief

Greenwood sorry for inhaling gas

FOOTBALL: Manchester United forward Mason Greenwood apologised yesterday after footage was published of him apparently inhaling so-called laughing gas.

The Sun on Sunday reported on a video showing the teenager breathing in nitrous oxide from a balloon.

"I have now been made aware of the health risks associated with this practice and accept that even trying it, as shown in these historical pictures, was poor judgement," Greenwood said.

End of an era for A Question of Sport

TELEVISION: Sue Barker is leaving A Question of Sport after 23 years as part of a major shake-up of the programme.

Team captains Matt Dawson and Phil Tufnell will also depart from the long-running sports quiz show, which first aired in January 1970.

Their final series together will be broadcast next year.

The new presenter and team captains have not yet been announced.

Farah sweeps to victory in Ireland

ATHLETICS: Four-time Olympic gold medallist Mo Farah swept to victory in a road race on Northern Ireland's scenic coastline, one of the first major sporting events there since the lockdown. Britain's star long-distance runner broke the one-hour world record on his return to the track earlier this month.

On Saturday, he took part in the Antrim Coast Half Marathon near Belfast and finished in 60 minutes 27 seconds.

England's players agree 25% pay cut

RUGBY U: England's players have accepted a 25 per cent pay cut for the 2020-21 season as a result of the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, the Rugby Football Union said Saturday. "This is a special squad of players," RFU chief boss Bill Sweeney said, "and their appreciation and understanding of the difficulties being faced across the English game has led to this outcome."



HE'S OFF: Luther Burrell (right) slams into London Broncos' Matt Fleming

MEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE

Burrell to switch codes again after Wolves end his contract

by Our Sports Desk

WARRINGTON have terminated the contract of former England centre Luther Burrell, who is seeking a way back into rugby union.

Burrell, who won 15 caps for England, switched codes in July 2019 when he joined the Wolves on a two-and-a-half-year contract from Northampton.

But he made just three appearances last season and, after being on the bench for the first five games of 2020, has been ignored by coach Steve Price since the resumption of the season on August 2.

Warrington have confirmed the release of the player, who spoke of his frustration in an interview with the Mail on Sunday in which he said he continued to push himself in training despite the lack of opportunities.

"There has to come a point where you look at the situation honestly and ask: how much more can you take of this?" he said. I was doing everything I could but the opportunities just weren't presenting themselves."

Now 32, Burrell insists he can still play at the highest level in the 15-man code if he gets the chance.

"I want to come back to union," he said. "I'm so hungry. I'll go on to the open market and hopefully someone will be fishing for a centre; 12 or 13."

"Just give me the call and I'll be there tomorrow morning. My boots are already in the car."

"I've not forgotten how to play union in the space of a year. My final Saints game was against Ben Te'o, who was in the England squad and I scored with my first touch."

"I'm in better shape now, but if I have to go and prove myself somewhere on a trial for a couple of weeks, then I'm prepared to do that."



WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

HAYES PRAISES BLUES NINE GOAL SCORERS

Chelsea make easy work of Bristol City at first home game of the season

by Our Sports Desk

CHELSEA manager Emma Hayes was "happy to be home" yesterday as her side thrashed Bristol City 9-0 in the first home game of their title defence, with each goal scored by a different player.

There were a number of debut goals for the Blues, but it was familiar face Fran Kirby who started the hosts' onslaught in the 15th minute.

Kirby endured a difficult 2019-20 campaign, but Hayes said: "I think Fran is at a level above already. She doesn't have to carry anyone on her shoulders in this team like she might have done a few years ago."

It was this strength in depth and team spirit that seemed to please Hayes the most.

Maren Mjelde scored a penalty in the 32nd minute and new signing Melanie Leupolz headed Chelsea's third after 35 minutes – the first of the debut goals.

Erin Cuthbert and Millie Bright rounded off the first-half goals as Chelsea showed that they mean business after their disappointing draw with Manchester United last week.

Current PFA player of the year Beth England opened the



EASY: Chelsea's Millie Bright laughs in the team huddle after the final whistle

post-break scoring in the 64th minute and Chelsea showed their depth when record signing Pernille Harder came on to replace her just a minute later.

Harder enjoyed a successful home debut with a hand in the last three goals, immediately setting up fellow substitute and summer signing Niamh Charles to tap home.

Charles repaid the favour in the 73rd minute, squaring for Harder to finish a slick Chelsea

move and Sam Kerr eventually got her goal in the 86th minute when Harder played her through.

"The fact that there were nine different goalscorers shows the diverse players that we have in our group," Hayes said. "When it becomes about an individual at any point, you compromise on the biggest prizes."

Being able to use all five of her substitutes played into

Hayes's hands on a hot afternoon when Chelsea rarely took their foot off the gas.

When asked about the gulf in class between her team and bottom-of-the-table Bristol City, Hayes conceded that the league will take time to grow.

"I'm hoping what happens at the top will trickle down," she said.

"Might there have to be some teething pains to get to that level? Yes. And is there a gap?

Yes. But I want to focus on all the great things that women's football does in this country and build on that in the hope we take it even further."

An influx of new signings to the WSL has seen the top of the table looks as competitive as it has ever been, and Hayes added: "Talent wins games, but teams win championships. They have the experience of knowing that and it's my job to point them to that on a regular basis."

WEEKEND RESULTS

Premier League

Burnley P.....P Manchester United
Crystal Palace 1.....0 Southampton
Fulham 0.....3 Arsenal
Liverpool 4.....3 Leeds United
Manchester City P.....P Aston Villa
West Ham 0.....2 Newcastle
West Brom 0.....3 Leicester

Championship

Barnsley 0.....1 Luton
Birmingham 1.....0 Brentford
Bournemouth 3.....2 Blackburn
Bristol City 2.....1 Coventry
Cardiff 0.....2 Sheffield Wednesday
Derby County 0.....2 Reading
Huddersfield 0.....1 Norwich
Millwall 0.....0 Stoke
Preston 0.....1 Swansea
QPR 2.....0 Nottingham Forest
Wycombe 0.....1 Rotherham

League One

Accrington 2.....0 Peterborough
Crewe 0.....2 Charlton
Doncaster Rovers 1.....1 MK Dons
Fleetwood Town 2.....1 Burton
Gillingham 0.....2 Hull City
Lincoln City 2.....0 Oxford United
Northampton 2.....2 Wimbledon
Plymouth 1.....0 Blackpool
Portsmouth 0.....0 Shrewsbury
Sunderland 1.....1 Bristol Rovers
Swindon 3.....1 Rochdale
Ipswich 2.....0 Wigan

League Two

Barrow 1.....1 Stevenage
Bolton 0.....1 Forest Green Rovers
Bradford 0.....0 Colchester
Cambridge United 3.....0 Carlisle
Cheltenham 1.....2 Morecambe
Mansfield 0.....0 Tranmere Rovers
Oldham 0.....1 Leyton Orient
Port Vale 2.....0 Crawley
Salford City 2.....2 Exeter City
Scunthorpe 1.....1 Newport County
Southend 0.....4 Harrogate
Walsall 1.....0 Grimsby

WSL

West Ham 1.....9 Arsenal
Chelsea 9.....0 Bristol City
Everton 1.....0 Tottenham
B'ham City 2.....5 Man Utd
Man City 0.....0 Brighton
Reading 3.....1 Aston Villa

W Championship

Crystal Palace 1.....1 London City
Durham 3.....0 Lewes Women
Blackburn 0.....1 Charlton
London Bees 0.....3 Liverpool
Sheff Utd 2.....2 Leicester

Scottish Premiership

Aberdeen 1.....0 Kilmarnock
Livingston 1.....2 Hamilton
Motherwell 1.....0 St. Johnstone
Rangers 4.....0 Dundee United
Ross County 0.....5 Celtic
St Mirren 0.....3 Hibernian

Welsh Premier

Aberystwyth Town 2.3 Cardiff Met
Barry Town 0.....3 TNS
Caernarfon Town 1.....1 Penybont
Conna's Quay 1.....1 Bala Town
Flint Town 1.....0 Newtown
Haverfordwest P.....P Cefn Druids

WRESTLING

IOC condemns execution of Iranian wrestler

by Our Sports Desk

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) described reports confirming the execution of Iranian wrestler Navid Afkari (right) as "deeply upsetting" amid mounting calls for sporting sanctions.

Iranian state media said on Saturday that Afkari, a national champion who was sentenced to death over the murder of a security guard during 2018 anti-government protests, had been executed. Afkari had said that he was tortured into a confession.

His death comes despite the attempted intervention of the IOC and the sport's world governing body, United World Wrestling, with IOC president Thomas Bach having said on Wednesday that he was trying



to "facilitate a solution."

In a statement the IOC said: "The execution of wrestler Navid Afkari in Iran is very sad news. The IOC is shocked by this announcement today.

"In letters, Thomas Bach, the IOC president, had made direct personal appeals to the Supreme Leader and to the president of Iran this week and asked for mercy for Navid

Afkari, while respecting the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"It is deeply upsetting that the pleas of athletes from around the world and all the behind-the-scenes work of the IOC, together with the NOC of Iran, United World Wrestling and the National Iranian Wrestling Federation, did not achieve our goal.

"Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Navid Afkari."

Last week Brendan Schwab, the executive director of the World Players Association, had insisted that, in executing Afkari, Iran would be "forfeiting its right to be a part of sport's universal community."

Schwab tweeted on Saturday: "[World Players Association] are aware of credible and heart-breaking reports that Navid Afkari was executed despite the work of so many courageous champions of human rights in sport.

"We are seeking formal confirmation. If true, we are determined to ensure Navid did not lose his life in vain."

Meanwhile the president of the World Olympians Association (WOA), Joel Bouzou, said his organisation was "gravely

upset" that efforts to spare Afkari's life had proved unsuccessful.

Bouzou said: "On behalf of the global Olympian community WOA today expresses its profound shock and sadness at the execution of Iranian wrestler Navid Afkari.

"WOA stood with the IOC and President Thomas Bach OLY in their appeals for mercy and are gravely upset that their combined efforts were not successful."

TODAY'S TIPS

Farringdon's Doubles

CROWDED EXPRESS
Wolverhampton 17.50 (nap)

SIR RODERIC
Lingfield 13:50

Houseman's Choice

MODMIN
Bath 15:35

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