



# LABOUR CONNECTED

PACKED with news & analysis from conference including features from MPs Claudia Webbe (p9), Jon Trickett (p8) and NEC member Ann Henderson (p10)

# **Morning Star** for Peace and Socialism

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# ACT ON THE DOUBLE OR SEE 50,000 CASES PER DAY



**BEARING BAD NEWS:** Sir Patrick Vallance arrives to deliver his stark warning yesterday

## Weekly 2x increases may soon kill 200 daily, top scientists warn

by Ceren Sagir

THE UK could soon face 50,000 new Covid-19 cases & 200 dead per day unless ministers take more action to protect the public, the government's scientific advisers warned yesterday.

England's chief medical officer Professor Chris Whitty and the government's top scientific adviser Sir Patrick Vallance spoke from Downing Street, unaccompanied by ministers for the first time, after infection rates rose to 6,000 people per day. Prof Whitty said that the country

stands at a "critical point," with the current trend heading in "the wrong direction" as cases approximately double each week.

Dr Vallance said that the recent rise in infections in all age groups was not due to increased testing.

He warned that if current infection rates continue, there may be 50,000 cases per day by the middle of October and 200 or more deaths per day by mid-November.

It came as the government continued to bungle on the NHS app – due to launch four months late on Thursday – as it backtracked on its

earlier claim that it would no longer be used for its intended purpose of tracking and tracing the virus.

Unison general secretary Dave Prentis warned that the situation is "spiralling out of control" and that the current measures and "mixed signals" are not enough.

"There's simply no time for complacency. The government must make public safety a priority," he said.

"Strict social distancing, fixing the bungled testing system and ensuring low-paid staff don't take a financial hit for staying off work are crucial. "Key workers in the NHS, care,

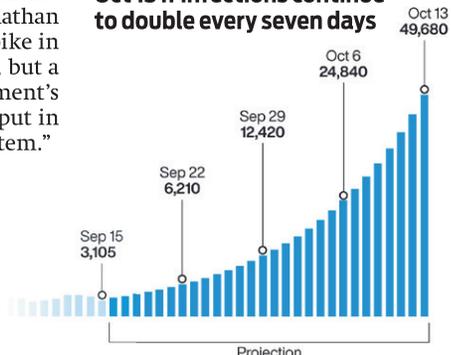
schools and other public services must be protected for all our sakes."

Shadow health secretary Jonathan Ashworth said: "This rapid spike in infections was not inevitable, but a consequence of the government's incompetence and failure to put in place an adequate testing system."

He called for an effective testing and tracing system with support for people to self-isolate, and for a Cobra meeting of all regions to be urgently held.

➤ Turn to page 5  
➤ Star comment: p8

**Expected case numbers by Oct 13 if infections continue to double every seven days**



■ KEY WORKERS BETRAYED

# Tories break NHS surcharge vow to foreign careworkers

by Lamiat Sabin

LABOUR has accused the government of breaking promises to care workers as new legislation to be debated in the Commons today seeks to increase the immigration health surcharge rather than scrap it.

In May, the government pledged to remove the surcharge for health and care workers who apply to live and work in Britain.

But they are currently still required to pay the annual charge of at least £400 each, including dependents, to be reimbursed later.

The legislation includes the provision to increase the annual surcharge from £400 to £624 per person in October. Care workers earn on average

just £19,104 a year.

The majority of care workers would also be completely excluded from any exemptions under the proposed new health-and-care visa.

The surcharge was originally introduced by the Tory-Lib-Dem coalition in 2015 as part of their "hostile environment" penalising foreign-born workers.

Shadow immigration minister Holly Lynch said: "This amounts to a shameful broken promise by the government to health and care workers who have given so much at the front line of the Covid crisis."

"The reality is that ministers have been happy to clap for carers but are now charging them exorbitant fees to use the NHS system that depends on them."

"It's completely unacceptable to level up-front charges

on low-paid care workers that can amount to thousands of pounds for a family.

"The government is effectively borrowing money from families without ever saying when they will get it back. This will be impossible for many to pay."

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer told Prime Minister Boris Johnson in May that a care worker on minimum wage would have to work 70 hours a week to afford the fee.

The day after his comments, the government made a U-turn and stated that "work by officials is now under way on how to implement the change."

In June, Mr Johnson told him that "NHS or care workers who have paid the surcharge since May 21 will be refunded."

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## Labour Connected, 2020 online party conference

■ FRINGE MEETING

### Neolib governments 'have let coronavirus run amok'

NEOLIBERAL governments in Britain, the US, and Brazil have let the coronavirus run amok, Labour MP Diane Abbott said during an online party-conference fringe event.

Sunday evening's meeting, titled *Fighting the Tories - Transforming the Economy*, was hosted by Unite assistant general secretary Steve Turner.

Ms Abbott pointed out that the three countries have some of the worst Covid-19 death rates per capita.

She said: "It is a myth that they were trading off lives for the economy. New Zealand put people first and are projected to have one of the mildest recessions. We should work to eliminate [the virus],

and we demand that jobs and people's lives are the priority."

Labour MP Richard Burgon said that it is time for the labour movement to promote policies in Labour's 2017 and 2019 manifestos and a zero-Covid strategy similar to those of China and Vietnam, where the virus is almost eliminated. He said: "It's a precondition to getting the economy started."

Economist and author Grace Blakeley said that the pandemic has shown that Britain is "run in the interests of a tiny cabal that has a stronghold on every single aspect of our lives."

The way forward is democratising the economy by giving workers more control over institutions, she said.

SPEAKING OUT:  
Diane Abbott



RESIST: Acorn activists make their point in Leeds

■ HOUSING CRISIS

# Tenant union Acorn vows to resist evictions as ban ends

by Our News Desk

TENANTS' union Acorn vowed to continue resisting evictions yesterday as the temporary ban came to an end a month after the government announced a last-minute extension to the pandemic evictions ban that it enacted in March.

Acorn held a series of co-ordinated eviction-resistance training sessions in over a dozen spots in England and Wales on Saturday in preparation.

Training included practical eviction resistance and what to do when bailiffs come knocking to evict

tenants. More sessions are planned in the coming weeks.

During the pandemic, Acorn has been pressing the government to implement proper protections for renters, lodgers and mortgage holders affected by the pandemic. Campaigners called for a rent waiver for those who have lost income due to the crisis and an immediate and permanent end to Section 21 "no fault" evictions, which the government promised last year.

Nearly a quarter of a million private renters have fallen into arrears since the pandemic began, with almost half a million in

arrears overall, Acorn has warned, leaving many at risk of eviction and homelessness, with eviction proceedings returning to courts, putting people's health and wellbeing at risk.

Acorn Cardiff secretary Nicki Kindersley said: "Both Westminster and the Senedd have yet again failed to protect renters against homelessness in the face of the pandemic."

"Although an extension to notice periods is a positive move, this is just kicking the can down the road and we still anticipate thousands of evictions this autumn and winter."

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■ FURLOUGH SCHEME

# SUNAK IS RUNNING DOWN CLOCK FOR BUSINESS AND JOBS

Labour says Tories must implement economic rebuilding scheme now

by Lamiat Sabin

TIME is running out for millions of people on the coronavirus job furlough scheme as well as businesses that face going to the wall when government support is axed at the end of October, Labour warned yesterday.

Shadow chancellor Anne-

liese Dodds used her keynote speech to Labour's online conference to attack Chancellor Rishi Sunak for "allowing the clock to run down on the four million people on furlough" who could soon be at risk of redundancy.

She said: "He's doing exactly the same for the millions of businesses that have needed a

helping hand to survive these last few months.

"From March next year, repayments will start for the loan schemes set up to help businesses through the crisis. But, on the current trend, our economy won't be anything like back to normal by then."

"Without effective government action, many companies

FOCUS ON JOBS:

Shadow chancellor Anneliese Dodds visits a social enterprise in Peckham, south London, yesterday to see its work helping train people experiencing homelessness to be coffee baristas



Labour Connected, 2020 online party conference

■ CONFERENCE SPEECH

# Starmmer turns back on Corbyn era: 'We're under new leadership' now

by Our News Desk

LABOUR will be the party of levelling up Britain and closing the attainment gap between the rich and poor, party leader Sir Keir Starmer will pledge today.

In his speech to close Labour's online conference Labour Connected, he will detail his vision for Britain to be the "best place to grow up in and the best place to grow old in."

Speaking in Doncaster for his first keynote speech since being elected Labour leader earlier this year, Mr Starmer is expected to talk about the opportunities he had in life.

The QC was knighted for his former roles as director of public prosecutions and head of the Crown Prosecution Ser-



**RIGMAROLE:** In time-honoured fashion, Keir Starmer pretends to prepare his speech for the cameras

vice, and has described himself as having had a working-class upbringing.

He will also directly urge voters who switched from Labour to the Tories in recent elections "to take another look

at Labour," in a bid to pitch the party as patriotic.

"We're under new leadership. We love this country as you do," he will say in a snide reference to smears on his predecessor Jeremy Corbyn, who

was attacked as unpatriotic because of his opposition to war.

He will add that ending the education gap should be a "national mission."

"Enforce it through an independent body, such as the Children's Commissioner, and make sure no family loses out because of the exams fiasco or delays in getting children into school."

Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union (NEU), commented that eradicating poverty should be part of the effort.

He said that 4.3 million people in 2018-19 were in poverty – nine children in a class of 30 – and that 200,000 more children will be pushed below the poverty line by Christmas.

Mr Courtney said: "It is obvious that children and young

people who are cold, hungry, and worried cannot concentrate or learn as effectively.

"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.

"700,000 young people live in homes without internet access. The government must step up its scheme to provide free wifi access and laptops for disadvantaged children and give schools a dedicated tech budget to combat the digital divide.

"All of this is readily achievable. The NEU looks forward to working with all political parties to ensure no child is left behind."

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will go to the wall, with more job losses and more costs for the public finances.

"That is why I am calling today for the Chancellor to act urgently and put in place a business rebuilding programme."

Ms Dodds said it must be a targeted scheme to prevent more large sums of public money from being squandered by the government's "financial mismanagement."

It was revealed ahead of her speech that the government has doled out some £3.9 billion for ineffective schemes and equipment in the name of beating coronavirus.

Ms Dodds also warned that the government is returning to using "language of restraint" when talking about the economy by threatening post-pandemic tax hikes and deep spending cuts long before the next election.

She said: "We all know what that means from the mouth of a Conservative chancellor – more jobs lost in places that can least afford them – with local councils being hung out to dry and forced to cut thousands of staff.

"Attacking the very communities the Conservatives said they would protect. And taking place at a time when our government should be focused relentlessly on jobs, jobs, jobs.

"Threatening to hike taxes now, just so they can cut them before the next election.

"To make even deeper spending cuts, in the hope people will have forgotten by the time they go to the polls.

"It doesn't have to be this way. Workers and businesses should expect more, much more from those in power."

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■ DIVISIVE POLICIES

## Patel 'nowhere to be seen' as crime and abuse rage on

HOME SECRETARY Priti Patel was accused yesterday of standing by while domestic violence, crime, racism and injustice rage on.

Shadow home secretary Nick Thomas-Symonds (pictured) told the Labour conference that women and girls, ethnic minorities, and people in poverty are worst hit by crime.

He said: "For many women, the situation was even more bleak as we headed into lockdown.

"All the warning signs were there that domestic abuse would increase, and sadly that came to pass. And we all know how appalling

a record the Tories have on this."

Ms Patel is "nowhere to be seen" when it comes to tackling violence, Mr Thomas-Symonds said in his online speech. He said that the Home Office's flagship violent crime taskforce has not even met for more than a year.

"When it comes to issuing press releases and talk of mobilising the armed forces against [refugee] dinghies, she's there," he said. "With her words, she seeks to divide when she should seek to unite. Yet she fails to act when injustice stares her in the face."



### In memory of Glyn Davies SRN RMN BTA COHSE NUPE

Labour councillor and member of the Labour council 1971-1974 who built council homes and brought comprehensive education to Harrow.

*Glyn would say: Fight for state pension at 60.  
Restore the free TV license for all over 60.*

Gillian Huw 07932 703 840

In honour of Dr Alan McKinnon 1946-2015

★ Morning Star Scottish Conference

# NO MORE HIROSHIMAS NO TO THE NEW COLD WAR

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Chair Lynn Henderson

tinyurl.com/morningstarconference

■ TRANSPORT

# AFTER WASTED BILLIONS, RAIL FRANCHISING ENDS

**AT LAST:** Nationalisation is the only sensible option, say rail unions



Pic: Neil Terry Photography

by Peter Lazenby

RAIL franchising was “ended” yesterday as emergency measures introduced to keep trains running through the coronavirus pandemic were extended by the Department for Transport (DfT).

After 26 years and at a cost of billions of pounds to taxpayers and frustrated passengers, the government says it will abandon its rail franchising system.

But rather than return rail to the efficient public sector, it is to pump hundreds of millions more into the pockets of profiteering privateers by introducing a new contracting system.

Emergency measures introduced in March to ensure services kept running despite the

collapse in demand caused by the Covid-19 lockdown cost the government at least £3.5 billion.

Taxpayers will continue to cover losses made by operators for the next 18 months before the creation of a “simpler and more effective structure,” the DfT said.

But Mick Cash, general secretary of the RMT transport union, urged the government to “ditch its obsession with the free market and call to a halt any attempts to reanimate the corpse of rail privatisation.

“Public ownership is the only model that works and can steer us through a crisis such as Covid-19.

“It’s time to cut out the middleman.”

Transport Salaried Staffs’

Association general secretary Manuel Cortes lamented that whatever happens, “the privateers always win.”

He said: “The Tory government must stop dithering about the future of our railways. Only public ownership will cure its many ills.”

Unite national officer for rail Harish Patel accused ministers of failing to act decisively by allowing firms to continue to profit by receiving huge amounts of taxpayers’ money.

Shadow rail minister Tan Dhesi said it was completely unacceptable that taxpayers will continue to pay hundreds of millions of pounds to private companies under the new plans.

“It’s time to put passengers before profit and bring our rail franchises back into full public ownership,” he said.

Train drivers’ union Aslef general secretary Mick Whelan said the extension was welcome in order to avoid “cliff-edge changes during a pandemic.

“Public ownership of Britain’s railway is a long-term strategic goal but, for now the extension of the EMAs is a pragmatic solution,” he argued.

Unsurprisingly, rail privateers welcomed Transport Secretary Grant Shapps’ announcement.

Paul Plummer, chief executive of the privateers’ Rail Delivery Group, said that the decision would “help regrow the market for train travel, which is good for economic recovery and the public finances.”

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**CRUISING CAPERS:** The Western Belle, an Ullswater Steamer, approaches Pooley Bridge on Ullswater, which is the second largest lake in the Lake District in Cumbria. Today is the first day of astronomical autumn  
Weather: P. 10

■ FINANCE

# Activists demand action on big banks mired in dirty cash

by Bethany Rielly

CAMPAIGNERS are urging swift action from ministers in response to revelations that some of the world’s biggest banks may have moved trillions of dollars in dirty money.

A huge cache of leaked US government documents seen by BBC Panorama has unveiled the staggering scale of global financial corruption.

The leak contains more than 2,500 sensitive banking papers which cover transactions involving more than two trillion US dollars.

Key revelations include documents alleging that HSBC allowed fraudsters to move millions of dollars in stolen money around the world, even after it learned from US investigators that the scheme was a scam.

The scandal immediately hit HSBC’s shares which fell to a 25-year low yesterday, wiping £3 billion off the bank’s value.

Panorama also found files which reportedly show that a Russian oligarch with close links to Russian President Vladimir Putin secretly funded the husband of one the Tory Party’s biggest donors.

The leaked FinCen files – reports filed with the US Financial Crimes Enforcement Network – are largely made up of documents which banks must fill in if they have suspicions about a client’s dealings.

Banks must send these suspicious activity reports (SARs) but are under no obligation to shut down money-laundering when they do.

More than 3,000 British companies were named in the SARs, more than any other country.

Tax Justice Network chief executive Alex Cobham said: “As

will be revealed over the coming days, many of the world’s major financial institutions have comprehensively failed to meet their own responsibilities, in the name of turning a profit – however dirty.

“Swift and robust action is needed, including potential criminal charges, or banks will simply continue to treat the prospects of being caught and fined as a simple cost of business.”

In a statement, the government insisted that it had taken “robust action” to crack down on dirty money in recent years.

“In addition, we are taking forward a series of measures to reform the Companies House register, including compulsory identity verification for directors registering companies, to help combat fraud and money laundering,” the statement continued.

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FRONT PAGE

# ACT NOW OR SEE 50,000 COVID-19 CASES PER DAY

**FROM PAGE ONE:** A new poll commissioned by public-ownership campaign We Own It revealed yesterday that three quarters of the British public want the track-and-trace system to be run by public health teams and local health services rather than private companies.

Serco and call-centre company Sitel were initially contracted to run the system up to August 23, but their contracts were extended with a potential value of £528 million for an undisclosed period.

We Own It director Cat Hobbs said: "It's absolutely staggering that the government is clinging doggedly to its failed, privatised system.

"It's time for them to face reality. It's time for them to kick the private companies out of the system and give local public health protection teams the resources to run it instead."

Areas in north-west England, West Yorkshire and the Midlands face further local restrictions from today.

And in Wales, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport and Blaenau Gwent will be placed under a local lockdown from 6pm.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said yesterday that the final decisions on national restrictions were still being made, but hinted at curbs to households socialising and refused to say whether pubs in England would still be open this weekend.

Social-media users were angry at the government's silence following the scientists' announcement and the hashtag #Where-isBorisJohnson was trending on Twitter.

The PM is expected to hold a press conference today.

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COVID-19

## Ban on prison visits is 'not justifiable'

BLANKET bans on visits to prisons under Covid-19 restrictions are "not justifiable" and pose a risk to human rights, according to a report by MPs.

The joint committee on human rights said that prison visiting must be resumed "as a matter of priority," saying that the suspension has had a "significant" impact on inmates

and their families.

Visits to prisons ceased on March 24 as part of restrictions which also saw activities suspended and time spent out of cells reduced to around 30 minutes a day.

Although the government announced plans to ease restrictions from July, the committee heard that this process

has been "too slow," while measures promised to make up for the loss of social visits such as video calls had not been delivered.

The report claimed that the suspension of visits is a "serious interference with the right of prisoners and their families to respect for private and family life."

WORKERS' RIGHTS

## 'Hire local seafarers to help enforce pay rate'

SHIP and ferry operators should hire more UK-based seafarers to complement moves to enforce the national minimum wage (NMW) in the industry, the RMT transport union said yesterday.

The union said that thousands of British seafarers have been sacked, with many replaced by cheaper labour from other countries.

RMT general secretary

Mick Cash was speaking before yesterday's online ministerial talks on the enforcement of the NMW for UK seafarers.

"Covid-19 has been used by some employers in the ferries sector to make mass redundancies, even though the pandemic has triggered an international crewing crisis," he said.

"Contracts for foreign ratings working from UK ports typically pay well

below the NMW for six months' work at sea.

"The new legislation gives us the chance to take action against this long-standing disgrace and restore a level playing field for UK seafarers to compete for work – not just in passenger ferries but on the growing fleets needed to service the offshore wind, decommissioning and coastal-cargo sectors in UK waters."

OLD BAILEY

# Wikileaks was 'not the first to release diplomatic cables'

by Tim Dawson

THE US is wrong to charge Julian Assange for publishing unredacted classified documents because they had already appeared online beforehand, the extradition hearing for the Wikileaks founder heard yesterday.

Computer scientist Professor Christian Grothoff said that Wikileaks was not the first to release 251,000 diplomatic cables when they appeared on its website on September 2 2011.

Mr Assange, 49, is fighting extradition to the US, where he faces an 18-count indictment alleging a plot to hack computers and conspiracy to obtain and disclose national defence information.

Prosecutors claim that he put the lives of sources and informants around the world at risk by publishing their names.

But Prof Grothoff told the Old Bailey that the unredacted cables came into the public domain after the publication of a passcode in a book by Guardian journalists in February 2011.

He said that in late August 2011, it was discovered that the code could be used to decrypt a version of the cables held by Wikileaks before the full cache was made available through the Pirate Bay and Cryptome websites on September 1.



"It was actually available on the internet in a way that would be virtually impossible to stop," Prof Grothoff told the court via video link.

But the expert's impartiality was called into question by the US government because his name appears on a 2017 letter to Donald Trump urging the president not to charge Mr Assange or other Wikileaks staff.

Prof Grothoff said that he did not remember signing the letter but described Mr Assange as a "sympathetic character" because of his role in exposing "war crimes."

Joel Smith, prosecutor for the US government, probed: "You are biased, you are partial?"

Prof Grothoff replied: "No. I believe that looking at the

indictment put forward, you're confusing actions Wikileaks took to hide and obscure the documents with them publishing it.

"On the very specific technical point where you say Wikileaks published those cables you are wrong, and you didn't properly do your homework to find who first published those cables.

"So I think it's unfair for you to accuse Mr Assange of publishing those unredacted classified cables.

"The primary publisher of the unredacted cables wouldn't be Wikileaks."

The hearing, which entered its third week yesterday, continues.

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EXTRADITION

## World leaders call for end to Assange's 'illegal' trial

by Bethany Rielly

THIRTEEN former and present world leaders have made an urgent call to the British government to halt Julian Assange's "illegal" trial on extradition to the US.

Former Brazilian president Lula da Silva is among 165 politicians across 27 countries joining the call to demand the freedom of the Wikileaks founder, currently fighting extradition at the Old Bailey in London.

Endorsing an open letter to PM Boris Johnson, signed by 189 lawyers, Lula said yesterday: "Assange should be perceived as a hero of democracy. He does not deserve to be punished. "I hope the people of the UK,

the people of France, the people of the United States will not allow this atrocity."

The letter, penned by Lawyers for Assange, claims that the extradition proceedings and request "violate national and international law, breach fair trial rights and other human rights, and threaten press freedom and democracy."

It alleges that Mr Assange could be at risk of torture in the US, making extradition to the country illegal.

Signatories also include Argentinian President Alberto Angel Fernandez, former Spanish PM Luis Zapatero and Lula's successor Dilma Rousseff.

The extradition proceedings, which entered their third week on Monday, have been widely

criticised for preventing legal observers from entering the court.

Amnesty International yesterday described the judge's refusal to grant special provision to fair trial monitors as "disturbing."

"Amnesty International have monitored trials from Guantanamo Bay to Bahrain, Ecuador to Turkey. For our observer to be denied access profoundly undermines open justice," Amnesty researcher Stefan Simanowitz said.

Mr Assange faces up to 175 years in prison on espionage charges over the release of classified documents in 2010 and 2011, which exposed US atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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■ FINCEN FILES

# DEUTSCHE BANK ACCUSED OF FUNDING TERROR

by Our Foreign Desk

DEUTSCHE BANK (DB) has been accused of funding Isis during its occupation of vast swathes of Iraq with huge cash transfers sent to the country discovered as part of the FinCEN files investigations.

Leaked banking documents have revealed suspicious money transfers of at least \$4 billion (£3.86bn) flagged by the US branches of DB and the Bank of America (BoA) to a number of Iraqi banks between June 15 2014 and June 30 2015.

According to the documents obtained by BuzzFeed News, the BoA logged 524 bank transfers from the US to a number of Iraqi bank branches between February 2 and 13 2015 of more than \$16.8 million (£15.4m).

Between May 18 and 20 2015 the BoA flagged 244 bank transfers for a total of around \$41.4m (£32.3m), the papers showed.

This was a period when the Islamists were in control of the city of Mosul which they captured in June 2014.

It allowed Isis to take control of more than 121 bank branches, according to the Iraqi Central Bank, using the funds to expand its deadly operations.

Isis assets at the end of 2015 were estimated at \$2.2bn (£1.7bn) made up of oil and gas reserves, cash, minerals and land.

The jihadists are known to have looted more than \$400m (500 billion Iraqi dinars) in cash from Mosul's financial institutions.

Much of it was laundered through the banking system and used to pay creditors for weapons, ammunition and vehicles.

DB is one of the major international banks operating in Iraq and was one of three, along with Citibank and JPMorgan Chase, appointed by then Iraqi prime minister Haider al-Abadi to issue \$6bn (£4.7bn) in government

bonds to finance the budget deficit of \$25bn (£19.5bn) in 2015.

The German banking giant has previously faced a number of lawsuits for alleged money-laundering and has been fined billions of dollars for "suspicious transactions."

It filed two suspicious activity reports (SARs) "as part of a special project by the Bank of America to identify wire transfers that are originating from, and being sent to, these financial institutions located in Iraq."

"Eighty one wires totalling \$33.4m (£26.1m) were conducted via correspondent bank relationships that involved numerous financial institutions on a global level," the BoA reported.

Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas filed their SARs to FinCEN "in conjunction with ongoing law enforcement collaboration," the exact nature of which is unclear.

DB has not commented directly on the allegations but said in a general statement: "In line with its legal and regulatory obligations, Deutsche Bank believes it is vital to combat financial crime in order to ensure the stability of banks and the integrity of the international financial system."

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■ IRAN

# Survivors call for recognition of 1987 Sardasht massacre

by Steve Sweeney

SURVIVORS of an Iraqi chemical weapons attack in Iran have redoubled calls for international recognition of the massacre over 33 years later.

It came as groups marked the 40th anniversary of the start of the Iran-Iraq war on Sunday, with the anniversary of the invasion falling today.

The gas attack on the Kurdish town of Sardasht on June 28 1987, during Saddam Hussein's leadership, is believed to have been the first time that chemical weapons were deliberately used to target civilians in an urban area.

Some 119 people were killed

and 1,518 wounded according to official statistics, though the real numbers are likely to be much higher.

Saleh Azizpour, who runs an association for survivors of the attack, explained that as many as 8,000 were affected and that many more are suffering from long-term health complications.

Calling for the international community to recognise the gas attack, he said: "If someone lost a leg or an arm in the war, you can put a prosthesis on him. But when our lungs are burned, who will breathe for us?"

Iraq began using chemical weapons against Iran as early as 1982, according to Mr Azizpour, but the UN security

council continued to support Iraq and avoided blaming it for the attacks.

Survivors accused the international community of complicity in the 1987 assault and branded its response feeble.

Many Western companies and governments, including in the US and Britain, are known to have supplied Hussein with chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war.

In 2005, Dutch businessman Frans van Anraat was jailed for 17 years for supplying the material used in chemical attacks such as that on Sardasht and on the Iraqi Kurdish town of Halabja, where some 5,000 people were killed in March 1988.

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**INDIA:** Farmers participate in an anti-government protest against farm Bills in Bengaluru, India, yesterday. Amid an uproar in parliament, Indian lawmakers on Sunday approved a pair of controversial agriculture Bills that the government says will boost growth in the farming sector through private investments

■ BOLIVIA

# Morales condemns attack on activists

FORMER Bolivian president Evo Morales has condemned the weekend's attacks on his party's activists in Cochabamba, which he blamed on the country's right-wing administration and its supporters.

Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) canvassers' campaign tents were set on fire and materials damaged as they were chased down the street by attackers they identified as members of the Resistencia Juvenil Cochala (RJC). They fired tear gas and fire-

crackers at the MAS supporters, while some were caught and beaten.

Mr Morales said: "We hold the coup leaders responsible for the attacks by members of the Cochala Youth Resistance against MAS activists who were campaigning in Cochabamba. The danger of violence, racism and separatism must not return to the country."

Presidential frontrunner and MAS candidate Luis Arce also condemned the attacks, demanding respect for the right to carry out peaceful

electoral campaign activities.

RJC leader Yassir Molina insisted that his group was not responsible for the violence.

The incident comes months after armed right-wing gangs attacked those peacefully protesting against the government of Jeanine Anez, who came to power after a Washington-backed coup ousted Mr Morales in November.

Ms Anez has pulled out of the presidential race, which MAS is favourite to win, along with parliamentary elections.





■ CAMEROON

## Soldiers deployed ahead of protests

by Our Foreign Desk

**SOLDIERS** have been deployed onto the streets of Cameroon ahead of protests planned for today which call for President Paul Biya to resign amid escalating ethnic tensions.

Those planning to take part in the demonstrations, called by opposition leader Maurice Kamto, have been threatened with “life imprisonment” after government figures accused him of insurrection.

His Cameroon Resistance Movement has called for peaceful protests to demand Mr Biya’s resignation and that regional elections in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon be reformed to include marginalised communities.

Some 17 per cent of Cameroon’s population of 17 million live in the two Anglophone regions.

The military mobilisation comes as the government fears that demonstrations could spark severe public disorder as tensions continue to rise.

At least 3,000 have been killed and 730,000 people internally displaced in clashes with the security services over the past four years.

In June, the Norwegian

Refugee Council said for a second year running that Cameroon topped the list as the most neglected crisis on the planet.

Opposition figures claim that scores have been arrested ahead of today’s protests. According to eye-witnesses, men in military fatigues detained at least eight motorcycle-taxi drivers who were reading opposition newspapers.

Government minister Paul Atanga Nji said: “I want to sound a stern warning to unscrupulous politicians looking for cheap popularity with a hidden agenda that they will face the law in case of any public disorder.”

But Mr Kamto, who claims that the 2018 presidential election won by Mr Biya was rigged, insisted the protests would go ahead despite state oppression.

“Our fight against the dictatorship is heading towards its critical phase. Despite the essentially peaceful nature of our struggle for the freedom and development of our country, the regime once again resorts to terror and judicial barbarism,” he said.

“As I have said repeatedly, we want to get out of the dictatorship.”

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**PROVOCATION:** The Secretary of State’s visit was said to be ‘a spurious use of a foreign nation as a platform for provocation and hostility towards a neighbouring state’

■ BRAZIL

## Pompeo’s visit blasted by group of ex-ministers

**FORMER** Brazilian foreign ministers rejected US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s recent visit to their country, accusing him of using it as a base for hostility against neighbouring Venezuela.

All former post holders in the South American country since the fall of the military junta in 1985 said that Mr Pompeo’s actions were not in line with good international practice.

The Trump ally visited facilities linked to Operation Acólidas, the government scheme to assist so-called refugees, in the Boa Vista municipality, the main point of entry into the country for those arriving from Venezuela.

But the foreign ministers

said: “We have the obligation to watch for the stability of the borders and the peaceful and respectful coexistence with our neighbours. Those are pillars of our sovereignty and defence.”

They warned that Mr Pompeo’s visit was a “spurious use of a foreign nation as a platform for provocation and hostility towards a neighbouring state.”

Washington seeks to oust democratically elected Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, which Mr Pompeo insisted was necessary during his visit to Guyana, continuing to ratchet up the pressure.

The US has placed a bounty on Mr Maduro’s head, declaring Venezuela a “narco-terror state.”

■ UNITED STATES

## Judge blocks Trump’s plan to ban Chinese messaging app

A US judge has blocked an attempt by President Donald Trump to ban the Chinese messaging app WeChat, saying it raised serious questions about free speech, protected under the constitution’s first amendment.

The US Department of Commerce was due to implement a ban on WeChat appearing in US app stores on Sunday.

But a group of WeChat users challenged an executive order signed by Mr Trump that would have shut down the app in the country.

The US Justice Department insisted that blocking the order would “frustrate and displace the president’s determination of how best to address threats to national security.”

Mr Trump claims the app could pass US user data to the Chinese government.

The Department of Commerce insisted that WeChat has collected “vast swathes of data from users, including network activity, location data, and browsing and search histories.”

But Judge Beeler said that “while the general evidence about the threat to national security related to China (regarding technology and mobile technology) is considerable, the specific evidence about WeChat is modest.”

Beijing says Mr Trump’s claims are baseless and WeChat owner Tencent insists that all chats on the app are private.

■ TURKEY

## UN inaction denounced for complicity in war crimes

by Steve Sweeney

THE United Nations has been accused of complicity in war crimes for failing to take action against Turkey, which is accused of atrocities including torture, rape and extrajudicial killings in northern Syria.

Ankara has launched two invasions of the Syrian Kurdish region known as Rojava, allying with jihadist groups on the pretext of combatting terrorism.

It has been accused of a litany of war crimes, including chemical weapon attacks and the attempted genocide of the Kurdish people, with more than 300,000 internally displaced as a result of the Turkish occupation.

Last week a UN report documented the crimes committed by Turkey and its jihadist allies,

including the discovery of “black sites” where hundreds of women had been tortured and raped after being kidnapped.

“In Afrin, Ras al Ain and the surrounding areas, the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army may have committed the war crimes of hostage-taking, cruel treatment, torture and rape,” UN spokesman Paulo Pinheiro said.

“Turkey should act to prevent these abuses and ensure the protection of civilians in the areas under its control,” he urged.

Ankara has insisted that it is working to rein in the extremists, claiming to have put a member of the Ahrar al-Sharqiyah in a “military court martial” for their role in the execution of Syrian-Kurdish politician Hevrin Khalaf.

The Future Syria Party secretary general was dragged out

of a car, tortured and shot at least 20 times by jihadists in October 2019.

Turkey has continued to target women, with three activists from the Kongreya Star organisation – Zehra Berkel, Hevun Mele



Xelil and Amina Waysi – executed in targeted drone strikes on Kobane earlier this year.

Speaking ahead of World Peace Day, which was celebrated yesterday, the Democratic Regions Party co-chair Saliha Aydeniz said that reports into atrocities were not enough, calling for action from the UN.

“The UN has documented the relationship between Turkey and the gangs. Again, looting, torture and rape were documented. And they said it was a war crime.

“From here, we ask the UN: why don’t you take a step against these war crimes? It’s not just about preparing a report. It is not enough. If you do not take a step, then you are a partner in these crimes,” she said.

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★ Star comment

## The government must change course: we need a zero-Covid strategy

GRIM news on rising Covid-19 cases and forecasts of a spike in deaths make the case for a different approach more urgent.

Britain needs to shift to a zero-Covid strategy, as the experts of Independent Sage warned months ago and as recommended by the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs – though as yet the Labour Party leadership is not on board. The second wave is the government's fault. It did not impose the original lockdown as early as it should have done, waiting until coronavirus was already well established throughout the population, making it far harder to suppress.

It then relaxed restrictions in line with business priorities without reference to whether the virus was under control.

It has not established a testing regime for those coming into the country, as exists across most of Europe.

It has handed the development of its test-and-trace system to private companies with no relevant experience and poor records of delivering on previous contracts, and renewed their contracts despite their woeful performance so far.

Boris Johnson's shambolic handling of the pandemic is not merely a failure of competence but an indictment of a government whose political priority has not been containing or suppressing Covid-19, but managing public reactions to a "world-beating" death rate, continuing the privatisation and fragmentation of health service delivery across Britain and rewarding its friends financially. This is a political question.



England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty demonstrates as much when he attempts a public health rationale for maintaining business as usual: "If we go too far the other way [in imposing virus control measures] then we can cause damage to the economy which can feed through to unemployment, to poverty, to deprivation – all of which have long-term health effects."

Indeed they do, but refusing to prevent rising unemployment is a political choice.

The government could launch a youth guarantee of jobs training or employment, as recommended by the Alliance for Full Employment being championed by former prime minister Gordon Brown and national and regional leaders like Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll.

It could launch a teacher recruitment drive to facilitate smaller classes at school to enable socially distanced learning, as called for by the National Education Union. It could extend the job retention scheme as many other countries such as France and Germany are doing. It could nationalise stricken industries and protect jobs and skills in them while reshaping them to help meet national goals such as reduced emissions.



As for poverty and deprivation, the government should reverse the huge cuts to local authority budgets imposed over the last decade. It should drop talk of abandoning planned rises to the national minimum wage and introduce a mandatory living wage of £15 an hour as demanded by food workers' union BFAWU.

It should immediately raise statutory sick pay so that workers who fear they may be infected are not driven to continue working, putting others at risk, for fear of destitution. It should move from its inept test-and-trace programme to one of find, test, trace, isolate and support, so that those who need to isolate are given the help they need to do so without starving or losing their homes.

All these measures are possible, and can contribute to a national zero-Covid strategy that would see the virus reduced to minimal levels and allow widespread safe lifting of restrictions, as we have seen in countries that successfully adopted such a strategy, including China and New Zealand. The government is not going to adopt such measures simply because they work, however.

Ministers are happy for Britain to live with Covid-19, unemployment and poverty. Those of us who aren't must mobilise to force a change of course by exerting pressure at every level of government and on the streets.

SOME people in senior positions in the labour movement are arguing that our central attack on the Tories should be to show that they are incompetent and that Labour would be much more capable of handling the multiple crises facing the country.

The charge is incompetence – and the verdict is that they are guilty. However, it is far from clear that this ought to be the central point of Labour's critique.

Let's start with the charge. This bunch is perhaps the most incompetent shower ever to be elected into office in our country since universal suffrage was introduced.

Look at the exams fiasco this summer. Or the attempt to stampede kids back to school before the holidays when the schools simply were not ready. And how else can you explain the ghastly and unnecessary death toll from Covid-19?

Too many senior Tory politicians were sent off to public school as children. They came to think that they were born to rule. But they don't all learn how to do the detailed work which is necessary to be an effective administration. All this is true. But the charge of incompetence ought not to be the end of the matter.

Far from it. Look at the ludicrous comment made by David Cameron the other day. The pandemic, he said, was "the rainy day we had been saving for. Austerity prepared Britain for Covid-19." Well, how out of touch with lives in working-class communities everywhere could you possibly be?

The real core of this government's problems lies in its ideology. Our purpose must surely be to mount a bigger argument against the Tories than that of maladministration. And we can do this by showing that there is another way of running the country which will lead to different and better choices.

We can illustrate this in a number of ways. Let's start with the often repeated phrase that there is no "magic money tree." This assertion has been used to starve the NHS, care service, education and the criminal justice systems of funds for many years.

It left our communities lacking in the resilience we needed to face the virus.

It was said there was no magic money tree when the wages and salaries of the key workers were held down year after year. Now they are whispering that they may not increase benefits in upcoming budgets.

But somehow when it comes to the Tories and their mates in big business a very different rule applies. Suddenly a tree dripping with cash has appeared as if by magic.

Take Chris Grayling. The minister who was always failing. He was found a job, at £100,000 per annum for seven hours a week – the equivalent to four people working full

# The Tories are far more than simply incompetent



Of course the government is badly organised. The pandemic is deliberate – it is ideological. The Tories are far more than simply incompetent and the left needs to call that out explicitly.

time for a year on average pay in my constituency – on top of his salary as an MP.

And then there is the health-care firm Randox, which employs Owen Paterson MP as a paid consultant, which was awarded a £133m contract without any other firms being given the opportunity to bid for the work. He reportedly earns £8,000 per month from them.

And what about firms with reported personal links to Michael Gove and Dominic Cummings? Public First, a public affairs agency run by two directors with close connections to Cummings, has recently been handed contracts worth almost £1m, apparently without any consideration of alternative suppliers.

The list goes on and on: the Mirror has written of more than a dozen companies with links to the Conservative Party that have won almost £500m in contracts for equipment during lockdown.



Readers of the Star will have noted that while in large parts of England we are struggling to get a test, 100 per cent of the kids and staff at Eton managed to procure one

This isn't incompetence. It's "hands-in-the-wallets-of-taxpayers time." It's cronyism on an industrial scale.

But it's also highly ideological in character. It's about attacking the public sector, reducing the spending power of working people and shifting income and wealth towards the rich.

It's what the Tories always do – but with brass knobs on. And they are using the pandemic as an excuse to do it.

Under these circumstances, it is the job of socialists to call out the true nature of this government. Make the charge of incompetence stick, yes. But it's more than that.

They are using the Covid-19 crisis to launch an assault on the basic principles of the NHS itself. They always say that you should never waste a crisis – and that is precisely what Cummings understands. There are five disastrous

political choices which illustrate the point.

First, they are attempting to break the central ethos of the NHS which is to engage in public service, free at the point of need. What else could Matt Hancock have meant when he said last week that any service which is free will inevitably cause queues – he was talking about the backlog in test and trace.

Second, as we have seen they are handing over contracts for health provision to the tune of hundreds of millions of pounds to private companies whose primary ethos is not of service but of enhancing shareholder value. They are milking taxpayer money in their private interest.

Third, they are ransacking public health institutions like Public Health England and replacing them in the middle of a pandemic with no parliamentary accountability and

# Far worse incompetent

...nised, but its response to the  
...l cronyism on an industrial scale  
...ctly, writes **JON TRICKETT MP**



handing them over to – in this case – a Tory peer with a record of failure.

Fourth, they are too often treating the heroic staff as if they were expendable domestic servants. How else can you explain the failure to provide PPE or even Covid-19 tests when necessary? And what about the fact that so many key workers who have kept our country functioning throughout the pandemic are so badly paid and that many now face redundancy as furlough comes to an end. Clapping hands outside Downing Street for the cameras simply won't cut it.

Finally, they have left poorer communities stripped of the resilience that they need to fight the virus. In the care homes, where our most needy elderly people live. Amongst our front-line workers. Or in the north of England where the virus is worst and we are already going into lockdown

again, but less than 20 per cent of the calls for testing produce an appointment. Readers of the Morning Star will have noted, by the way, that while in large parts of England we are struggling to get a test, that 100 per cent of the kids and staff at Eton managed to procure one.

It was a working-class socialist who established the NHS. Nye Bevan said the NHS would survive as long as we are prepared to fight for it. He was right.

It is the left which must now show not only to Labour but to the whole country that it is us – the socialists – who understand the moment we are living through and who have the answers. We can, and indeed we must, lead the way: remember the old slogan that the “cause of labour is the only hope for the world.”

■ *Jon Trickett is MP for Hemsworth in West Yorkshire.*

**T**HE Covid-19 crisis is, of course, unprecedented in the scale of its economic and social disruption.

Yet much of the unequal impact of the pandemic is because it is operating in a world in which half of global wealth belongs to the richest 1 per cent and in which global and regional inequalities are defined by racial, gender and class oppression.

Whilst billionaires increase their wealth and self-isolate on luxury yachts, workers in Leicester and across the world are forced to put themselves at risk in order to pay the bills.

We know that, as we rebuild from this crisis, we cannot sustain our fundamentally unequal social order. I believe that a wealth tax is crucial if we are to transition towards a fairer society.

Wealth inequality in Britain is even greater than income inequality, with the richest 10 per cent of households owning 40 per cent of all household wealth. Unlike income, wealth keeps growing automatically and exponentially because it is held in investments that generate even more wealth.

Wealth is also passed from generation to generation, and this dynastic aspect also magnifies existing race and gender disparities.

A recent study by Professor Richard Murphy found that, over a recent seven-year period, income was being taxed at almost 10 times the rate of wealth. Income had been taxed on average at 29.4 per cent while wealth – generated mostly from rising house prices and the increased value of personal pensions – had been taxed at 3.4 per cent.

This means that our overall tax system is incredibly regressive. Whilst gains from rising wealth are near-exclusively concentrated amongst high earners, universal taxes such as council tax, VAT, the BBC licence fee and duties on alcohol and tobacco are disproportionately felt by poorer households.

Professor Murphy concluded that the effective tax rate for the wealthiest 10 per cent of the population – once income and wealth were combined – was 18 per cent, less than half the 42 per cent effective tax rate for the bottom 10 per cent.

The aphorism “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer” has become something of a cliché. Yet comparing wealth and income tax reveals the underlying truth behind this saying.

The most recent Wealth and Asset Survey found that, between 2016 and 2018, the wealth among the richest 10 per cent of households increased almost four times faster than those of the poorest 10 per cent.

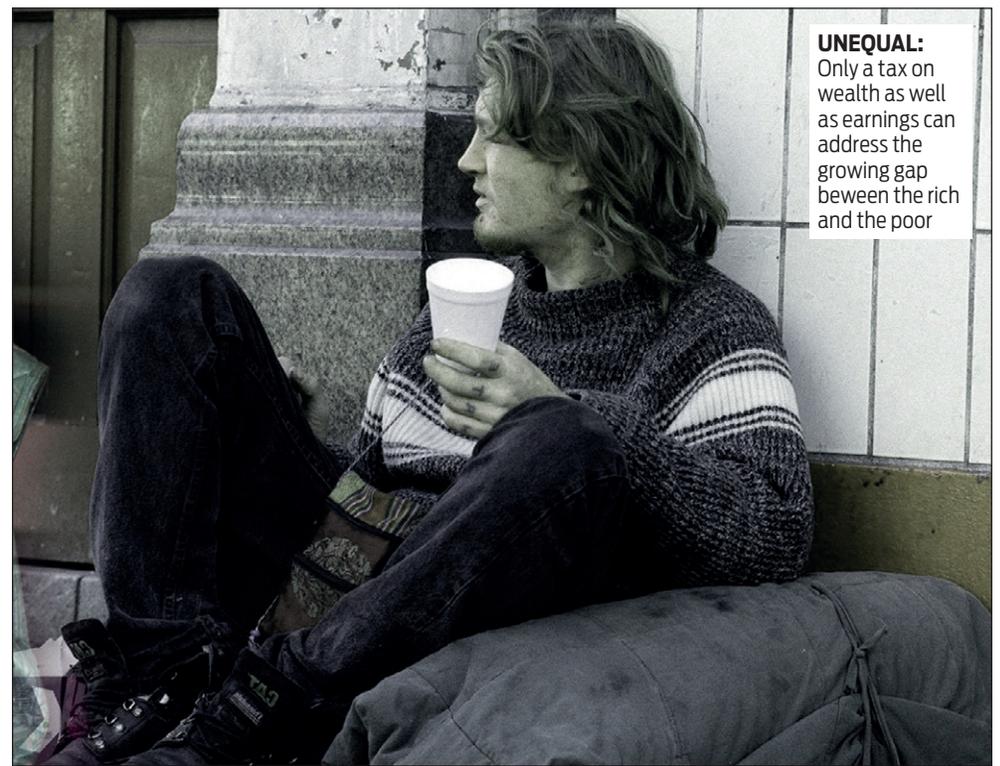
A study by the Office for National Statistics also found that the poorest 10 per cent of households had debts three times greater than their assets compared with the richest 10 per cent who amassed a wealth pile 35 times larger than their total debts.

# A wealth tax is crucial in our transition to a sustainable, just society

Not only does research show that the public want wealth to be taxed at the same rate as income, any government that does so also has the potential to raise up to £174 billion a year, argues



**CLAUDIA WEBBE MP**



**UNEQUAL:** Only a tax on wealth as well as earnings can address the growing gap between the rich and the poor

The cumulative effect of this is that the richest 10 per cent hold 45 per cent of national wealth, with the poorest 10th holding just 2 per cent. This is an unacceptable distribution of our national resources.

Our government is in effect subsidising the obscene inequalities that exist in our country. Indeed, research by Tax Justice UK found that the government is giving some of the wealthiest families in Britain up to £666 million a year in generous inheritance tax reliefs on land and business property. In 2016, just 51 families shared a £327m tax break – which worked out at roughly £6.4m for each person.

A YouGov poll found that 69 per cent of the public agree that income from wealth should be taxed at least as much as income from work. But our billionaire-owned right-wing press consistently portrays a wealth tax as an

unacceptable affront to enterprise and freedom.

This is despite mainstream economists, such as Thomas Piketty, persuasively arguing for the direct taxation of wealth as a policy tool for redressing inequality.

It is obscene that, in the sixth richest country in the world, vast amounts of wealth are hoarded away while 14 million British residents live in poverty.

The crises we face require radical solutions. We stand on a precipice, in which the crises of climate breakdown, rampant racial inequality and the shockingly uneven distribution of resources seem irreversible.

Not only is it morally right for wealth to be taxed at the same rate as income, but the government also has the potential to raise up to £174 billion a year by doing so. This kind of spending power is crucial

if we are to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, economic recession, rebuild our public infrastructure after 10 years of austerity and urgently transition to a green economy.

In 1974, a Labour government came to power which was committed to introducing an annual wealth tax. Sadly, we left office without doing so. Yet our 2019 manifesto pledged to end the unfairness that sees income from wealth taxed at lower rates than income from work by raising the capital gains tax.

Redressing our illogical, regressive system of tax must remain a central goal of Labour's policy as we organise to build a fairer world.

■ *Claudia Webbe MP is the Member of Parliament for Leicester East – follow her at [www.facebook.com/claudiaforLE](https://www.facebook.com/claudiaforLE) and [www.twitter.com/ClaudiaWebbe](https://www.twitter.com/ClaudiaWebbe).*

# The Labour Party in Wales does not represent the status quo but change

**F**IRST MINISTER for Wales Mark Drakeford is a passionate believer in devolution and the strength of the collective within Britain to be wielded for the common good.

He also believes in using positive arguments for Britain, rather than the negative messages used in Project Fear during the Scottish independence referendum.

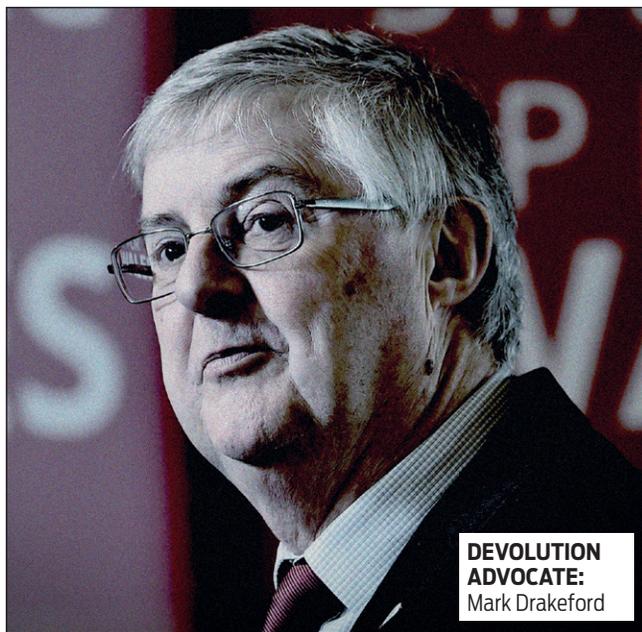
"I want to go on making a positive case for what I think is the best of both worlds – assertive devolution in which we use the powers we have to promote the interests of Welsh people, as I think we have during the coronavirus crisis.

"But also for Wales to draw on the strength of being part of a successful United Kingdom."

We discussed the TUC warning of the dangers of mass unemployment as the furlough scheme is due to end on October 31. Drakeford wants it extended, but in a modified way to protect jobs and business.

"It is incumbent on the Conservative government to find a successor to the furlough scheme, as the current scheme is not what we need in the future.

In the second of a two-part interview, David Nicholson talks to First Minister of Wales **MARK DRAKEFORD** about his positive messages on devolution, the opportunities the Covid-19 pandemic has created and the green agenda



"Lots of people are back in work but there are sectors of our economy which can be successful in 2021, if we can get them through this year.

"A cliff-edge end to the furlough scheme will put a stop to businesses that otherwise could have been successful.

"I am completely with the arguments being put by the devolved governments together and the Labour front bench in Westminster for a successor to the furlough scheme that focuses on those sectors of the economy that still cannot reopen and to get them through the next difficult period."

In a backhanded criticism of Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, Drakeford explained that although Sunak has talked about using innovative ways to continue to support

the economy he has not given any detail.

"I wish he would share a bit of his innovative thinking with us so businesses in Wales can prepare for whatever help may come their way."

Drakeford is candid that by itself Wales does not have the economic firepower to do everything that is needed.

"We will use whatever powers and capacity we have. But it has to be done alongside and with the co-operation of an active UK government, not one that simply says the scheme has finished and that is that."

During his leadership campaign before he became First Minister the former professor and social worker had set out an ambitious green agenda to take advantage of the physical resources Wales enjoys of wind,

tidal and solar energy sources.

I asked Drakeford whether the economic toll of dealing with the pandemic had dented his environmental plans and he was bullish in his response.

"We have to think of this as an opportunity, even in the dark days, we have got to find ways of creating a future which emphasises our own strengths and natural resources."

He is clear that even in the bleak days of the coronavirus pandemic there have been positive lessons to learn.

"We have to think of all this as a chance to make inroads and progress, rather than as an impossible barrier."

Unlike Johnson's government's exhortations to get public servants back into Whitehall offices, Drakeford does not want that for Wales.

"In our Welsh government headquarters building in Cathays Park we have some 2,000 members of staff who would normally travel into Cardiff using private transport. We do not want to go back to that.

"Working remotely and from home and creating hubs closer to where people live is an important environmental and green agenda we want to take out of

**A**S THE impending economic crisis occupies the minds of the trade union and labour movement, alongside the continuing public health emergency, organising to recruit, represent and give voice to those most affected has to be given priority.

Speakers at TUC Congress last week, and the Labour Party's virtual Labour Connected events, have left us all in no doubt that this is urgent.

In Scotland, following calls from Scottish Labour, the Scottish Parliament did meet throughout the summer, albeit on fewer days and often in a virtual setting.

This gave the MSPs the chance to question the First Minister and her government over the handling of the response to the pandemic, and to raise in public and in Parliament, the case studies that are filling MSP mailbags.

It is only right that announcements of public interest and significance during this crisis should be made direct to Parliament(s) and not fed out through Twitter or press conferences without accountability.

Richard Leonard as leader of the Scottish Labour Party has been questioning and challenging the First Minister at Question Time on the crisis in care homes, on PPE provisions and

## Bold decisions need to be made now

From health and safety, to job security, to forthcoming local and mayoral elections, there's lots of areas where Labour, and Scottish Labour, must put forward positive action proposals, says

**ANN HENDERSON**

on health and safety in many different workplace settings.

Scottish Labour's campaign for a national care service has the support of the trade union movement, and has resonated with communities and families across Scotland, all in agreement that private profit has no place in the services we provide for those in need of care, be that in the community or in

care homes. Labour has forced the First Minister to also agree on this principle.

The Scottish Labour campaign on jobs and the economy, #JobsForGood, has been running since early July, with calls for Scottish government to use all its powers to invest in sectors which need specific help, and to deliver on a jobs guarantee scheme which can

tackle some of the growing inequalities that have been exacerbated under Covid-19.

A "green economic recovery" will need a shift in investment and a follow-through on promises made to Scottish workers.

As an example of this, Unite the Union, along with the STUC and Scottish Labour, has been campaigning to save jobs in manufacturing, investing now for the future.

As the Alexander Dennis workforce in Falkirk and Larbert face redundancy and job insecurity, surely now is the time for protecting the skilled workforce and planning ahead for new vehicles to deliver that cleaner, greener, increased capacity in public transport, which will have to come if we are to meet climate change targets.

The interaction between reserved powers held at the UK Parliament and Westminster, and the devolved powers held by the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Parliament, has also been coming under scrutiny.

Health and safety concerns affect every single workplace, every public service and every community.

Health and safety legislation



falls primarily within the UK Parliament's remit, but this does not absolve the Scottish government of responsibilities and the partnership approach to which it is committed, through Partnership on Health And Safety in Scotland (PHASS).

Rhoda Grant MSP highlighted this summer the significant number of vacancies for health and safety inspectors across Scotland.

These are jobs that should

be filled now, in Scotland, as a matter of urgency.

The work of the STUC-affiliated trade unions to organise, represent and educate workers in every setting has been consistent throughout the summer months, and the STUC's expectations of stronger interventions into the Scottish labour market by the Scottish government must be supported.

Organising without being able to meet up, without the

this experience and when we talk about recovery, reconstruction and the sort of jobs we create and the type of economy we want to come out of it.”

I asked the First Minister to flesh out what opportunities he means.

“We are going to need to create jobs for many people in Wales, young people in particular, and to bridge [the space] between where the economy is today and where we hope it will be in the future.

“There is real scope to create those jobs in the environment, in biodiversity – putting right the damage that has been done to the natural environment of Wales.

“So when we talk about job creation we will definitely put our issues and environmental justice at the heart of that.”

I had already mentioned the physical environmental advantages Wales has and Drakeford was clear that his government would be prioritising this in the coming years.

“We are working hard to bring British government back to the table in relation to the Swansea Bay tidal lagoon scheme.

“They talk about having ‘shovel-ready’ projects to bolster the economy in these dark days,” he says and Drakeford is clear that the Welsh government will be pushing this renewable energy project hard.

“We are pushing ahead a programme inside the Swansea City deal which is based in Pembroke Bay and Milford Haven, which is a very important part of that renewable energy agenda.

networks that inspire and develop the policies we need, as we go into the unknown, is incredibly difficult.

TUC Congress and the Labour Connected events reach only those who log on to a computer – and many people do not have that facility or knowledge.

Going onto the winter, with the prospect of continued or greater isolation for many, gives us a huge responsibility to think about how we build that confident movement we will need.

The first electoral test will not be the general election in 2024, but the English local elections and mayoral contests in May 2021, and the Welsh and Scottish Parliament elections.

In Scotland, in preparing for those elections, the labour movement must make much stronger demands on the incumbent SNP-led Scottish government.

The impact of the pandemic is being felt just as severely in our care homes and communities in Scotland as elsewhere, and in some cases even worse.

The Women Connected Labour event on Saturday replaced a Labour Women's Conference this year.

Without a policy-making function, it could be hard to see how the priorities of which women spoke will be carried through – but there really is no choice.

“So there are a whole series of ways in which we make the progress we want to see in creating an economy for Wales which is sustainable, works to our strengths and offers a future for the parts of Wales where the economy has been a struggle to maintain.”

I asked how much of his original vision for the economy and environment will now be translated into Welsh Labour's manifesto for next year's Welsh Parliament election.

“We have had to slim down our programme for government during this Assembly term because of coronavirus, but we have not abandoned it.”

The First Minister explains that there is a core to his government's programme which includes some of the projects we have discussed in the interview which Labour will continue to push.

“But then some of these ideas are inevitably in manifesto territory now which we will put to the people of Wales to demonstrate to them that the next election is not a choice between change and the status quo.

“The Labour Party in Wales does not represent the status quo. We represent change, but it is a choice of change. What sort of change do you get if the Tories are in charge in Wales, as well as Westminster – a truly horrifying prospect.

“Or is it the change you get with a Labour government with a progressive agenda determined to use the levers of government in Wales to do the sorts of things in Wales we have long supported?”

Labour, and Scottish Labour, must put forward positive action proposals that shape any jobs guarantee schemes, prioritise local government and public services on which on many women depend, and dramatically increase the household incomes of women.

We need quotas for jobs for disabled people with the appropriate supports in place, the expansion not reduction of childcare provision so that women do not continue to drop out of the labour market, and it means recognising that families continue to pay the price for racism in our society, so positive measures must be taken to tackle this.

Funding priority, for example, for violence against women projects supporting black and ethnic minority women and children, and for a public housing policy which actually increases housing supply.

Bold decisions about society's resources need to be made now, and we all need to work out how to bring together the loudest possible voices to deliver the future we need.

■ Ann Henderson is a Labour NEC and SEC member. She is running again for NEC membership as part of the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance slate (along with Yasmine Dar, Laura Pidcock, Mish Rahman, Nadia Jarma, Gemma Bolton).

# Dodds sets out the economic groundwork for Labour to build on

The shadow chancellor announced promising ideas in her speech to Labour Connected. These can be developed by the movement but it's essential an anti-cuts agenda is kept to the fore, writes **JAMES MEADWAY**

**S**HADOW chancellor Anneliese Dodds is starting to put in place Labour's economic vision for the election in 2024.

Her speech at the Labour Connected event, held in lieu of the party's annual conference, underlined her opposition to austerity and support for jobs-friendly environmental investment.

And she took the Tory government to task for the extraordinary waste of public money and cronyism that has seen millions of pounds go to Conservative donors for testing kits that were unsafe, and outsourced contracts fail to deliver.

This is surely a rich seam to mine over the next few years.

It was a solid, if short, speech that laid some of the economic groundwork Labour will need to build on in the years ahead.

There's a broad consensus across the party and the wider labour movement on opposing Tory austerity cuts.

That fight was won in the party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, and across the country as a whole spending cuts are now so unpopular that the Tories have to keep insisting that they, too, will not be returning to austerity.

There's no room for complacency. The Tories are divided on how they exit from the first phase of the pandemic crisis, with Boris Johnson and No 10 – keeping a close eye on their newly acquired “Red Wall” seats – pushing against spending cuts even as the Treasury insists on trying to shrink the deficit as quickly as possible.

It is essential that the Labour Party and the broader movement are as one in opposing cuts, and so better able to exploit those Tory divisions.

Some of the spin around Dodds's speech risked confusing this message.

And we will need clearer future commitments on improving public services. Fundamentally, that means more spending.

Health, social care and education all need big cash



**ANTI-CUTS CONSENSUS:**  
Anneliese Dodds

increases in the next few years.

It would be wise for Labour to put in place the framework for how it is going to raise the funds, just as former shadow chancellor John McDonnell did successfully before the 2017 election.

Keir Starmer's leadership election pledges, including higher taxes on the rich, are a good starting point.

But as the rise in infections and local lockdowns make clear, we will not be returning to the pre-Covid world any time soon – even with a vaccine, our immunity to the virus may be limited.

Covid-19 has made the environmental collapse an unavoidable fact of everyone's life.

The number of epidemics globally is increasing as a direct result of the pressure the economy puts on the environment, with intensive farming a particularly efficient incubator for new diseases. Early evidence suggests that climate change will increase epidemics, too, as existing ecosystems are disturbed.

The political debates from here onwards are going to cen-

tre on how we deal with this collapse.

Labour's support for the Green New Deal, recently underlined by shadow business secretary Ed Miliband, is important, but we need more than a commitment to rapid decarbonisation.

We also need to lay out how our plans will make sure the grave costs of the environmental crisis, from increased flooding to food shortages, are placed on the broadest shoulders.

We need a plan for adaptation to a changing world that builds in security and fairness.

It is here that the shadow chancellor has raised some interesting ideas.

Labour's proposals for reforming the furlough scheme include government support for reduced time working – an excellent idea, recently proposed by the Autonomy think tank, and similar to what the German government now offers.

This would allow businesses to adjust to the new way of working, while – critically – making sure workers are properly protected.

We know industries and sectors are going to have to change in response to Covid-19, from aviation to tourism.

So we should start to plan for how that can happen – and look to reduce working time overall.

And we know that some work is better for the environment than others. The pandemic has brought home the extraordinary dependency we all have on work that is often underpaid and undervalued, from cleaning to care work.

But caring for the sick and the elderly, or keeping our streets and our workplaces clean, are labour-intensive jobs with minimal environmental impacts.

Dodds has suggested, building on the work of the Women's Budget Group, that any green recovery shouldn't just focus on high-tech jobs in renewables, but look to build up and support work across the whole economy.

Spending on care is particularly jobs-rich, creating more jobs per pound spent than construction or many other sectors.

The Women's Budget Group estimate that a Scandinavian-style care system in the UK would create two million jobs across the country.

These are still early days in the parliament, for Labour under its new leadership – and in this pandemic.

The role of shadow chancellor is a thankless task, and one made particularly difficult by Covid-19, which has seen Rishi Sunak become one of the most popular politicians in the country on the back of some big spending.

If Labour is to be in a position to win in 2024, however, it needs to not only attack the government for its incompetence, and for its cronyism, but to set out a plan for building a fairer country in increasingly difficult circumstances.

Dodds has indicated some promising future directions. The rest of the movement has to start to fill in the blanks, and fight for a programme and vision that Labour can and must win on.

**T**O nobody's great surprise the coronavirus crisis has exposed the dreadful weaknesses in labour law in our country and clearly shown the need for a new framework of labour rights in Britain.

We need radical reform in health and safety rights, individual rights at work and of course rights for trade unions at least compliant with International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 87 and 96, that Britain has signed, that guarantee a right to join a union, a right to organise, a right to collective bargaining and by implication a right to strike.

The ILO is an agency of the United Nations, its Conventions have the standing of international treaties but as the UK government has recently shown its respect for international treaties has been shown to be lacking. Of the expected breach of the EU Withdrawal Agreement government minister Brandon Lewis said, "This does break international law ... in a very specific and limited way."

Of course we have had 40 years of Tory and New Labour governments breaching international labour law in specific and not very limited ways!

Back to the pandemic. When the government first started to relax the lockdown and suggest workers, particularly teachers, should return to their workplaces there was much discussion about safe places of work and the use of Employment Rights Act 1996 s44 that gives workers the qualified right not to work if they feel that the working environment is unsafe to do so.

The problem here is obvious, the onus is on the individual

# There will be no turning back on labour rights

Covid-19 strengthens the case for collective bargaining, argues **ADRIAN WEIR**

worker or groups of workers. I can find no examples where, particularly in non-union workplaces, this right was ever exercised. Although there are meant to be protections afforded to workers who exercise their rights it's not difficult to imagine that the power imbalance between workers and employers would in most cases inhibit any use of s44.

Only a union presence could ensure workers were not exposed to danger and a union presence would probably negate the need to exercise s44 rights. A union presence that Labour's manifesto commitments would have ensured.

Although in the current climate they may find it more difficult to limit rights to a safe place of work but let's not forget that the Conservatives with their deregulatory zeal have made a point of targeting workplace health and safety. Among the first moves of the Tory-led coalition when elected in 2010 was to appoint Prof Ragnar Loefstedt to conduct a review of health and safety legislation.

His report, with the Orwellian title of Reclaiming Health and Safety for All, marked the start of the shift

away from the precautionary approach to workplace health and safety to something more like the US system; softening us up for the ill-fated TTIP treaty and currently what promises to be a truly dreadful post Brexit US-UK trade deal.

There can be no doubt that during the height of pandemic those who earn the least in our society were those who made the biggest contribution. Care workers and NHS staff, workers in wholesale and retail distribution and workers in bus and rail transport particularly stand out.

What has been their reward? Care workers and shop workers who are most likely to be on the national minimum wage (NMW) have been told that the Chancellor is to apply an "emergency brake" on increases in the NMW due next April. Currently set at £8.72 an hour for "adult" workers it was set to rise to £9.21 an hour, but no longer it seems.

In response Paddy Lillis, general secretary of shop workers' union Usdaw, said: "The coronavirus pandemic has clearly demonstrated how reliant the country is on millions of low-paid key workers,

providing essential services to help ensure the country is fed, healthy and safe. While they appreciated the Thursday clapping, that does not put food on the table. The recognition they need and deserve is a wage they can live on."

This arbitrary action taken by the Chancellor must clearly show how necessary were and are the measures set out in Labour's recent manifesto committing to the introduction of sectoral collective bargaining. The proposed Ministry of Labour (under whatever name was adopted) would have been charged to establish a forum bringing together employers' federations and unions organising in the sector, in this case Usdaw and Unite, to bargain over terms and conditions.

All the evidence shows that union-negotiated agreements will have superior terms and conditions than wages arrived at by others means. More importantly, it introduces a strong element of workplace democracy into wage determination; collective bargaining led by the unions gives their members a voice which no other body, including the Low Pay Commission, can match.



At present, Labour remains committed to restoring unions to a central role in industrial relations and worker representation. There has been no repudiation of its labour rights offer: "A Labour government will ... empower workers and their trade unions - because we are stronger when we stand together ... and roll out sectoral collective bargaining - because the most effective

way to maintain good rights at work is collectively through a union" (2017) and "We will roll out sectoral collective bargaining" (2019).

This includes a wider new framework of trade union law: "Repeal the Trade Union Act" (2017) and "Repeal anti-union legislation including the Trade Union Act 2016 and create new rights and freedoms for trade unions ..." (2019)

With no Labour Conference this year the Labour Connected event provides a forum for policy discussions but no decisions are being taken. The reports of the current round of National Policy Forum consultations will apparently be published after Labour Connected but nonetheless the submission made by Prof Keith Ewing and John Hendy QC on behalf of the Institute of Employment Rights to the NPF Economy, Business & Trade Policy Commission provides a good signpost for current and future work.

The public are more and more disenchanted with the incompetence of the government's failure to deal with the Covid-19 crisis; can and will this disenchantment be turned into something more profound? In which case now is not the time, as far as trade union and labour rights are concerned, to be turning back or moving to the centre.

■ Adrian Weir is assistant secretary of the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom. CTUF and the Institute of Employment Rights held e-fringes during the virtual TUC Congress and Labour Connected events - see [www.ier.org.uk/institute-events](http://www.ier.org.uk/institute-events).

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Only a union presence could ensure workers were not exposed to danger and a union presence would probably negate the need to exercise s44 rights



MUSIC

# Bach to the future pandemic

Listening to one of the great composer's cantatas, **DAVID YEARSLEY** is struck by how it resonates so acutely in the era of Covid

**N**EAR the beginning of one of the most concerted creative outpourings in the history of Western music, and still in the hearty haleness of mid-life, the 38-year-old Johann Sebastian Bach – one wife recently buried and several of the children by his new young wife soon to die – composed the cantata *Es ist nicht Gesundes an meinem Leibe* (There Is Nothing Healthy in My Body).

Devoted to human illness, spiritual and physical, in the time of pandemic, it is just one of dozens of Bach's works that would nowadays require a trigger warning: "This cantata may contain unpleasant, unsettling, even disturbing material."

The text of the opening chorus is overlaid with guilt and self-loathing: "There is nothing healthy in the face of God's threats and there is no peace in my bones from my sin."

The cantata's poetry is drawn from a collection published in 1720 by the Lutheran clergyman Johann Rambach, who also wrote a tract on Christ's crucifixion, a thick bludgeon of a book owned by Bach's second wife Anna Magdalena.

One of the greatest masters of Christian masochistic imagery before Mel Gibson's *Passion of Christ*, Rambach loved to write about pain and suffering, all the better to advertise the joys awaiting the saved in heaven.

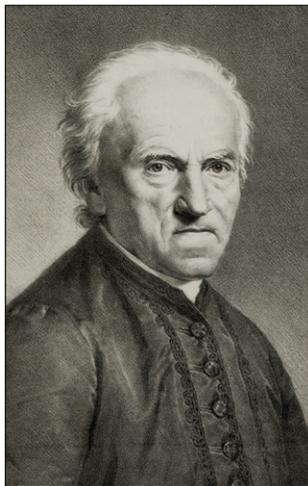
After rising up from its opening pitch that seems to anchor

listeners to their own depravity, the bass line at the start of the cantata is dragged down through a figure that by Bach's time had long been the musical signifier of death.

Up on the deck of this sinking ship, we hear heavy-burdened sighs from the orchestra. A still slower, more lugubrious version of this same figure is then emitted by the chorus – the mortal body bewailing its own ills in downcast song.

At dramatic moments in the course of this portentous musical discourse, Bach introduces a full texture of brass instruments playing the familiar tune of the Passion chorale, whose text would have been known to contemporary congregations: "My heart is filled with longing/To pass away in peace."

From the tribulations of the earthly body, release comes only from escaping the world itself.



This hymn shimmers as if from heaven and it is both harmonious with, and independent from, the tortured, serpentine counterpoint of the voices and other instruments.

A tenor recitative follows this chorus. Like 18th-century operas, Bach's cantatas generally alternate movements devoted to the quick delivery of slabs of text – recitatives – with arias, more static reflections using shorter poetic units and involving a great deal of textual repetition.

In twisted, pain-wracked melodic contours and lashing chromatic harmonies, Bach lays out the central thesis of the work: "The whole world is a hospital, filled with countless people, even children in their cribs, stricken by illness."

One person suffers the fever of lust, another stinks with pride, a third – and here, one thinks of the healthcare executives of our times – is tossed into a premature grave by the consumption of avarice. The leprosy of sin devastates the limbs of all people.

"Who is my doctor?" asks the recitative rhetorically at its panicked conclusion.

The answer is voiced only late in the subsequent bass aria, in ecstatic arcs of soaring melody – all joyful hope in contrast to the pained introversion of the

**CONTEMPORARIES:** Portraits of (left) Johann Rambach by Friedrich Carl Groger and (above) Johann Sebastian Bach by Elias Gottlob Haussmann



preceding recitative: "You are my doctor, Lord Jesus, only you know how to cure my soul."

The sicknesses catalogued are both metaphorical and real. Sin is the cause of all suffering but Bach's musical depictions of a host of maladies in the bass aria alone are so detailed and evocative that they must have made his infirm and often sickly congregations uncomfortably conscious of their bodies and all the diseases and discomforts that afflicted them.

Death lived among them, not in the care home for the elderly on the edge of town.

After the cry for help that opens this bass aria, "leprosy" and "boils" are depicted in twist-

ing, repeated figures that capture both the immediate pain and the relentless progress of disease.

Later, ineffective "herbs" and "compresses" offer glimpsed hopes of comfort but these quickly give way again to pain and despair until the doctor Jesus makes his house call at the door of the soul.

Though composed before our antiseptic age, this aria offers an unforgettable evocation of the way the patient's squirming and sweating in the waiting room gives way both to anticipation and to dread as the door opens on to the bright white of the examination room – except that dur-

ing the pandemic the waiting room is most often your own ever-shrinking quarters, a real prison, or the street.

On the most obvious level, the cantata relates the scorn for earthly existence harboured by millenarians and political quietists.

In a world of questionable medical procedures and menacing diseases that killed the malnourished and maltreated with even greater efficiency than Covid-19, the only hope is offered in heaven.

In that Bach's gripping music captures the opposing forces of hope and futility so often felt by sick people, then as now, it offers a strange solace.

Even in its exacting representations of suffering, the cantata soothes, partly by looking beyond its immediate circumstances and sorrows, while at the same time wallowing in them.

One doesn't have to be religious to recognise the weirdly ecstatic quality in the music and the complicated psychological state it represents.

Dependent on the body to be sung, played and heard, the cantata nonetheless strives to overcome the human condition, even if death is the only real cure.

Does the music succeed in healing itself? There may be nothing healthy in this music but it does not die.

As the goodly doctor Hippocrates reminds us: "Ars longa, vita brevis" – "Life is short, art eternal."

■ This is an extract from a longer article by David Yearsley in *Counterpunch*, [counterpunch.org](http://counterpunch.org). He can be reached at [dgyearsley@gmail.com](mailto:dgyearsley@gmail.com)

## ALBUM REVIEWS | TONY BURKE

**King King**  
Maverick  
(Channel 9 Music)  
★★★★☆

THE fifth album from the Britain's top blues-rock outfit King King, *Maverick* follows 2017's critically acclaimed album *Exile & Grace* – it was *Classic Rock*'s magazine's Blues Album of the Year.

*Maverick* was cut in King King's home town of Glasgow and it's the debut recording on their own label.

"I named the album *Maverick* at a time when it was risky to do so," says band leader Alan Nimmo.

"I made some bold moves and changes from band members to behind-the-scenes stuff. I guess that's who I am. I'm a



risk-taker."

All the songs bar one were co-written by the band, which features a new line-up with the kilt-wearing Nimmo on guitar and vocals.

There are two singles on the album – *I Will Never Fail* which got plenty of airplay on *Planet Rock* and *Never Give In*, which is likely to follow suit.

**Super Chikan and Terry 'Harmonica' Bean**  
From Hill Country Blues to Mississippi Delta Blues  
(Wolf Records)  
★★★★☆

JAMES JOHNSON – aka Super Chikan – lives in Clarksdale Mississippi and performs solo and with his band the Fighting Cocks.

Chikan is unique in making his own guitars – some from cigar boxes – which he hand-paints and musically he creates a unique driving slide blues sound.

Terry "Harmonica" Bean hails from the north Mississippi Hill Country and has appeared in two great documentary films about the Mississippi blues.

They share 15 tracks recorded

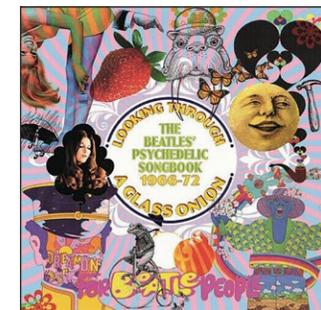


in the field in Pontotoc (Bean) and Clarksdale (Chikan) in 2018 and this is gutbucket blues as played for the patrons of sweltering juke joints, with Bean playing classics like *Black Cat Bone* and *Walkin' Blues*, while Chikan is on blistering form with tributes to bluesmen Jimmy Reed, Muddy Waters and Elmore James. The Mississippi blues are alive and well.

**Looking Through a Glass Onion**  
The Beatles Psychedelic Songbook 1966-1972  
(Grapefruit)  
★★★★☆

THE BEATLES' *Revolver*, *Sgt Pepper*, *White Album*, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Abbey Road* sets provided the source for countless cover versions and and this 3CD set features some of the more adventurous and radical reworkings.

Among them are covers from well-known artists such as Deep Purple, The Hollies and The Tremoloes, along with a spaced-out Duffy Power, avant-garde sax man Lol Coxhill, rockers Stone The Crows, Spooky Tooth and prog rockers Affinity – all doing



*I Am The Walrus* – The Shadows, Cliff Bennett and the Rebel Rousers and guitar virtuoso Davy Graham. And Dame Vera Lynn.

There are lots of unknowns who had a go too – *Jawbone*, *Episode Six* and *Trucial States*.

With 68 tracks, a 40-page booklet, memorabilia, rare labels and photos, it's a real *Magical Mystery Tour*.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

Dry and warm across much of Britain with fog patches quickly clearing. Band of rain, occasionally heavy, moving south-east across Scotland, perhaps reaching north-west England later.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Turning much colder than recently and unsettled with showers and occasional longer spells of rain. Some drier, brighter interludes are also likely, especially in the west on Friday.

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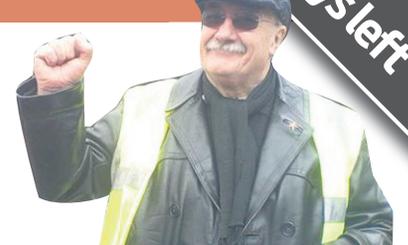
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Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

8 days left



YOU'VE RAISED: **£10,479**  
WE NEED: **£7,521**

IT'S the first day of autumn, but it's not just the leaves that are falling, as £595 has dropped into the coffer, taking us past the £10k mark to £10,479.

Thanks go to the 58 folk who contributed to our advance, ensuring that we're that bit closer to target. It shows that if many send what they can, like a snowball rolling down a hill, it keeps getting bigger.

From Dewsbury comes £20 in thanks for the "great meeting this afternoon" – with all the zooming about that we're doing, I'm not sure which meeting, but I'm guessing it was the Morning Star one "at" the Labour Party conference. If it wasn't, I'm still glad you enjoyed your meeting, and thanks for contributing – and I hope that you and other readers will be coming along to

the Scottish Morning Star Conference on October 4.

"Thanks to you and the team" accompanies £5, the same arrives with solidarity greetings from a pensioner in London and another £5 is from a supporter who "thinks you're worth it."

From Cheltenham £10 helps us gallop towards our goal, and 800-odd miles separate Hutton and Hamburg, but our support-

ers there both found time to send £10. A crisp £20 from Sheffield is for "the only paper to defend, inform and empower working people."

A message from a supporter tells us: "I will increase it when my income increases." Thank you, this would be welcome, but so would many more readers becoming fund supporters. Thanks again all.

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DAILY SUDOKU

(middling)

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

Solution tomorrow...



Yesterday's sudoku

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

TV & radio preview

with Neil Jenkin



INVESTIGATOR:  
Marine biologist  
Ellen Husain

Catch a wave? Surfers could be more concerned with catching superbugs

THE more we mess with the natural world, the more it comes back to bite us in the bum. Since the coronavirus pandemic erupted there's been a lot of talk about zoonosis – disease that jumps the species gap from animal to human – but this is old hat: much of human exposure to infectious disease has travelled this path, from bubonic to C-19.

In the past few years the scientists have alerted us to superbugs: strains of bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi that are resistant to most antibiotics and other treatments commonly used. MRSA – methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus – and Clostridium difficile are probably the ones you'll have heard of, lurking in the wards and corridors of our hospitals. Their

rise is linked to the misuse and overprescription of antibiotics, which contributes to resistance.

Now marine biologist Ellen Husain has been investigating the presence of pathogens in our oceans. She told the Star: "We've known about so-called superbugs in hospitals for years, but it's only recently we've become aware of the levels of antibiotics in our seas and that we now also have antibiotic-resistant bacteria in our coastal waters."

In **Costing the Earth** (3.30pm Radio 4), Husain finds out about the ways in which antibiotics find their way into the marine environment and learns how surfers and regular sea swimmers may be more likely to have antimicrobial-resistant bacteria in their bodies.

Telly: out of the goodness

of their hearts at US media giant Comcast. Sky Arts is airing for free. What's the catch, I wonder? Anyway, make hay while the sun shines. Tonight's offerings include **Danny Dyer on Harold Pinter** (no, really! They were mates, apparently) at 9pm and **Josephine Baker: the Story of an Awakening** at 10pm.

More telly: **Jazz** (9.45pm PBS America), Ken Burns's ace documentary series steams on; **Chateau Chunder: When Australian Wine Changed the World** (10pm BBC4), a social history of wine and wine drinking and an examination of how a small group of Aussie winemakers took on the world and won; **Shameless** (11.40pm Channel 4), last episode in the brilliant first series of Paul Abbott's comedy set on a Manchester housing estate. Frank plots to stage his own death.

QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell



GRISLY: Reindeer herders on a Russian Arctic island found this immaculately preserved carcass of an Ice Age cave bear revealed by the melting permafrost

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- 1 Macclesfield Town FC, owing more than £500,000, were wound up last week. What's their nickname?
- 2 What is the name of the metal motor-vehicle toys made by Lesney between 1947 and 1982?
- 3 What is the smallest number used in a sudoku puzzle?

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

1. A complete example of an extinct species of which mammal was found on a Russian island recently? **A bear, specifically a cave bear (pictured)**
2. By what name is the Workers Uniting

- union better known in Britain? **Unite**
3. Of which Commonwealth country was David Granger president until his resignation last month? **Guyana. He quit following the general election there**

ATHLETICS

# Teagle respects Mentrída's sportsmanship

by Our Sports Desk

A BRITISH triathlete who secured a podium finish after a rival runner allowed him to pass after he took a wrong turn has promised he would do the same.

James Teagle was closing in on third place in the 2020 Santander Triathlon event in Spain when he missed the finish chute in the 10km run and was overtaken by 21-year-old Diego Mentrída.

However, as the 24-year-old Briton looked on in despair, he saw Mentrída slow down and

let him cross the finishing line ahead of the Spaniard to claim third place.

Loughborough-based Teagle, who competes for the Spanish Alusigma Penota Triathlon team, said: "I'm actually racing him this weekend, so I owe him, if he does the same thing, to let him go past. I'd look a right villain if not."

The event took place last weekend, but video footage of the dramatic conclusion has since been shared widely on social media and Mentrída showered with praise.

Teagle said: "Essentially I get to the finishing chute and there

are two ways to go and I choose the way with the big red arch in front of me and keep running that way until the crowd shout: 'You're going the wrong way!' in Spanish.

"I turned around and there's Diego 50m the other way from the actual finish chute and we both start sprinting.

"In the video, you can see me run through and crash into the barrier and I put my arm up – I was frustrated because I'd made a stupid mistake – and that's when Diego stops, to my surprise.

"I wouldn't have held it against him if he didn't. He

shows great integrity and sportsmanship and lets me pass.

"You can see in the video, I'm a bit confused still as to where the finish line is, but it was great sportsmanship."

Mentrída's incredible display of sportsmanship, which came after competitors had battled it out over a 1.5km swim and 40km on the bikes before taking to the roads, left Teagle almost speechless.

He said: "There was a full range of emotions, and obviously you're really tired at the end of a race as well. It was incredible, but that's kind of

what you get in sport sometimes.

"It never usually goes your way, it's very rare that it goes exactly how you want it to, but to see that integrity, that's incredible. It took me by surprise, I'll be honest.

"I shook his hand really quickly initially because I didn't know where the finish line was still and then shook his hand again afterwards and said: 'Thank you very much, that was incredible.'"

Mentrída said after the race: "When I saw that he had missed the route, I just stopped. James deserved this medal."

RUGBY UNION

# Women's Six Nations gets final date

DATES have been announced for the remaining 2020 Women's Six Nations games.

The competition, halted earlier this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, is set to resume on October 25 with Scotland tackling France in Glasgow and Ireland hosting Italy.

Runaway tournament leaders England play their final match against Italy in Parma on November 1, when victory would guarantee them the title and a Grand Slam.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# Inconclusive Covid test sees play-off game postponed

by Our Sports Desk

THE opener of the WNBA play-off series between the Seattle Storm and the Minnesota Lynx was postponed nearly 90 minutes before its scheduled tip-off on Sunday because of inconclusive Covid-19 test results for Storm players.

The players with inconclusive results have undergone additional testing and are in isolation, according to the WNBA.

WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert was at the hotel when she found out about the inconclusive results and boarded the Storm's bus to let them know.

"We needed more testing and data," Engelbert said in a TV interview. "As soon as I talked to them they were concerned about health and safety, and it wasn't about basketball at that point."

The Lynx had already arrived at the arena and some of the players had been warming up when they were told the game was postponed.

"This is the hardest part of Covid-19 [when] putting on live sports," Engelbert said. "Every day you're reset to zero. Keeping the bubble safe and making sure there's no community spread. The purpose of testing programme and protocols is to pull anyone out before they are infectious."

The league announced on Sunday night that Game 1 of the best-of-five semi-final series would be played tonight. That was supposed to be Game 2.

"We want to make sure we have all the data and testing if someone is affected with Covid," Engelbert said. "We can isolate them and take care of their safety. Hopefully we'll get good data over the next 24 to



48 hours. Hopefully get back on the court for Game 1 on Tuesday. We will test them tonight and have additional testing on those players that had inconclusive results."

Engelbert, along with players' union head Terri Jackson, went into the Connecticut locker room after the Sun's semi-final series win over Las Vegas to tell the players about what had happened.

"None of us knew what was going on of course," Connecticut coach Curt Miller said after his team's win. "Cathy came and spoke to our teams. We've done a great job of keeping Covid out of our bubble. I hope these are false positives. The thing that is concerning is the multiple positives."

The commissioner also talked to the Las Vegas coaches about it. The Aces had gone through an inconclusive test result in the regular season; Lindsay Allen had to miss a game because of one.

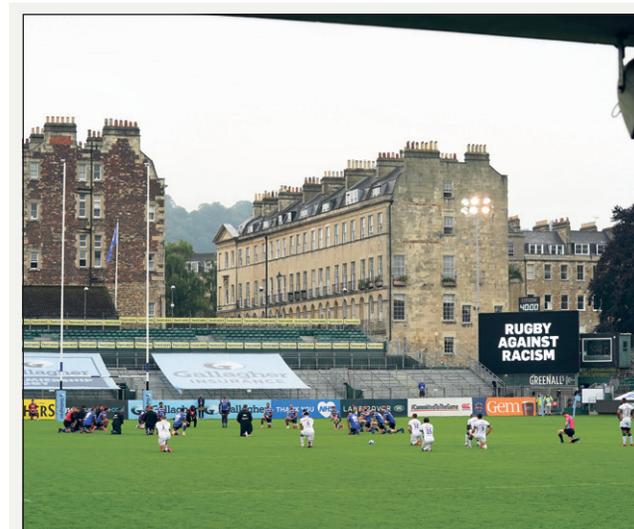
Las Vegas coach Bill Laimbeer said in a post-game interview that the league had sent an email to the four teams still playing to outline the potential problem of inconclusive positive results.

The WNBA made it through the regular season with a few false positive tests for the coronavirus, but no players developed Covid-19 once the season started. The season is being played inside a bubble environment at IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida.

"The Storm organisation fully supports the decision to postpone the game. The health and safety of the WNBA players, team staff and all those involved in the production of this season remains our top priority," Storm co-owner Lisa Brummel and CEO and general manager Alisha Valavanis said in a statement.

Everyone inside the bubble has been tested for the virus every day.

"You have to follow your gut and instinct and data and science," Engelbert said. "Everything has worked in the bubble because we followed the science. We had players miss games in the regular season. This was the right thing to do today."



MEN'S RUGBY UNION

# Supporters set to return for Bath

by Our Sports Desk

BATH will welcome spectators back to the Recreation Ground tonight as they target another major step towards the Premiership play-offs.

Victory over Gloucester would take Bath second in the table behind runaway leaders Exeter.

Their final league game is away to Saracens on Sunday week, with play-off rivals Wasps, Sale Sharks and Bristol all having two matches left.

The west country derby will see 1,000 fans attend in a third crowd pilot Premiership fixture, after matches at Harlequins and Gloucester earlier this month.

"For us, it is a great opportunity now because we have worked hard and put ourselves in a position for it to be a good opportunity," Bath rugby director Stuart Hooper said.

"If we had won only two games from the seven [since the Premiership restarted last month] then it wouldn't be, so it is a real opportunity for us, but it is because we have created it.

"It has been good for the lads to have a good couple of days off before we have regrouped and prepared to get going again.

"They have been flat out and giving us absolutely everything."

Bath were beaten 29-15 by Gloucester when the clubs last met eight months ago, but Hooper added: "We have developed a fair bit since then.

"They performed well in that game. Take nothing away from them, they deserved the victory and I think that we were pretty off that day.

"It is a new fixture, it's another opportunity and we won't be dwelling on what happened in the past."



**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

# KNEELING 'MESSAGE HAS BEEN LOST'

## QPR's Ferdinand defends team's decision not to take a knee against Coventry

by Our Sports Desk

LES FERDINAND has said that footballers taking a knee before a game has been reduced to nothing more than "a fancy hashtag or a nice pin badge" and that the "message has been lost."

QPR's director of football was defending his side's decision to not kneel prior to Friday night's game against Coventry.

It was the first televised game in which the gesture did not take place, after football introduced it during games played behind closed doors in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

Kneeling in sport to highlight racial inequality was started in 2016 when NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick knelt before the United States national anthem to protest against the unlawful killings of black people at the hands of the police.

The killing of George Floyd in May, a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, sparked mass protests worldwide, including the Premier League.

QPR said in a statement yesterday that the decision had been made jointly with Coventry and the match referee ahead of the game, and was

not done "to suggest a lack of support for the Black Lives Matter movement."

There were many other games across the divisions over the weekend where players did not make the gesture.

Director of football Ferdinand said: "Taking the knee was very powerful, but we feel that impact has now been diluted.

"In the same way 'Clap For Carers' was very emotional for us all, it got to a stage where it had run its natural course and the decision was rightly made to stop it.

"Does that mean we, as a nation, don't care or appreciate our NHS workers? Of course it doesn't.

"No-one is more passionate than me about this topic. I have spoken on the matter throughout my footballing life.

"I work for one of the most diverse football clubs in this country. A lot of people are being fooled out there.

"Recently, I took the decision not to do any more interviews on racism in football because the debate was going around in circles.

"People want a nice soundbite when something happens, but how many of the media who have criticised QPR over the past 48 hours genuinely want change?"



Former England forward Ferdinand also had spells at Newcastle, Tottenham, West Ham and Leicester before moving into coaching and then football administration with the Hoops.

Ferdinand maintains more must be done in the fight against racism and inequality than simply offer "a nice soundbite when something happens."

He highlighted the lack of resolution to a complaint made by QPR following the abandonment of a friendly between the club's under-18s team and Spanish side AD Nervion in August 2019.

"The taking of the knee has reached a point of 'good PR,' but little more than that," Ferdinand said.

"The message has been lost. It is now not dissimilar to a fancy hashtag or a nice pin badge.

"What are our plans with this? Will people be happy for players to take the knee for the next 10 years, but see no actual progress made?"

"Taking the knee will not bring about change in the game - actions will.

"Those media that have been quick to question us should be looking more inwardly.

Our Under-18s were forced to abandon a game in August 2019 against AD Nervion FC due to racist abuse.

"More than 12 months on, Uefa refused to deal with the situation and the Spanish FA did nothing.

"What media coverage has been given to that? Not nearly as much as what has been granted to QPR not taking a knee.

"Don't judge us. Simple research and evidence will show you we are doing more than most. If you want change, judge yourselves."

### TONIGHT'S FOOTBALL

#### Champions League

Krasnodar.....PAOK Salonika, 8pm  
Maccabi Tel Aviv.....Red Bull Salzburg, 8pm  
Slavia Prague.FC Midtjylland, 8pm

#### League Cup

Leyton Orient.....Tottenham, 6pm  
Newport County.....Watford, 7pm  
West Brom.....Brentford, 7pm  
West Ham.....Hull, 7.30pm  
Luton..Manchester United, 8.15pm

#### EFL Trophy

Shrewsbury.....Newcastle U21, 5.30pm  
Wimbledon.....Brighton U21, 6pm  
Stevenage.....Soton U21, 7pm  
Oldham.....Wolves U21, 7.45pm  
Wigan.....Liverpool U21, 7.45pm

### SPORT ON TV

BASEBALL: MLB, Cleveland Indians v Chicago White Sox - BT Sport 211pm;

BASKETBALL: NBA play-offs - Sky Sports Main Event 2am (Wed).

FOOTBALL: EFL Cup, Leyton Orient v Tottenham and Luton v Manchester United - Sky Sports Main Event 6pm; UEFA Champions League, Maccabi Tel-Aviv v Red Bull Salzburg, FC Krasnodar v PAOK and Slavia Prague v FC Midtjylland - BT Sport//ESPN 7.45pm.

GOLF: Payne's Valley Cup, Woods/Thomas v McIlroy/Rose - Sky Sports Golf 7pm.

RUGBY UNION: Premiership Rugby, Bath v Gloucester - BT Sport 15.15pm.

SNOOKER: European Masters - Eurosport 2 2.30pm, 7pm.

TENNIS: French Open, qualifying - Eurosport 1 9am.

### TODAY'S TIPS

#### Farringdon's Doubles

MARKAZI  
Beverley 2:05 (nap)

CORKED  
Beverley 4:55

#### Houseman's Choice

ALJADY  
Beverley 2:40

### MEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE

# Wolfpack hope they will return to Super League

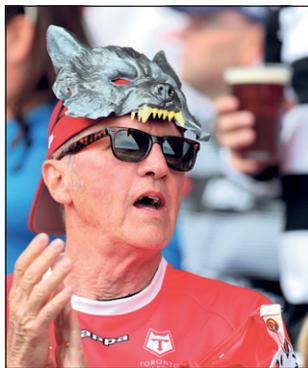
by Our Sports Desk

THE fate of Toronto Wolfpack could be determined by the end of the week as Super League bosses meet to discuss their reapplication.

The Canadian club pulled out of their inaugural season in the top flight in July when Australian owner David Argyle announced he no longer had the resources to fund them.

Their participation agreement was terminated and the league continued with 11 clubs.

The Wolfpack have since found a potential new owner in Toronto businessman Carlo LiVolsi, who submitted his plans, including an 80-page document, to relaunch the club at an online meeting



with Super League executive chairman Robert Elstone and Rugby Football League chief executive Ralph Rimmer earlier this month.

A report with recommendations is due to be handed to the other 11 clubs today ahead of a meeting of the Super League

board - essentially the club owners - on Friday morning which will make a decision to either reject the application outright or seek more information.

With the vote expected to be close, the Ontario club are desperately hoping the clubs will give LiVolsi an opportunity to present his case in person next week.

There is still some resentment over the way Toronto pulled out of the league just days before the scheduled August 2 restart and bitterness grew over revelations that the players have not been paid since May.

LiVolsi has insisted he will pay the wages in full if the club are reinstated and the GMB trade union, who repre-

sent rugby league players, on Friday said they had brokered a deal worth in the region of £1 million.

LiVolsi has spoken of his plans to take the club to new heights and Toronto captain Josh McCrone and coach Brian McDermott have both issued pleas for the club to be given a second chance.

A move to restore Super League to a 12-team competition could count in their favour.

"We are confident we will get a fair hearing," Toronto's UK business manager Martin Vickers said.

"We know we made a strong submission and trust the Super League board will make the right decision for Toronto Wolfpack."

Rimmer has indicated his

support for the new club but Elstone is thought to have strong reservations and the odds appear to be stacked against the Canadians.

LiVolsi says he would not be interested in joining the Championship or League 1, insisting it is "Super League or bust" and, at this late stage, the club would be unlikely to find other owners willing to start the process over again.

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