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BAKERS' UNION CUTS TIES WITH LABOUR PARTY

Vote to disaffiliate after more than 100 years forced by Starmer's 'factional internal war' against the left

by Ben Chacko

THE Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union (BFAWU) voted to disaffiliate from the Labour Party during a special recall conference yesterday.

The union, a founding member of the party in 1902, said that Labour "has travelled away from the aims and hopes of working-class organisations like ours" under current leader Sir Keir Starmer, who it said has been too focused on waging a "factional internal war."

The union called the conference after Labour made threats to "auto-exclude" its president Ian Hodson (pictured). The party cited his links to left-wing campaign group Labour Against the Witch-hunt, which Labour has banned as part of its ongoing crackdown on the left.

Only one delegate voted against disaffiliation, the Morning Star understands.



Mr Hodson, whose union was addressed by the newly elected MP Keir Hardie in 1893, said that Sir Keir should "hang his head in shame that he has ended our long relationship with the Labour Party."

General secretary Sarah Woolley said that delegates to the union's

“

We're not going to be restrained by a Labour Party that wants to be in the bosses' pocket rather than standing with workers

BFAWU leader Ian Hodson

virtual conference saw the attacks on Mr Hodson, whose political activities were carried out on members' behalf, as an attack on the union itself.

"A trade union cannot allow smears to be put out about one of its officers, and about the union as well," she said.

"Lies were being spread about Ian, and Labour allowed them to build up and build up."

Mr Hodson said that BFAWU members were "tremendously disappointed that they've been put in this position and had to take [the decision to disaffiliate]."

He said that Labour "has moved even further away from working people" during the week of its annual conference.

"I was very upset about the Sun being allowed into the conference hall, very upset that a shadow minister [Andy McDonald] has to resign because Keir Starmer doesn't think workers deserve £15 an hour – especially after he attended our picket line in 2019 and then a Fight for £15 rally we held right after that."

In a statement confirming its vote, the BFAWU noted it had "levied its poorly paid members to build a party that would bring about real change" in 1902, but slammed Labour's "failure to deliver those changes during our 119-year relationship."

"The BFAWU will not be bullied by bosses or politicians," the statement said. "When you pick on one of us you pick on all of us. That's what solidarity means."

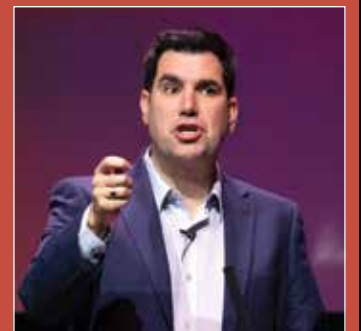
The union asserted that it would now "become more political" and use its political fund to ensure that its members' voices are heard.

Mr Hodson said the union would continue to work with left MPs including Labour's Ian Mearns and Richard Burgon, and that any decision on alternative political vehicles would be decided on democratically.

"But we're not going to be restrained by a Labour Party that wants to be in the bosses' pocket rather than standing with workers," he said. "We're not interested in a party that's not interested in us."

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CONFERENCE 2021



INTERVIEW: RICHARD BURGON MP talks to the Star, arguing that votes in Brighton prove that socialism is still a force in Labour: p9

NEWS: Demands on £15 minimum wage, delegates back action on fire and rehire, plus fringes and The World Transformed festival's closing day: p2-3

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LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE and THE WORLD TRANSFORMED

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Appeal to support Palestinians' legal fund

PALESTINIAN activists have issued a call to socialists in Britain to support detainees arrested for participating in Palestine's uprising earlier this year.

Thousands of Palestinians from across their historic homeland united to protest against Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip, culminating in a historic strike on May 18.

Israeli authorities responded

by arresting more than 2,000 people, including children, in a bid to quell the uprising.

Speaking to The World Transformed yesterday, Riya al-Sanah, a Palestinian activist and researcher for Who Profits, urged the British public to donate to a fund set up to support those arrested by covering legal fees: the Detainee and Dignity Support fund

(dignityfund-baladna.com).

"Support the fund because ... it's not about charity, it's about political solidarity, because Israel uses mass incarceration as a discipline mechanism," she said.

"Go back to your institutions, go back to your trade unions, make collections, organise over the question of detention and mass incarceration in Palestine."

FRONT PAGE

WAKE-UP CALL AS BAKERS' UNION CUTS TIES

FROM PI: Gateshead Labour MP Ian Mearns, who chairs the BFAWU parliamentary group, said it was "sad and regrettable" that the union had decided to leave but that he was "not at all surprised."

"It seems it is no longer allowed within the party to disagree with an outdated leadership. The suspension of the union's president was a step too far for a union that defends its members, unstintingly, in very

difficult circumstances."

Wansbeck MP Ian Lavery told the Star that Labour should treat the "terribly disappointing" move from a union with a "fantastic history of struggle" as a wake-up call.

"The leadership should look to rebuild those political bridges that have been dramatically and deliberately burned to the ground in such a short time. Let's hope we can develop the policies that can encourage

and welcome the bakers' union back."

Mr Burgon, who chairs the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs, said the bakers were "a fantastic union that has been at the forefront of fighting for fair pay."

"The Labour leadership must not take working people or their trade unions for granted."

The Labour Party has been contacted for comment.

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MORNING STAR EVENT

Starmers' purge condemned for letting Tories off the hook

by Matt Trinder

A COMPLIANT billionaire press and Sir Keir Starmer's assault on the left have let the Tories off the hook during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Morning Star's Labour conference fringe meeting heard.

Parliamentarians and trade unionists discussed the impact of the crisis and the need for independent media at Monday's packed event, chaired by the paper's editor Ben Chacko.

Leeds East MP Richard Burgon said Tory ministers had blood on their hands after more than 150,000 deaths during the pandemic, yet the Labour leadership only seem interested in "a load of bloody rule changes."

On Sunday, conference delegates narrowly

backed last-minute proposals from Sir Keir's team to hand more powers to MPs in future leadership elections at the expense of rank-and-file members and affiliated groups.

Unite chief of staff Andrew Murray slammed Sir Keir's hypocritical calls for a "contribution society" after his volte-face over a £15-an-hour minimum wage, backed during his leadership campaign but now watered down to "at

least" £10 an hour.

Solidarity was expressed with Andy McDonald, who dramatically resigned from the shadow cabinet on Monday after being pressured to reject the higher rise.

Brent North MP Barry Gardiner called for a moral crusade against Tory injustices and thanked the Star for being the only national newspaper to cover fire-and-rehire attacks on workers in depth.

His private member's Bill to ban the tactic will be debated by MPs next month.

And GMB general secretary Gary Smith said the paper had a vital role to play in rebuilding the labour movement and bringing "unity and solidarity" to the cause.

Attendees also heard from Labour MSP Katy Clark on the need for workers to fight for their rights, and psychiatric nurse Rheian Davies, who warned of a worsening mental illness epidemic amid health cuts.

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BOSSES' BLACKMAIL TACTIC

Conference backs Unite union's call to ban fire and rehire

by Matt Trinder

DELEGATES at Labour's annual conference have overwhelmingly supported Unite's demand for an end to fire-and-rehire attacks on workers.

Yesterday Brent North MP Barry Gardiner told the Morning Star: "This is the Labour Party focused where it should be: on the needs of working people."

"I am delighted that our party has united around the campaign to stop fire and rehire."

"Labour was born out of the trade union movement and the struggle for workers' rights. We must never forget that, and work together for the dignity of work and for workers' dignity."

Monday's motion, passed by a show of hands as the Morn-

ing Star went to press, warned that tactics that effectively blackmail workers into taking on more hours while seeing their pay and pensions cut should have no place in society. "People are entitled to secure work and earnings. The power imbalance between

workers and employers must change," it said.

Moving the motion, Unite's Philippa Marsden said: "Fire and rehire is an act of blackmail by employers — but we can beat back these attacks."

"At British Airways, our members stopped the worst of the cuts. At Go North West, bus drivers stood firm and the company backed down."

"At Weetabix our members are in the middle of industrial action against a fire-and-rehire wage grab. We will do all it takes to stop this there too, but it should not be legal to do this to workers."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has criticised the practice as unacceptable, but has failed to legislate against it.

Unite's new general secretary Sharon Graham, who has slammed fire and rehire as "one of the scandals of our

“Labour was born out of the trade union movement and the struggle for workers' rights: we must never forget that

BRIGHTON 2021

■ SLAPDOWN FOR STARMER

MOTION ON £15 MINIMUM WAGE ANOTHER REBUKE FOR LEADER

Demand for Labour to back low-paid workers follows principled frontbencher McDonald's resignation on issue

by Matt Trinder

DELEGATES at Labour's conference were expected to back a £15-an-hour statutory minimum wage as the Morning Star went to press yesterday evening in yet another grassroots rebuke to Sir Keir Starmer's leadership team.

The motion came a day after Andy McDonald's dramatic resignation from the shadow cabinet.

The former shadow employment rights secretary quit on Monday afternoon, saying he had been ordered not to support calls for a £15 minimum wage and instead to argue for "at least" £10 an hour. It currently stands at £8.91 an hour for over-23s.

As delegates prepared to vote on the motion, 2019 foot-age emerged of Sir Keir, then Brexit minister, campaigning with McDonald's workers fighting for £5 more.

Referring to the workers at the protest, he said: "They're not asking for the Earth, they're asking for the basics: £15 an hour."

Yesterday, former shadow home secretary Diane Abbott commented: "It is no good clapping these people and then not be prepared to give them a decent minimum wage."

The motion also included demands for stronger union



QUIT: Andy McDonald

rights, higher taxes on the very wealthiest, an end to zero-hours contracts and a better work-life balance.

Earlier yesterday, delegates backed GMB's motion for care workers to be paid at least £15 an hour.

Moving the motion, GMB's Cath Pinder said: "The UK's care sector is broken. People cannot access the care they deserve and care workers are chronically underpaid and undervalued."

"There will be more than 170,000 care vacancies by the end of the year, and we all know the reason. There is not a labour shortage but a wage shortage."

"The UK's care system relies on gross injustice to generate bloated profits for shadowy private companies."

"Care workers are paid the

bare minimum while care home residents shell out their life savings just to have dignity in old age.

"Fifteen pounds is the UK average hourly wage. Conference, can we all agree that care work is worth at least that?"

Delegates have already backed calls for greater public ownership of key industries and an end to arms sales to Israel – all proposals at odds with Sir Keir's wishes.

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HAVE YOUR SAY

Write (up to 300 words) to
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HUBBUB: Jeremy Corbyn and Barry Gardiner talk at yesterday's fire-and-rehire hub meeting

■ FRINGE DEBATE: GREEN JOBS

Long Bailey speaks out against ditched nationalisation vow

by Bethany Rielly

REBECCA LONG BAILEY has spoken out against Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer's broken promise on energy nationalisation, declaring that public ownership is essential for tackling the climate crisis.

Sir Keir sparked anger at the party's conference in Brighton this week when he ditched his own pledge to bring the "big six" energy companies into public hands.

Speaking at The World Transformed fringe festival, the former shadow business secretary, one of the key architects of the party's green new deal under the previous leadership, made it clear she was against the move.

"There's been a bit of confusion about what the Labour Party's position is on public ownership – that it's an ideological flight of fancy and we really need to be focusing on more important things," she said.

"I would say that public

ownership is essential if we're going to be able to tackle climate change.

"We can't make the changes and investments at the pace that we need to make them without taking control of critical energy networks and some of the big energy suppliers so that we can roll out those changes as quickly as possible."

Attendees heard from Labour activists that they can no longer rely on the party leadership to support a green jobs revolution and must now look to grassroots movements and trade unions.

Sir Keir told the BBC on Sunday that he would not nationalise the big energy firms if he became prime minister.

Shown one of his 10 campaign pledges stating that "public services should be in public hands," he said: "I don't see nationalisation there. When it comes to common ownership I'm pragmatic about this. I do not agree with the argument that says we must be ideological."

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age," said the vote was a welcome step forward.

Ms Graham, who is not attending conference this year in order to focus on Unite's ongoing industrial disputes, said: "Unite will continue to take action at the workplace to defeat the employers using this practice. It is a brutal assault on wages and conditions."

"We can win on fire and rehire and win more often if we fully commit to focusing on building union strength and organisation at the workplace."

Monday's motion also reaffirmed conference's support for stronger individual employment rights, the repeal of all anti-trade-union laws, a ban on zero-hours contracts and an end to outsourcing in public services.

Mr Gardiner hosted former party leader Jeremy Corbyn and ex-shadow chancellor John McDonnell as well as delegates at his "end fire and-rehire" hub next door to the main conference hall in Brighton yesterday.

The Brent North MP's private member's Bill, which aims to abolish the tactic, is set to be debated by MPs during its second reading in the Commons next month.

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RAILWAYS

SOUTHEASTERN IN DISGRACE AFTER OWING £25 MILLION

'LOCK, STOCK AND RAILS': Unions call for nationalisation of network

by Peter Lazenby

RAIL services in London and south-east England will be back under public ownership next month after profiteering train operator Southeastern was stripped of its franchise yesterday, owing the Treasury £25 million.

Both rail unions and Labour responded to the fiasco by demanding full and permanent nationalisation of the nation's rail network – and that the cash be recovered.

London and South Eastern Railways operator Govia was recently investigated and found to have failed to pay £25 million owed to the Treasury under the terms of its franchise.

Elodie Brian, the chief financial officer of transport firm Go-Ahead, the majority owner of Govia, has resigned.

Services will be taken over by the Department for Transport on October 17.

Mick Lynch, general secretary of rail union RMT, accused Govia of "playing fast and loose with their financial commitments."

He said: "This latest public-sector rescue of a privately operated rail service should kill off the risky and expensive nonsense of rail privatisation once and for all."

"It's time to put the rest of Britain's failing private rail operations out of their misery, cut out the middleman and build a public railway that's fit for a green, post-Covid future."

Manuel Cortes (pictured), general secretary of the industry's clerical and management union TSSA, said that the days of privatisation "must now be well and truly over."

He said: "Time and time again we see the private sector fail and taxpayers ride to the rescue."

"We need the government to dump the failed franchise system, end the profiteering of the train operating companies and take over the whole thing – lock, stock and rails."

Mick Whelan, general secretary of train drivers' union Aslef, said Southeastern should be under permanent public ownership.

Labour's shadow transport secretary Jim McMahon said the collapse was "yet another example of the complete failure of the franchise model, which prioritises private company profits over passengers and service."

He called for nationalisation "over the next six months."

LSER services cover London, Kent, East Sussex and the High Speed 1 lines.

Govia also runs Thameslink, Southern, Great Northern, and Gatwick Express.

Go-Ahead shares fell more than 22 per cent in morning trading and the firm's chairwoman Clare Hollingsworth said: "We recognise that mistakes have been made and we sincerely apologise to the department."

"We are working constructively with the Department for Transport towards a settlement of this matter."

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VINDICATED:
TSSA general
secretary Manuel
Cortes



DOME SWEET DOME: A construction worker stands inside a welded steel dome at Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant near Bridgwater in Somerset, as work on the project reaches its five-year anniversary

HGV CRISIS

'Teachers need fuel priority — or schools can't open'

by Our News Desk

TEACHERS should have priority access to fuel amid the ongoing shortage or children's education will be further disrupted, a teaching union warned yesterday.

NASUWT general secretary Dr Patrick Roach called on ministers to take action to ensure that teachers and support staff are able to get into work to ensure schools and colleges can remain open.

He warned that fuel shortages are expected to cause "serious difficulties" for education provision.

Dr Roach said: "For many teachers, the use of public transport is simply not an

option, with many schools in areas not easily accessible other than by using private vehicles."

"The government must urgently consider making teachers a priority group for access to locally available petrol and diesel fuel supplies."

The government has faced calls to prioritise access to fuel for healthcare staff and other essential workers.

But head teachers' union NAHT warned that prioritising essential workers for fuel could cause "more chaos" on the forecourt as it would be "impossible to enforce."

General secretary Paul Whiteman said: "The only real answer is for the government to do everything in its power

to get fuel to pumps and bring this situation to an end."

He warned that if shortages continue, it is possible that children and teachers will be unable to get to school.

Head teachers are hoping that they will not be forced to revert back to online lessons as a result of shortages, school leaders' union ASCL said on Monday.

General secretary Geoff Barton said: "There is the option for remote education, which schools and colleges have shown themselves to be very adept at providing through the pandemic, but this is very much a last resort and they will be hoping it doesn't come to that."

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LONDON UNDERGROUND

Strikes possible over driverless trains

RAIL union RMT raised the threat of industrial action on the London Underground yesterday over adverts for a consultancy contract to explore the introduction of driverless trains.

The union's general secretary Mick Lynch said that the move was part of government-driven spending cuts on the Tube, proving ministers' "twisted priorities" at a time when the transport network is facing massive challenges.

"Driverless trains are a Tory fantasy that should be consigned

to the science fiction shelf," he added.

"They are dangerous nonsense and just another dead cat lobbed on the table to distract from what's going on in the real world."

He committed the union to fighting the plans "with every tool at our disposal, including the use of industrial action."

The government said that the plan is part of a £1 billion package, agreed with Transport for London (TfL), to modernise the Underground.

A spokesman for Mayor of

London Sadiq Khan said: "It's disappointing that the government is doggedly pursuing the introduction of driverless trains despite TfL estimating that a full conversion across the network would cost £10bn."

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CONSUMER RIGHTS Tribunal approves lawsuit against BT

A TRIBUNAL has approved a bid to launch a £600 million class action compensation claim against BT on behalf of customers who say they were overcharged for landlines.

Justin Le Patourel, the founder of Collective Action on Land Lines, is taking the landmark case to the Competition Appeal Tribunal for more than two million landline-only BT customers.

Law firm Mishcon de Reya has filed claims it says could result in payments of up to £500 each for 2.3 million BT customers.

Mr Le Patourel said: "We believe that BT has been overcharging millions of its most loyal customers for years.

"We are thrilled that this decision will bring us closer to putting right this injustice."

The case will now proceed to full trial.

A BT spokesperson said they strongly disagree with the claims that any overcharging occurred and are considering all available options.

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

HOLYROOD

MSPs rally against 'senseless' cut to universal credit

by Our News Desk

SCOTLAND'S Social Justice Secretary Shona Robison warned that cutting universal credit would be "senseless and harmful" as her motion condemning the decision was debated in Holyrood yesterday.

The SNP minister said that the Tories have one last chance to reverse the cut, which is due to take effect next week.

Ms Robison's motion states that the decision to remove the £20-per-week uplift to the benefit reflects the Westminster government's "uncompassionate approach to welfare."

The Tory government continues to defend its decision, stating that the increase was only a temporary measure during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Before the debate, Ms Robison noted that the cut "comes at a time of rising food and fuel bills, imminent increases in National Insurance payments and the end of the self-employment and furlough schemes."

"This is a conscious decision to remove support from people on the lowest incomes who rely

upon this uplift as a lifeline to allow basic needs to be met."

Scottish Labour's social security spokeswoman Pam Duncan-Glancy argued that the uplift was "a response to a failing social security system gutted by the Conservative government."

"This money went on basics like food, bills and travelling to work or school.

"For millions of people struggling to make ends meet, slashing that money now will be an assault on their basic human rights."

She warned that the cut will do untold damage to communities and called for unity against it.

"But we need deeds as well as words from the Scottish government," she added.

"The SNP and the Conservative governments must use all the powers at their disposal to take bold transformative action to tackle poverty and inequality right now."

Record numbers of people are seeking online support for their mental and financial well-being ahead of the cut, according to charity Mental Health UK.

news@peoples-press.com



Pic: UCU City and Islington College

WORKERS' RIGHTS

London colleges picketed by UCU over paltry pay deal

by Peter Lazenby

LECTURERS at 10 further education colleges in England launched strike action over pay yesterday.

Action at another three colleges was called off after bosses caved in and offered a better pay deal.

The strikers are in dispute with their employers' body, the Association of Colleges, which proposed a below-inflation 1 per cent pay increase in December last year.

Up to 10 days of strike action have been launched and pickets were in action at all colleges yesterday.

Colleges hit by strike action are City and Islington College, College of North East London, Westminster Kingsway College, City of Liverpool College, Croydon College, Lambeth College, Carshalton College, Kingston College, Merton College, Wandsworth and Tooting College.

Strikes at City of Bristol Col-



Pic: UCU Westminster Kingsway College

lege and New College Swindon were suspended after an 11th-hour decision by management to propose a higher increase.

Strike action was also called off at Weymouth College after staff accepted a new deal.

The University and College Union (UCU) said that if the strike-hit colleges want to

avoid further disruption they should "follow the lead of these colleges and get around the negotiating table."

The lecturers want a pay increase of at least 5 per cent after more than a decade of below-inflation further education pay increases.

They say they are now paid

£9,000 a year less than teachers and have suffered a real-terms pay cut of 30 per cent over the last 10 years.

Striking lecturers at three London colleges are in dispute over working conditions as well as pay.

UCU general secretary Jo Grady said: "College leaders are facing strike action and severe disruption because they have refused to negotiate on pay."

"College staff are some of our most brilliant and dedicated educators, but they have seen a real terms pay cut of over 30 per cent in the past decade."

"Another below-inflation offer of 1 per cent is completely unacceptable."

"Staff have given notice of more days of strike action this term and will be walking out again unless they see improved pay offers."

"This can be resolved – but that is in the hands of employers."

news@peoples-press.com

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Over 1,000 lecturers to strike over two staff redundancies

MORE than 1,000 lecturers at the University of Liverpool are set to strike for five consecutive days next week as they battle to save two staff from compulsory redundancy.

The action by members of the University and College Union (UCU) will hit the university's first full week of

teaching as students return from the summer break.

Lecturers have already thwarted management's plans to slash 47 academics in the department of health and life sciences, with the university having faced 24 days of strike action and an international academic boycott.

University of Liverpool UCU president Peta Bulmer said: "The employer can avert the chaos of strike action by listening to staff and students and halting these cuts."

"Management at the university has caused students and staff a great deal of stress by refusing to end this dispute."

"There are only two staff left to save, and we are calling on the vice-chancellor to reach an agreement so students do not see disruption to their first full week of lessons this academic year."

The university said that compulsory redundancy has only been served to one member of its staff.



UNDESERVED HONOUR: Former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton at her inauguration as chancellor of Queen's University Belfast

■ NORTHERN IRELAND

University faces fury after making Clinton chancellor

by Our Foreign Desk

QUEEN'S University in Belfast has come under fire for appointing former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton as its chancellor, with cries of "war criminal" heard at her inauguration.

Ms Clinton took to Twitter after Friday's ceremony, writing: "Just call me Madam Chancellor."

"Butcher of Libya is actually much more fitting," Lebanese political commentator Sarah Abdallah replied on Monday to her more than quarter of a million followers.

Veteran journalist John Pilger joined her yesterday in expressing his anger at the installation of Ms Clinton, which was delayed by a year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Shame on Queens University, Belfast, for making Hillary Clinton its 'first female chancellor' — the woman who rejoiced in the destruction of modern Libya, causing 20,000 dead and gloating over the grisly murder of its leader; whose 'foundation' backed terrorist states. Shame!" Mr Pilger said.

Ms Clinton thanked the prestigious Irish university for the

opportunity to serve a five-year term as its chancellor.

"I am delighted finally to return to Queen's as the 11th and first female chancellor ... When I was asked, the answer was easy. An emphatic Yes!" she said.

But her speech was drowned out by chants of "war criminal" and "out, out" after angry protests greeted her entrance to the university.

Ms Clinton, who served as secretary of state under former US president Barack Obama, famously celebrated the gruesome killing of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi by saying: "We came, we saw, he died."

The hawkish Democrat has backed a coup in Haiti, voted in favour of war in Iraq, endorsed a "troop surge" in Afghanistan and, while secretary of state, supported nearly 300 drone strikes in Pakistan which killed about 3,000 people.

Queen's University president and vice-chancellor Ian Greer sought to justify Ms Clinton's appointment by describing her as "an internationally recognised public servant who has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to Northern Ireland."

international@peoples-press.com

■ PALESTINE

Two youths wounded as Israeli troops raid Qabatyia

ISRAELI troops continued their campaign in the occupied West Bank governorate of Jenin with a series of raids in the early hours of yesterday.

Security forces ransacked the family homes of two Palestinian political prisoners in the town of Qabatyia, firing sound bombs, rubber bullets and tear gas.

Two youths were taken to hospital for treatment after being shot during the operation.

According to residents, undercover Israeli agents have been combing the area seeking out activists as part of a broad clampdown in the wake of last month's jailbreak from the maximum security Gilboa prison.

Two people were shot dead by Israeli forces in Jenin earlier this week, including 16-year-old Yousif Soboh.

Another three were killed in occupied East Jerusalem, with Israel claiming that its raids were aimed at hunting down " Hamas operatives."

The mother of one of the dead, Ahmad Zahrán, accused the Palestinian Authority (PA) of colluding with the crackdown, saying that Israeli forces had been chasing him for weeks and had recently raided their home.

"The PA is the one who sent the Israelis to us," she said.



■ BELARUS

LUKASHENKO HITS OUT AT WEST OVER MILITARY BUILD-UP

HIGH TENSION: President blames Nato and its allies for migrant crisis

by Steve Sweeney
International editor

BELARUSIAN President Alexander Lukashenko has warned of increased militarisation on the country's borders and is blaming foreign forces for creating a humanitarian crisis.

After meeting top officials from Belarus's security, defence and law enforcement agencies on Monday, he accused Ukraine of establishing military camps harbouring opposition figures who are being prepared to return to Belarus to overthrow the government.

And Mr Lukashenko said that most of the troops gathered on the country's border, particularly those in Poland, were from the United States.

He also took aim at neighbouring Lithuania, which he said "gets into every crevice to show its loyalty to Nato and the United States."

The Belarusian leader said there was a migrant crisis unfolding on the country's borders that he blamed entirely on Western countries.



ALLEGATIONS: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko

He accused neighbouring states of declaring states of emergency, which "allow no-one to enter so that no-one knows that people are dying."

Mr Lukashenko blamed countries including Lithuania for the ill-treatment of

migrants when they arrive in their territory.

He has been accused of sparking a migration crisis by allowing people to fly from the Middle East and sending them across the borders of neighbouring European Union members.

■ AUSTRIA

Communists come top in municipal poll

THE Communist Party of Austria opened coalition talks yesterday after a shock victory in the Graz municipal elections.

It emerged as the leading party in Austria's second-largest city with 29 per cent of the vote, ahead of the centre-right Austrian People's Party, which picked up just under 26 per cent.

People's Party mayor Siegfried Nagl, who has led the city

for 18 years, announced that he would step down.

Local Communist Party leader Elke Kahr said that she had "received hundreds of emails, text messages and calls" on Monday evening in support of her becoming the city's mayor, a role that she said she would accept on behalf of the thousands of people who voted for her party.

She described the result as "more than surprising," adding: "Some people make promises a few weeks before the elections. We are there every day and for years for the people, especially for the poorest."

Who the communists' coalition partners would be was not clear, as discussions were still under way as the Morning Star went to press.

HIGH FLYERS: Members of the Chinese air force's Red Falcon air demonstration team performing yesterday at the 13th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in the southern province of Guangdong

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Chief ICC prosecutor drops probe of alleged US crimes in Afghanistan

by Our Foreign Desk

THE International Criminal Court's new chief prosecutor Karim Khan has dropped a probe into United States war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan under intense pressure from Washington.

The British national, who was sworn in last week, said on Monday that he would "deprioritise" investigations after the Taliban retook control of the country in the wake of the US troop withdrawal.

"Recent developments in

Afghanistan and the change in the national authorities represent a significant change of circumstances," he said in a statement.

"After reviewing matters carefully, I have reached the conclusion that, at this time, there is no longer the prospect of genuine and effective domestic investigations.

"I have therefore decided to focus my office's investigations in Afghanistan on crimes allegedly committed by the Taliban and the Daesh-K [Islamic State] and to deprioritise other aspects of this investigation," he said.

The prosecutor said he had met judges last week to discuss relaunching the probe and blamed the "limited resources" of the Hague-based court for narrowing its focus.

In 2017, his predecessor Fatou Bensouda asked judges to allow a full-blown investigation that would not only focus on the Taliban and Afghan government forces but also US troops and the CIA.

Her request was approved in March 2020 with preparations under way to start investigating war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the 20-year US invasion

and occupation of Afghanistan.

But her move angered Washington, with then president Donald Trump revoking her visa and imposing broader restrictions on the activities of ICC members, hindering their ability to conduct their work effectively.

Mr Khan said there was a need to "construct credible cases capable of being proved beyond reasonable doubt in the courtroom."

He insisted it was necessary to switch focus because of the gravity of the crimes committed by the Taliban and Isis.

He specified the August 26 suicide bomb attack on Kabul

airport in which at least 170 people, including 13 US service personnel, were killed.

But notably he failed to mention the retaliatory drone strike ordered by US President Joe Biden that wiped out the entire family of an Afghan aid worker, including six children.

The US voted against the Rome Statute, which established the ICC in 1998, and is not a member of the global body.

Washington has consistently opposed an international court that could hold US military and political leaders to a uniform global standard of justice.

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MILITARISM

Macron signs frigate deal with Greece and talks of Euro army

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron raised the prospect of a European army yesterday as he signed a new defence deal with Greece worth about £2.5 billion.

Speaking after Athens formalised an agreement to buy French frigates, Mr Macron said that efforts to increase European military autonomy were even more vital after the scrapping of his government's submarine deal with Australia.

"The Europeans must stop being naive," he said. "When we are under pressure from powers, which at times harden [their stance], we need to react and show

that we have the power and capacity to defend ourselves. Not escalating things, but protecting ourselves."

The French president was speaking less than two weeks after European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said that the EU needed to strengthen its capacity to respond to crises independently of the United States.

She claimed that the neo-liberal economic bloc needs to acquire the "political will" to build its own military.

France will host a European defence summit next year that is likely to be dominated by discussions of a so-called EU army.



SEALING THE DEAL: Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis (left) and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron at the Elysee yesterday

But he denied that Belarus was responsible for increased migrant flows, saying this was the work of "European criminal gangs."

It was Western countries that were responsible for the crisis, according to Mr Lukashenko, and they had a responsibility to solve it.

"Let's discuss what to do next," he said. "It's not acceptable to let people suffer. We provided them with clothes, food and firewood, as well as with tents."

"However, they will freeze to death in the winter. These people came thousands of kilometres from the south. In short, there is a humanitarian disaster on the border."

Belarus has warned about US-led military expansion in eastern Europe, including 28,000 troops deployed as part of Nato military exercises stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

These operations have doubled in the past five years, he said, with military aggression intensifying since Mr Lukashenko won last year's disputed election with some 80 per cent of the vote.

Western powers say the vote was fraudulent and have pumped millions into opposition news organisations, trade unions and media outlets as part of efforts to dislodge him.

Earlier this year a resolution passed by the European parliament expressed regret that the Belarusian authorities had failed to follow World Bank and IMF recommendations to privatise the state sector, implement austerity and "encourage entrepreneurship."

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DEFENDING THEIR PEOPLE: Kurdish guerillas Aliser and Arin

NORTHERN IRAQ

Kurdish guerillas claim to be containing Turkish invaders

by Steve Sweeney
International editor

KURDISH guerillas said yesterday that Turkey was "playing its last card" in its invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan as its forces face fierce resistance.

"The enemy cannot move freely in the areas he occupies," guerilla Aliser said of the Turkish troops, thousands of whom are engaged in a military offensive in the mountainous border region of Duhok.

Kurdish resistance fighters are carrying out frequent attacks to prevent the soldiers from advancing.

"So far, the Turkish state has not achieved its goals and has even been repelled. The Turkish government is playing its last card here by trying to prolong

their lives through war," he told the ANF news agency.

Turkey launched Operation Claw Lightning in April, as part of a military offensive that it claims is targeting the banned Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

But its forces have been accused of a litany of war crimes, including the use of chemical weapons, driving thousands of Kurdish villagers from their homes and damaging agricultural land through incessant bombing.

Turkish missiles struck the United Nations-administered Makhmour refugee camp last month and four health workers were killed in an air strike on a hospital in the Yazidi part of the Shengal district.

Kurdish officials have written to world bodies, including the UN and the Organisation

for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, asking them to investigate but have received no response.

Battle continues to rage five months after the Turkish operation began, with its forces said to be "shocked" by the resistance of the PKK fighters.

"The guerillas know no obstacle even under the most difficult conditions. Women play a crucial role in guerilla warfare," guerilla Arin said.

"The Turkish state fears the strength of women and therefore targets them. But the attacks by the Turkish state will not go unanswered."

"The strength of the guerilla fighters became evident in this war... We are determined and will defeat the enemy here on this land," she added.

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★ Star comment

The bakers' disaffiliation from Labour – a wake-up call to the movement

THE decision by the bakers' union to disaffiliate from Labour ends a historic relationship older than the party itself.

President Ian Hodson notes that Keir Starmer should “hang his head in shame” at having provoked the end of ties that stretch across three centuries.

With motions opposed by the leader's office passing every day, the resignation of his shadow employment rights minister exposing his role in blocking support for raising the minimum wage and statutory sick pay and now the disaffiliation of a union that helped to found the party, conference 2021 is looking less like a car crash for Starmer than a multi-vehicle pile-up.

Labour apparently made numerous promises to the bakers that it would take steps to resolve the crisis provoked by its threat to “auto-exclude” their president. Its failure to deliver on these promises in time to prevent yesterday's momentous decision indicates incompetence or duplicity; with Starmer's team it is difficult to know which.

The reasons the union gives for disaffiliation touch on two key features of Keir Starmer's leadership.

The first is the targeting of Hodson in the first place.

The decision to ban membership of four left organisations this summer reflects the extreme intolerance and authoritarianism that characterise Labour's “new management.”



Transparently a bid to hound out socialists, the party machine's behaviour since – excluding members for having had dealings with these groups before they were banned, demanding that members prove a negative by providing evidence that they did not support these organisations – are a travesty of justice which demonstrates the contempt in which Labour officialdom holds Labour members.

In picking on Hodson, Labour threw a gauntlet to the bakers. As general secretary Sarah Woolley says, BFAWU members saw the attack on their president as an attack on them. “When you pick on one of us you pick on all of us,” the union statement reads; “that's what solidarity means.”

The BFAWU here is grappling with a fundamental question for the whole left: how do we respond to the smearing and persecution of thousands of committed socialists and trade unionists by the current Labour leadership? How do we stand with them?

The second is the question on so many trade unionists' lips: what is the Labour Party doing for us?

Why is it opposing pay rises for key workers who have kept the country running through an unprecedented crisis? Why is it opposing higher sick pay in a global pandemic – when union after union has reported members being terrified even to get tested for Covid because they can't afford time off sick?



The two aspects are of course interlinked. Labour's current leadership are, to quote Hodson, “in the bosses' pocket.” And it is engaged in an all-consuming campaign to smash the radical left that gave hope of real change to so many in the party's very recent past.

Its purges of a left that was easily routed at the last leadership election, like its desperation to change rules around reselecting MPs that posed no threat to any sitting MP, might smack of paranoia.

But they reflect a Labour right that understands the left is popular and that its socialist programme commands wide public sympathy. No chance, however small, of a left resurgence can be allowed. We must never underestimate the ruthlessness of the right – but its very extremism is testament to the potential it knows the left still has.

The bakers are a fighting union. Their McStrike campaigns have given them one of the highest profiles of any union among the young, and the delegates who have voted to disaffiliate are poorly paid workers, mostly from old “red wall” seats.

If Labour loses people like these, its chances of electoral recovery shrink still further. All affiliated unions have good reason to make the bakers' departure a wake-up call.



PROMISING THE EARTH: Tony Blair in January 1997

Time to reflect on New Labour years

With Labour Party conference in full swing, **KEITH FLETT** makes a preliminary assessment of the time the party was last in power

HISTORY is generally accepted to start from 30 years after an event, even if sometimes it is too soon to say at that point what the impact of a particular event has been.

The beginning of the New Labour period in 1997 is moving towards the history books, while the end in 2010 is still a long way off in that historical framework.

However attempts are being made by both the Tories and Labour and by many media commentators to assess what the legacy of New Labour is.

The process isn't helped by the regular “rare” interventions by Tony Blair in public life either attempting to justify what he did or did not do as prime minister or seeking to persuade people that things would be much better if he was still in charge. Not many agree with that anywhere on the political spectrum.

Keir Starmer appears to be equivocal on the matter, although given his less than commanding public presence people could be forgiven for having missed that.

Starmer recently told the New Statesman that the reason why Labour still doesn't get support from some was the decision to back the war in Iraq in 2003. Starmer noted that he had opposed it.

On the other hand he has tried to reclaim the modest reforms of the 1997-2010 period, no doubt reminded by advisors like Peter Mandelson.

How far the changes of that time made a positive difference to ordinary people, and how far they simply ushered in greater

private sector involvement in public services, something continued and magnified by the Tories, should be discussed more.

The decision to back the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and then Iraq usually only features 20 years on in a framework that notes it didn't really work out but was not that controversial at the time.

It was of course very controversial. The Stop the War Coalition which was formed in November 2001 is perpetually derided by right-wing critics and those who like wars as either pacifists or supporters of terrorism (it's quite difficult to be both).

Like any social movement it has its ups and downs in support. It is however still here and held a 20th anniversary event at Conway Hall in London on September 18.

You might be forgiven for not noticing. While the recent withdrawal from Afghanistan marked the end of a 20 year strategy by the US, Britain and others, those who said it would all end in tears (and for many much worse than that) have not featured much in

media coverage.

This tells you unsurprising things about the British media of course, points about its narrowness of focus that have been made many times.

The forces that came together to form the Stop the War Coalition- CND, the Muslim Association of Britain and a spectrum of the left held a meeting full to overflowing shortly after the invasion of Afghanistan started on 20th September 2001. The first demonstration, organised by CND, took place in London on Saturday October 13th 2001. I was at both.

With the invasion of Iraq pending the StWC organised what remains the biggest demonstration in British history in central London on 15th February 2003.

So it went on and goes on, protesting against Western military interventions but still often ignored by the media for whom the basic message of opposition to war was and remains an inconvenient one.

With Labour Conference in Brighton at the end of September a preliminary assessment of the New Labour years has some significance.



They simply ushered in greater private sector involvement in public services

‘Starmmer is looking inwards. We’re looking out’

‘The left has been winning on the conference floor. It’s alive and kicking,’ **RICHARD BURGON** tells Morning Star editor Ben Chacko



RUMOURS of the death of the Labour left have been greatly exaggerated. That’s what Leeds East MP Richard Burgon, pictured, is keen to get across when I meet him at Labour conference.

Keir Starmer has had a conference dominated by partial defeat on rule changes, an embarrassing shadow cabinet resignation exposing his meanness on wages and sick pay during a pandemic, repeated victories for left-wing motions on the conference floor from nationalising energy to solidarity with Palestine that the party leader had tried to squash and the possible disaffiliation of one of the party’s founding trade unions.

Is it a humiliation?

“Yes, and a completely unnecessary one. He chose to go into a Labour Party conference in the midst of a public health conference with this arcane rule-wrangling.

“He’s made the Labour leadership look completely out of touch and irrelevant to people’s needs.”

Burgon ridicules Peter Mandelson’s claim that “millions and millions of people in this country understand what these rule changes are about” and are “cheering Keir on” in his bid to get them through.

“The idea that anybody thinks the priority of the Labour leadership in a crisis like this should be by what means the leader should be chosen is just complete nonsense.

“Obviously it makes the leader look weak but what

interests me more is what we’ve seen this week of the strength of the left delegates, the strength of the left unions.

“The activists who are winning debates, winning votes, winning policy positions – that’s very encouraging indeed.”

But is the leadership going to honour those policies won at conference?

“The Labour Party conference is sovereign. It makes party policy. The leadership has a duty to implement the policy decided on by conference, especially when these policies chime with the promises that Keir made to the members in his leadership election.”

There have been some major concessions to the left from the leadership on policy, most prominently the new deal on rights at work launched by Angela Rayner on the first day of conference – though attendees at an Institute of Employment Rights fringe meeting addressed by Andy McDonald, his last public engagement as shadow secretary of state for employment rights before his bombshell resignation – were in no doubt that it was McDonald and his team, together with labour law experts from the institute including John Hendy QC and Professor Keith Ewing, who worked on the policies.

Are these bids by the leadership to bribe the left into passivity?

“I think it’s evidence of the fantastic work done by the affiliated unions, the work done by Andy who was a superb shadow minister, the work of the Institute of Employment Rights.

“I pay tribute to them, and to the Labour Party members who have kept up the pressure for these sorts of policies. To the unions that have pushed this new deal at the TUC.

“It’s fantastic to see so many different unions fighting back, that way we can see battles being won in the here and now even under a Tory government. And that applies to policy too.

“One example is the FBU which played an absolutely crucial role in the Green New Deal that was adopted as policy this week, Matt Wrack’s address was for me one of the most powerful of the whole conference.”

Burgon’s optimism is contagious after what has felt like 18 months of pain for the left, but I point out that there are just as many negatives from



this conference.

What about the expulsion of Leah Levane of Jewish Voice for Labour, turned away at the door? What hope can he offer to the thousands of members being purged, the tens of thousands who have quit because of the party’s crackdowns on democracy and harassment of

activists?

“There has been a real project of demoralisation and members have been treated with contempt.

“And that has meant a big reduction in the number of members. But I think the fact that we are winning these votes on these key issues shows that

fighting back works.

“If you leave the party to teach the leadership a lesson, I’d say they do draw a conclusion from that which is to keep behaving like that. They want the left members out. The demoralisation is deliberate, it’s meant to make people walk away.

“But there is huge anger. As far as I’m aware there’s never been an actual card vote on whether to approve the appointment of the general secretary before. And 48 per cent of CLP delegates voted against him. Precisely because he has treated members with contempt. That’s really significant.”

But he was still approved. Won’t his narrow escape redouble his determination to crush the left?

Burgon bursts out laughing. “Shall we give up on everything, Ben? After all the battles the left have won in our society aren’t as numerous as we would like.

“Of course the leadership are going to keep attacking us. But at the end of the day they have seen now that the left can still beat them at conference, can still defeat attacks and win votes, they are acutely aware that the Labour left has not gone away. We are in a stronger

position.

“And not just because of the mood in conference. Out there. There is huge public support for public ownership, for a wealth tax, for council house-building.

“The left is managing to get policies into the news that most people agree with and the leadership are looking silly trying to stop Labour adopting incredibly popular positions.

“That’s why the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs began conference by putting forward 10 immediate demands for protecting people’s living standards in the current crisis. Starmer is looking inwards. We’re looking out.

“This conference represents a real step forward in the fight-back. It shows the transformative policies we won such mass support for in 2015-17 across Britain are still in demand despite the best efforts of the party leadership and the media and the whole Establishment.

“One of the most inspiring events I have been to in a long time was the Young Labour rally. And the leadership tried to stop them having a platform, and they held the meeting outside the official conference zone.

“And it was addressed by Jeremy Corbyn. And by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. And by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. By a climate striker.

“And it was huge. And it was full of hope.

“People should take heart from this. The left is alive and kicking.”

“

There is huge public support for public ownership, for a wealth tax, for council housebuilding



WHICH WAY FOR LABOUR? Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner at conference

“

What about the expulsion of Leah Levane of Jewish Voice for Labour, turned away at the door?

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

Many places dry with sunny spells, but feeling rather cool in the wind. A few showers in the west with cloud increasing across the north of Ireland later

NEXT FEW DAYS

Remaining unsettled with showers or longer spells of rain affecting many areas. Rather windy with a risk of coastal gales at times with temperatures around or slightly below average

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Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

YOU'VE RAISED:
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WE NEED:
£5,328



I'M NOT sure what the word is for the one before penultimate, but this is it with regards to September's column.

Things might appear bleak as we have only £12,672 in the coffers so far, this advance thanks to £467 arriving.

Our move, conferences and loss of staff members means that our phones are unanswered and mail is not being

collected, which is a problem.

A few folk have emailed me what's in the post, if you've sent a contribution or usually phone in, let me know and I'll ensure they account towards our total. As always, my email is: fightingfund@peoples-press.com.

The Labour Party conference is in full swing, and our paper is there in the hall gathering the news and analysis that mat-

ters, at the fringe meetings and with a popular stall.

In addition to our usual mugs, T-shirts and the rest, it has a few vintage items found while making the transfer from Rust to Ruskin. We know that the market determines value, and we now know that a copy of Voice of the People, a souvenir brochure commemorating 50 years of the Labour Party,

is worth £40 – a gift for a guy doing a dissertation on the history of the labour movement.

His mum, who made the donation, told me that her dad, who lived in the Tory heartland of rural Yorkshire, read the Daily Worker and got quite a bit of stick for doing so.

Hope it helps his studies as much as it helped the people's paper.

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DAILY SUDOKU

(tricky)

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

Solution tomorrow...



Yesterday's sudoku								
8	1	4	7	5	3	2	6	9
9	6	7	4	1	2	8	3	5
3	2	5	9	8	6	7	4	1
5	9	3	6	2	7	1	8	4
6	7	8	3	4	1	9	5	2
2	4	1	5	9	8	3	7	6
1	3	2	8	6	5	4	9	7
4	8	6	1	7	9	5	2	3
7	5	9	2	3	4	6	1	8

TV & radio preview

with Tom King

FOR ONE LUNCHTIME ONLY: Sir Keir Starmer nervously clutches a pint for photographers while watching Arsenal v Tottenham Hotspur in a Brighton pub



Sir Keith takes to the stage — queue early to guarantee disappointment

FRESH from failing to quell yet another self-inflicted bin fire aboard the sinking ship of his leadership, Sir Keith Starmer will finally be able to address his party — nay, the country! — from the conference podium today, something he claims he's been desperate to do ever since he lied his way to the top job.

However, if Sir Keith's record thus far when it comes to interacting with "ordinary working people" is anything to go by — ignoring and escaping from two young climate activists just the other day, for example — I suspect his reputed enthusiasm is another porky from the centrist sausage machine that is Starmer's Labour.

Anyway, the Labour Party conference cometh to a (spectacularly futile, all things considered) close today, with

Starmer's first — and perhaps last — speech to delegates (12pm **BBC News**). There are rumours that protesters are planning to disrupt the spectacle (perhaps the only reason for watching) while sources close to the leader claim he has a prepared response to any spontaneous outbreaks of "Ohhh, Jeremy Corbyn." It's a zinger, I'm sure.

Boy Erased (11.15pm **BBC2**) — a film exploring the grim world of so-called gay conversion therapy — follows Jared Eamons (Lucas Hedges), the son of a Baptist minister in a small conservative Arkansas town, whose attraction towards men prompts his parents to panic, and send him away to be "cured."

None of the original LNER Peppercorn Class-A1 Pacific

locomotives, designed by genius engineer Sir Nigel Gresley, survived the breaker's torch, so a committed group of enthusiasts spent 20 years building one from scratch.

Tornado: The 100mph Steam Engine (9.30pm **BBC4**), first broadcast in 2017, documents their attempt to reach the elusive but symbolically important speed of 100mph — a feat undertaken in the dead of night.

Meanwhile on the airwaves, **A History of the World in 100 Animals** (9.45am **Radio 4**) does exactly what it says on the tin: journalist and amateur naturalist Simon Barnes continues his odyssey through the fauna — a fraction of this planet's (remaining) biodiversity — this episode focusing on the oriental rat flea and the nightingale.

QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell



TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- Which artist drew Study for Worn Out?
- Was the Canterbury Treasure, found by road workers in 1962, made of gold, silver or copper?
- The Gulf of Panama is an arm of which ocean?

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

- What is the name of the river that links York, Selby and Goole? **The Ouse**
- Which species of the tit family has the latin name of Periparus ater? **The coal tit (pictured)**

- Who composed the comic opera Ruddigore? **Arthur Sullivan. WS Gilbert wrote the libretto**



Science and Society

with Rox Middleton, Liam Shaw and Joel Hellewell

New desalination technology to make your eyes water

WHEN we face climate and humanitarian challenges on an unprecedented scale, we must stop arms dealers from setting the research agenda.

Who decides what scientists research? Many scientists believe that they set their own research agenda. But this is quite far from the truth.

Even with a better understanding of the context within which individuals assess priorities and find themselves fascinated with problems according to their place in society, there is still a much clearer answer.

Capital drives scientific research. It is unsurprising that within corporations, research is done to make more money for corporations.

But increasingly in Britain, this is also true of academic research. Funding systems reward science that creates “knowledge transfer opportunities” or patentable “wealth-creating” products.

Governments in this country, and many others including the US, seek to put scientific research at the direct service of multinational corporations.

Some governmental funding of science is not associated to business investment, but rather

The misdirection of potentially lifesaving research is explained when the funding of the work is examined

is dedicated to increase the quantity and quality of science for the good of our society – broadly defined.

Science is remarkably well supplied with this money, compared to research in the arts and humanities.

This money is used to employ scientists who have ideas that will help with certain problems – the tendencies in which the money is spent incentivises scientists to be interested in the kinds of things that are likely to be funded.

The British government largely follows the “Haldane principle,” where decisions on the specific researchers who get funded are made by other researchers rather than politicians.

But how exactly these decisions should be made is still a tricky question. We are all familiar with the accidental discoveries that have been made in the course of working at some other problem.

Biros, the internet, penicillin – scientists often arrive at new discoveries that they could

not have specified beforehand, suggesting that if research is only ever funded based on its apparent potential for a specific problem, that limits the scope of possibility.

But there is another kind of research funding, the one that has changed all our lives over the last year-and-a-half.

When we need a specific solution to a truly enormous problem, when vast resources and funds are made available, when the political will is ready to implement real change, scientific networks can be used to turn the world around.

The vaccinations that have saved lives all over the world are a triumph of society, of which science is a key part.

The rollout worldwide remains to be completed, and the stalling over this is a failure of the same society.

As well as making space for the unknown possibilities of undirected research, it's clear we can use scientists and their work to achieve world-changing results.

What about the other cata-

strophic crises that we face in the world today?

Why haven't scientists solved the problems of fossil fuel use and global climate change? Shouldn't science's resources be directed to save lives where poor people die every day from hunger, thirst and disease?

This week, an academic research paper was published on a new way of desalinating water. The scientists use a polymer membrane, a semi-porous plastic sheet.

They run the water between the plastic sheet and by using electricity cause positive and negative ions (the components of salt) to leave the main flow of water, reducing the saltiness of the water. This is called electrodialysis.

The breakthrough that was reported this week was a big improvement in the efficiency of this method.

The scientists were reportedly inspired by a similar mechanism in algae and worked out that the natural membranes in this case included specific amino acids to enhance the

drawing out of salt ions from the water.

The researchers used this idea and introduced an amino acid called phenylalanine into their plastic film, it worked, and seems to have really improved the technique. Phenylalanine is a major component of the synthetic sweetener aspartame.

The researchers say they hope that their technology will be used to provide fresh water where only salty water can be found.

Tests showed that the improved method is competitive with current commercial desalination methods.

The movement of water through the system was faster, although the energy use was higher, and more salt remained in the water.

Water desalinated in this way, the researchers recommend, could be used in farming, and to service the water needs of power plants.

There are already mechanisms that can be used to desalinate water, and which might be used to provide clean

drinking water for people who need it.

They are far from perfect, they are energy intensive and slow, and crucial research remains to be done to improve this.

However, the basic technology is there. Much like many other technologies to slow or mitigate fossil fuel use, or to improve lives that have been ruined by climate disasters, water desalination is already possible.

There is still more research that can be done to improve the technology, but the real obstacle in the use of these discoveries is the global political will, that is hamstrung by capitalist demands.

Comparing to the Covid-19 vaccines, this would be comparable to researchers announcing an idea for a new but less effective vaccine now (in late 2021) when we have a vaccine that works but hasn't reached most people.

Looking closer at this desalination research, the story is even bleaker. The real gain in desalination by this method is for super-salted water, which the researchers point out is used in fracking.

In fracking, water that is up to 10 times saltier than seawater is forced through rock deep underground, displacing the tiny bubbles of natural gas trapped inside the microscopic pores of the rock.

The process destabilises the local geology, and the fracking fluid, which can include extreme salt levels, but also polymers, can leach into and poison local water supplies.

The natural gas that is burnt contributes to climate change. The new desalination method could be used for desalinating the water used in fracking, although the current procedure is to leave this water in the ground and there's no reason to think that this will change.

The researchers say their next work will focus on using the technique to extract “economically valuable ions” from the water, such as rare earth metals used in mobile phones.

The excruciating misdirection of potentially lifesaving research is explained when the funding of the work is examined.

Although the research was carried out at a US government-owned research institute, the facility is operated by the conglomerate Honeywell International.

Honeywell International deals in systems and technology for nuclear weapons, drones, surveillance and fracking, among other things.

It is one of the largest military and fossil fuel profiteers in the world. The company has a revenue more than twice the entire annual British science research expenditure.

We cannot afford to let the research agenda be set by interests like Honeywell. The response to Covid should be the model for the response to climate change and environmental disaster.

MUSIC | **ALBUM REVIEWS**
KEVIN BRYAN | CHRIS SEARLE | TONY BURKE



Pic: www.johnworthannam.com

John Wort Hannam
Long Haul
(Black Hen Music)
★★★★☆

AWARD-WINNING Canadian roots musician John Wort Hannam, left, may not be a household name on this side of the Atlantic just yet, but fine albums such as this should help to spread the word on behalf of the Lethbridge, Alberta resident and his warm and spontaneous brand of balladry. The current pandemic situation meant that John and his long-term producer



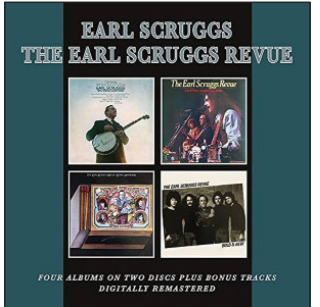
Steve Dawson were forced to assemble Long Haul remotely but they rose to the challenge admirably, with some top-notch players supplying the instrumental backdrop. As Hannam took the opportunity to reflect on the vagaries of the human condition via a batch of con-

sistently compelling ditties led by What I Know Now, Hurry Up Kid and Other Side of the Curve, with former John Prine and Nanci Griffith sidekick Fats Kaplin in particularly fine fettle on fiddle, mandolin, banjo and harmonica throughout an excellent set. **KEVIN BRYAN**

The Earl Scruggs Revue
I Saw The Light/ Live From Austin City Limits/ Strike Anywhere/ Bold & New (BGO Records)
★★★★☆

BEST known for the 1949 break-neck bluegrass instrumental Foggy Mountain Breakdown used in the 1967 film Bonnie and Clyde and The Ballad Of Jed Clampitt – the theme to the '60s TV show The Beverly Hillbillies – Flatt & Scruggs, having had a stellar recording

and performing career, split in '69 when Scruggs wanted to play country rock while Lester Flatt wanted to stay traditional bluegrass. Scruggs formed his Revue and cut some fine albums for CBS including these four from 1971 to 1978. Across this double set are Bob Dylan, Mike Nesmith, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams, Delaney & Bonnie and Joe South songs plus original material by Revue members with guests Linda Ronstadt and the Nitty Gritty Dirty Band. Extensive notes and record-



ing details. Country music for hippies. **TONY BURKE**

Barre Phillips/John Butcher/ Stale Liavik Solberg
We Met – and then
Relative Pitch Records
★★★★☆

VETERAN San Francisco bassist Barre Phillips, Norwegian drummer Stale Liavik Solberg and Brighton-born saxophonist John Butcher create a special tryst in their album, We Met – and then. A truly internationalist trio of free improvising virtuosi, they forge extraordinary and hyper-inventive individual sounds from their instruments,

while striking a co-operative discourse of new and fresh musical meanings. Now aged 87, Phillips is a true sonic pioneer and griot, his astonishing range of notes radiating youth and the power of surprise and defiance of years. Solberg's percussive magic holds orchestras of ringing surfaces in his palette and Butcher's horn finds sound patterns never woven before. Listen to the concoction and concord of the track Zero Tolerance – a debate of spirits in harmonies born of contradiction. Or Chaudron Profoud, where Phillips fearlessly plucks

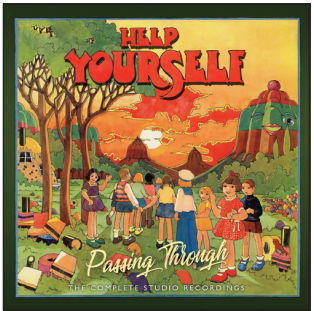


his bass to its highest limits. Such extreme and discovering musical encounters are indeed rare and precious. **CHRIS SEARLE**



The Last Inklings
The Impossible Wild
(Gillywisky Records)
★★★★☆

THIS beguiling collection was the brainchild of Leonardo MacKenzie and David Hoyland, a couple of multit talented musicians whose work is steeped in the spirit of contemporary folk while also offering some fresh new insights into the human condition in these troubled times into the bargain. Classically trained cellist MacKenzie has paid his dues as an in-demand session musician for a decade and a half and both men were formerly members of Kadia, whose debut album, East of Alexandria was showered with critical plaudits when it first saw the light of day in 2015. Their close working relationship continues to flourish today, as The Impossible Wild explores the role of nature, myth and superstition in the modern world. The results are exquisitely crafted and endlessly inventive as the duo weave their image laden narratives via richly rewarding tracks such as Hunter's Folly, Sleeping Giant and Vespers. **KB**



Help Yourself
Passing Through – The Complete Studio Recordings
Esoteric
★★★★☆

FORMED in 1970, as the backing band for singer, guitarist and keyboards player Malcolm Morley, Help Yourself were influenced by US west-coast rock. They cut their eponymous debut set in 1971 for United Artists and went on tour with label mates Brinsley Schwarz and Ernie Graham (ex-Eire Apparent songwriter and guitar player). Graham joined them – but left half way half-way through recording their second album. Working with Welsh rock legends Man, they became regulars on the pub rock and college circuit but UA dropped them after four albums – a fifth album from 1973 stayed in the can and so they called it a day in 1974. The box set includes six studio albums (with varying line ups), unissued sides from Bob Harris's BBC radio show plus a superb booklet with detailed notes, rare photos and memorabilia. **TB**



Bianco/Brackenbury
Rising Up
Discus Records
★★★★☆

JULIE COLE'S evocative sleeve painting holding this duo album by British violinist Faith Brackenbury and New York drummer Tony Bianco expresses the beauty and audacity of their album, Rising Up. Three long improvisations comprise the album, with the title track pitching skyward from its first notes, Brackenbury's bow and strings leaping like a soaring horn, and Bianco's bass drum, snares and cymbals digging down, crackling relentlessly. The album radiates a sense of wonder that the musicians so unexpectedly discovered each other's sounds and the artistry they could create together, for just two musicians make a new timbral world. Brackenbury hopes this music "will be uplifting to people and invoke peace, love and justice in the world." A pair of troubadours playing for millions, their message spilling out joyously from every note. Savour it like you would the title of the sumptuous track, Gypsy Shortbread. **CS**



Connie Smith
The Cry of the Heart
(Fat Possum Records)
★★★★☆

THE great Dolly Parton once remarked that: "There are really only three real female singers; Barbra Streisand, Linda Ronstadt and Connie Smith. The rest of us are only pretending." Veteran country singer Smith has now recorded more than 50 albums during a lengthy career which now extends back to the early sixties, and her latest offering, The Cry of the Heart, finds the octogenarian performer working in close collaboration with her husband, producer and fellow Nashville icon Marty Stuart. These two country stalwarts haven't felt tempted to diverge too far from the timeless sound which has served Connie so well over the years and her first album since 2011's Long Line of Heartaches serves up an appealing blend of freshly minted new material and heartfelt revamps of classic oldies and gems from the repertoires of artists that she has admired over the years. **KB**



Various
Something Inside Of Me
Unreleased Masters & Demos From The British Blues Years 1963 – 1976
Wienerworld Records
★★★★☆

FOUR CDs worth of unissued gems from the 1960s – when young, white blues fans packed into "blues clubs" wanting to hear the nearest thing we had to Mississippi and Chicago blues. Included are demo's by Fleetwood Mac's Danny Kirwan's first band Boiler House; unreleased tapes by The Nighthawks, (from the Surrey delta) and the authentic blues harmonica – guitar duo Simon Prager and Steve Rye; blues stalwarts Duster Bennett and Dave Kelly; piano blues and boogie-meister Bob Hall; country blues guitar wizards Graham Hine and Al Jones – and Hereford's electric Shakey Vick's Big City Blues Band. With a detailed 150-page booklet, period photos, flyers and posters – as US blues pianist Curtis Jones instructed the short-lived Dynaflo Blues Band at a 1960s gig at Bath University: "Let's jive!" **TB**



Devin Gray/Ralph Alessi/Angelica Sanchez
Melt all the Guns
Rataplan Records
★★★★☆

BROOKLYN-BASED drummer Devin Gray leads a stellar trio with San Francisco trumpeter Ralph Alessi and Phoenix-born pianist Angelica Sanchez to make a bold sonic statement against US gun violence in the brief but defiant album, Melt all the Guns. Alessi's squeezed, taut notes are passionately rampant in the opening track Think About It, and rise abruptly on Jetlag. Through Micro Waves Sanchez's hard-struck lyricism gives an underlay of rolling truth. The title track carries a sense of mourning, broken by Alessi's high-note challenge. The final improvisation, Protect our Environment, is laid bare by the concord and contradictions of Alessi's blues-filled horn, Sanchez's undulant notes and Gray's pounding, awakening drums. "We need to work for a future free of gun violence," says Gray. In this album brilliant musicians fuse their artistry with a commitment to peace. **CS**

THEATRE REVIEW | SHINING CITY ★★★★☆ | THEATRE ROYAL STRATFORD EAST

Absent women haunt narrative devoid of traditional ghost story tension

BACK in 2004, when *Shining City* premiered at the Royal Court, it was, according to The Guardian's Michael Billington, a play about men "wrestling with demons" and confessing their sins.

But in Nadia Falls' 2021 production at the Theatre Royal Stratford East, it feels like something quite different.

At the centre of the Conor McPherson's play still sits John (Brendon Coyle), a man haunted by the tragic recent death of his wife, Mari.

John's therapist, Ian (Rory Keenan), quietly listens as John's grief, regrets, mistakes and ghosts reveal themselves.

But if John can't seem to stop talking, Ian can't seem to start – he can't really explain to his girlfriend Neasa why he's leaving her, can't really explain why he's picked up

Laurence (Curtis-Lee Ashqar), and can only congratulate John on his therapeutic progress in sentences marked by ellipses.

While John is haunted by the ghost of his dead wife, Falls' production is haunted by the play's discussed, but absent, women.

It's haunted by Vivienne, with whom John fails to have an affair, who is described as talking "all this bollocks [...] all this shite" and it's haunted by the mother of Laurence's son, who is described as "nuts."

Even Neasa, played forcefully by Michelle Fox, starts off onstage making an impassioned plea for support, but then slips from view.

In 2021, you ask why the play doesn't put these women onstage.



SPELLBINDING: (L to R) Brendan Coyle (John) and Rory Keenan (Ian)

Falls' production moves slowly and is more interested in storytelling than in building the narrative tension of a traditional ghost story.

In part, this pacing is

enforced on the production by Peter McKintosh's set changes and in part it comes from Brendon Coyle's spellbinding performance as John.

Coyle's John relives the past

as he explores it in therapy – his pain and his shame etched on his face and sculpting his posture.

But it is in this production's slower moments that the

women emerge, haunting us as Mari haunts John.

Katherine M Graham

■ Runs until October 23, box office: www.stratfordeast.com.

DANCE REVIEW | ★★★★★

The knack for immediate bonding with the audience

BASED in Britain, Hofesh Shechter's small, company of 10 international dancers enthralled with its high energy, humour and showmanship, peppered with poignant reminders of man's cruelty to man.

Shechter created an immediate bond with the audience by appearing alone on stage, dressed in cream street clothes, to welcome us back to the theatre darkened by many months of Covid-enforced darkness.

A tall, big-boned man, with a dancer's or scaffolder's loose-limbed agility, he invited us to join him in a hip hop hoorah for our's and his company's pleasure at returning to live theatre.

This elemental release and assertion of our collective joy voiced his belief in the interdependence of dancers and audience.

Performed to the insistent beat of percussive electronic music composed by himself, *Clowns*, pictured, the first and longest work, opened with a spectacular bang with the Can Can danced with joyful glee by the company to Jaques Offenbach's well-known score.

With house lights and stage lights both lit, this immediately unified and democratised audience and dancers and the latter's delight at finally getting to perform to a live audience was palpable.

But the lightness of mood sharply turned as the house and stage lights darkened and the pounding electronic base

CHRISTINE LINDEY is enthralled by this double offering from her favourite choreographer, Hofesh Shechter, who wants his work to be experienced from the gut

evoked rumbling thunder or the sinister advance of marching army boots.

In contrast, gently swaying dancers dressed in cream, clown-like costumes emerged from the gloom, feet stepping in unison lightly and slowly on the spot as in a folk dance.

Such dramatically quixotic changes of pace and contradictory content continued throughout the performance.

A briefly blacked-out stage suddenly revealed a brightly lit, tableau-vivant of picnickers dressed in cream and red-trimmed costumes whose gentle pleasures were abruptly interrupted by manic electronic music to which three couples danced amorously then suddenly and shockingly behead their respective partners, and danced a celebratory jig.

Human duplicity, hypocrisy and cruelty revealed in the raw. Murder most foul indeed.

Collective dancing dominated the performance. Crazy as medieval strolling players, the dancers waved and wigged their arms and legs every which way in a clownish, theatrical folk dance with the elation and energy of children escaping to the playground.

This visceral release was abruptly interrupted by another shocking tab-



Pic: Todd MacDonald

leau-vivant as Shechter is "beheaded" by his own company.

He says: "I want audiences to be awakened, to experience my work from the gut. Trusting the gut is to me like trusting nature, or God, or a sense of purpose; a source, a spark. Trusting a higher and better force than our limited

oppressed cultured minds."

The show ended with *The Fix*. Shorter, more optimistic than *Clowns*, it contrasted a careful placing of feet and elegant, fluidly moving torsos and limbs as in tai-chi, with a manic communal fight which ended with the company all in a heap. As children do.

A single dancer managed to

escape, and they all fell over each other in utter chaos. Managing to calm down they joined hands to form a circle and moved slowly into a group hug.

Serious, sensuously reassuring each other they transitioned into child-like, small, stationary skips and waving arms.

But a single dancer detached himself from the group, flashed into a jerky manic fit and seemingly fell down dead.

Yet the rest of the company co-operated to calm him by hugging and they ended the show by joining the audience to hug them too, with the rest of the cast gradually waving us all goodbye, to the sound of waves gently lapping the shore.

Shechter says: "We want to make people aware, awake, and in turn understand they hold the power to change. It is that sense of brotherhood, comradeship in the battles of life, victory of spirit through persistence, through support that is my greatest ambition."

With choreography based on observation of everyday life, a genuinely, democratic and collectivist tone dominates.

Shechter manages to entertain, elate and inspire while reminding the hopeful and warm-hearted of the ever present dangers which stalk them.

A thoughtful socially politically aware sensibility shines through his work without being boring or didactic.

Some have scoffed, accusing Shechter of naively asserting the power of co-operation and love of fellow beings, but without these lasting political and social change will not be achieved.

■ US DETENTION CAMP

Cuba deserves a future without Guantanamo

MALCOLM BAXTER'S letter (M Star September 22) invoked memories: as a student in 1973 I protested outside the Chilean embassy at the overthrow of Salvador Allende and listened to Robin Blackburn and Tariq Ali condemning US interference in sovereign states in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I, like Malcolm earlier, went to work in Cuba as one of the British contingents of the Jose Marti Brigade in 1980, and, like him, listened to Fidel Castro speak in Revolution Square, Havana.

The Morning Star has recently printed a number of letters about the ongoing blockade of Cuba as well as Bernard Regan's excellent and detailed article (August 27) and Natasha Hickman's Covid-related denunciation of the blockade (September 11). This week (September 27) Grahame Morris MP has highlighted the hypocrisy of Biden's "new direction in US foreign policy" when addressing the United Nations general assembly on September 21.

In 2017, 37 years after first working in Cuba, I returned as



DIVISIVE INFLUENCE: The United States-Cuba border at Guantanamo Bay US naval base Pic: Ivan Curra/CC3.0

part of a Cuba Solidarity Campaign work brigade, less than a year after the death of Fidel.

I first went to Cuba as a tourist in 1978 and have since been back as a tourist a number of times. Just before returning home in 2017, as part of the brigade I was invited to a rally in Santa Clara attended by then president Raul Castro to listen to Miguel Diaz-Canel (then first vice-president) speak to commemorate the 50th

anniversary of the death of Che Guevara.

On September 23, Diaz-Canel, as president of Cuba, addressed the general debate of the 76th regular session of the UN general assembly, and in a wide-ranging speech stated: "For more than 60 years, the US government has not ceased for a single minute in its attacks against Cuba." He went on to reiterate Cuba's unshakable support to

the "one China" principle and opposition to any attempts to harm the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China.

All socialists should support a "one Cuba" principle, in which the illegally occupied Guantanamo Bay territory is returned to its rightful status as an integral part of Cuba.

MELVYN JONES
Hatfield, Herts

■ RIGHTS

Left has no business opposing abortions

I AM concerned to read some revanchist attitudes regarding abortion in the Morning Star's letters pages. It is important that men as well as women advocate strongly for women's rights – including reproductive rights.

For me, there are five basic issues of principle:

One, women should have full control over their bodies and their health – including over any foetus they may be carrying.

Two, abortions will happen under any society, irrespective of laws. The issue is whether they are performed as legally and as safely as possible. I don't want any women or girls having to perform abortions at home, or suffering some of the horrendous consequences of illegal abortion. For me, that must mean free, accessible abortion on demand, safely and legally, with the best possible medical care.

Three, antenatal screening for foetal abnormalities gives the woman important information about whether she should proceed with her pregnancy and the consequences of not doing so. It therefore gives her more control over her body and future life. It is a good thing and the woman's choice must be respected.

Four, abortions should take place as early as possible. That means giving the women or girl as much information as early as possible and access to the procedure when needed.

Five, if you want to change the decisions that women and girls have to take regarding abortions, then change the economic and social conditions which lead to those decisions.

Don't criminalise the individual woman or girl and don't force them to have an unsafe and illegal abortion.

ANDREW NORTHALL
Kettering



MISSED:
Cliff Cocker

■ STAR ARTS EDITOR

'Cliff was resourceful and kind'

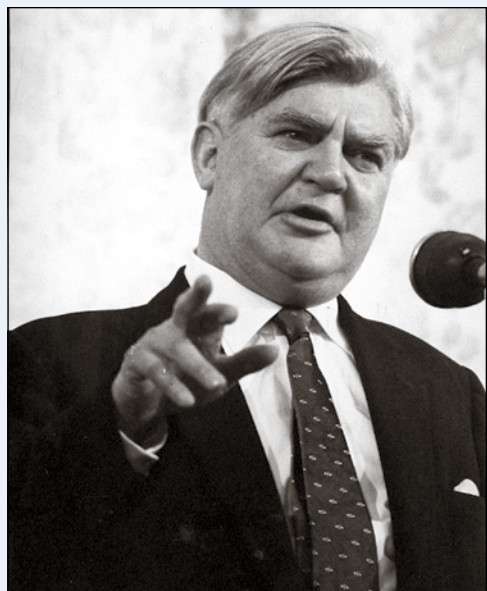
I WAS sorry to hear the sad news of Cliff Cocker's death (M Star August 27).

I remember Cliff's kindness to me in 1967 when I visited Liverpool as a community service volunteer, and his resourcefulness when crisis struck those of us living in Battersea in 1980-81, when

Thatcher wanted to have some of us "put away for good."

I did not keep up with Cliff in recent years but am sure his good works in the cause of socialism continued throughout his life.

May he rest in peace.
CHRIS PURNELL
Orpington, Kent



FIGHTING TALK: Former and current Labour Party deputy leaders Aneurin Bevan and Angela Rayner



■ LABOUR

Precedent for 'scum' speech

IN BRANDING the Tories "scum," Angela Rayner is only reiterating what Nye Bevan originally said about the Conservatives when he said that they were "lower than vermin."

PHIL BRAND
London SW17

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Write (up to 300 words) to
letters@peoples-press.com or
23 Coombe Rd, London CR0 1BD

■ STARMER

McDonald's exit is honourable

KEIR STARMER resigned from the Labour shadow cabinet on June 27 2016 in an open, though failed, attempt to depose Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader.

I don't think he is now in a position to complain about Andy McDonald's resignation, which came because Starmer appears to have backtracked on the level of the living wage he supports.

After all, Mr McDonald is not demanding his resignation but merely stating that he will fight for his principles from the back benches, which Starmer himself could also have done five years ago.

KEITH FLETT
London N17

PRINCIPLED: Andy McDonald



■ BUY-TO-LET

Landlordism in general must go

SURELY it is not just buy-to-let landlords who must be curtailed. It is private landlords and the market in housing in general that prevails in Britain.

It is now 32 years since the Tories abolished statutory rent control in the private sector, and with that came the diminution of local

authorities' powers to enforce basic standards.

So let's start with restoring private tenants' rights and rent control – make it enforceable. Next, set a date to bring all private lettings into the public sector.

Whatever the price of owning a home, for many it is and

has always been too high. After a lifetime of private landlords I am at last, in my later years, a council tenant. The worry of getting repairs done and the threat of eviction has gone. It is wonderful; who'd want to be "homeowner"!

GWEN COOK
London SW6

■ MEN AND WOMEN'S CRICKET

ROOT AND JONES CROWNED PCA PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

by Our Sports Desk

ENGLAND captain Joe Root is optimistic of continuing his purple patch after being named the men's player of the year at the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA) awards.

While England have endured a modest Test summer, Root has sparkled with the bat and arguably spared his side from disarray with 661 runs in half a dozen matches at an average of 66.1, with three centuries against India.

He was therefore recognised in a vote by his peers, with Eve Jones becoming the first female domestic professional to claim a PCA award when she was named cinch women's player of the year.

Root said: "I certainly feel I'm playing some of the best cricket I've played. I feel like I'm playing quite nicely. It's been one of those years you need to make the most of."

"I feel I've got good rhythm in the way that I'm moving and



OPTIMISTIC: Joe Root

good confidence at the crease. More than anything you are desperate to keep it going, keep that hunger, keep that drive to make those big scores and contributions.

"It's brilliant to win an award, especially one that's adjudged by your peers and I'm very grateful for that recognition."

England in June were beaten by World Test Championship winners New Zealand, the number one team in the format, while India, ranked just below the Black Caps in the International Cricket Council standings, are currently 2-1 ahead of Root's side.



CONFIDENT: Eve Jones

The status of the series is still to be resolved after the fifth and final Test was dramatically called off just a couple of hours before play on the first morning at Old Trafford – although England and Wales Cricket Board chief executive Tom Harrison has intimated he hopes the decider can be played next summer.

Jones has also had a summer to remember, registering more than 800 runs and helping Central Sparks and Birmingham Phoenix to within one win of the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy and The Hundred finals respectively.

■ MEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE

Tomkins wins RL writers' award

CATALANS DRAGONS and England full-back Sam Tomkins (pictured) has been voted the Rugby League Writers and Broadcasters Association's player of the year for the third time.

Tomkins, who won the award back to back as a Wigan player in 2011 and 2012, has been pivotal in the Dragons' best-ever Super League campaign.

The French club lifted the League Leaders' Shield and on Thursday night in Perpignan will take on Hull KR for a place in the Grand Final.

The Catalans' historic season is further recognised by the awarding of the Association's prestigious merit award for services to rugby league to club owner Bernard Guasch.

Tomkins polled two-

thirds of the votes of association members to land the Ray Fletcher Shield ahead of Castleford's Paul McShane and the St Helens trio of Lachlan Coote, Alex Walmsley and Morgan Knowles.

Tomkins, who is also on the Steve Prescott Man of Steel short-list, paid tribute to his team-mates.

He said: "The season's gone well for me, but it goes hand in hand as a full-back, you can

play well if the guys in front of you are doing well. "We've got players in the team that have been eight and nine out of 10 all year and for me to play in a confident group on the front foot, as a full-back that gives you the opportunity to play well."

"I'm reaping the rewards of the guys in front of me playing well."



■ WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Chelsea's Mjeldde raising funds to support Afghan players

by Our Sports Desk

CHELSEA'S Norwegian defender Maren Mjeldde (pictured) is among a group of players involved in a fundraising effort to support more than 75 female footballers evacuated from Afghanistan last month.

The players fled their homes fearing for their safety after the Taliban seized power following the US withdrawal from the country.

World players' union Fifpro is co-ordinating the fundraising campaign to support the players.

Mjeldde said: "My heart goes out to these women and those who have been left behind in Afghanistan."

"It's important that the international community helps all of them. For those who were evacuated, let's give them a hand as they start their lives again."

Taliban officials have been quoted in media reports stating that sport for women is "not necessary."



Girls have also been barred from secondary education in the country.

Afghan internationals who were based outside the country prior to August, such as Shabnam Mobarez, are also supporting the campaign to resettle the evacuated players.

"My team-mates and I will do everything we can to help out," Mobarez said. "These girls and young

women were frightened and extended their hands to us asking for our support and we must do all we can so they have a permanent safe and secure place to stay."

Fifpro said many of the evacuated players are currently in Australia after its government helped them escape immediate danger.

The union has pledged to match the first €25,000 (£21,400) raised.



■ WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS

Biles: 'I should have quit way before Tokyo 2020'

by Our Sports Desk

FOUR-TIME Olympic gymnastics champion Simone Biles believes she should have "quit way before" the Tokyo Games. The US athlete withdrew from five of her six finals in Japan to focus on her mental health.

The 24-year-old, who had been expected to add to the four gold medals she won at Rio 2016, spoke in 2018 about being abused by team doctor Larry Nassar, who is now serving a life sentence in jail.

"If you looked at everything I've gone through for the past seven years, I should have never made another Olympic team," she said in a

New York Magazine interview.

"I should have quit way before Tokyo, when Larry Nassar was in the media for two years. It was too much."

"But I was not going to let him take something I've worked for since I was six years old."

"I wasn't going to let him take that joy away from me. So I pushed past that for as long as my mind and my body would let me."

Biles had been seeing a therapist in the run-up to the Olympics and said anxiety set in on her arrival in Tokyo.

In addition to mental health issues, she also experienced "the twisties" – a phenomenon which temporarily affects an athlete's spatial awareness.

Explaining her decision to withdraw from events, she said: "Say up until you're 30 years old, you have your complete eyesight [then] one morning, you wake up, you can't see s**t, but people tell you to go on and do your daily job as if you still have your eyesight."

"You'd be lost, wouldn't you? That's the only thing I can relate it to. I have been doing gymnastics for 18 years. I woke up – lost it. How am I supposed to go on with my day?"

The 19-time world champion returned home from the rearranged Games with bronze in the balance beam, in addition to silver in the team competition.



MEN'S FOOTBALL

FAREWELL ROGER HUNT,
A GIANT OF THE GAME

England great and Liverpool's record league goalscorer dies, aged 83

by Our Sports Desk

LIVERPOOL'S record league goalscorer Roger Hunt has died aged 83, the club have announced.

Hunt, who was also part of England's 1966 World Cup-winning line-up, scored an unrivalled 244 league goals for the Reds.

The club said in a statement posted on their official Twitter account: "We are mourning the passing of legendary former player Roger Hunt.

"The thoughts of everybody at Liverpool Football Club are with Roger's family and friends at this sad and difficult time. Rest in peace, Sir Roger Hunt 1938-2021."

Hunt was born in Golborne, Cheshire, on July 20 1938.

He signed for Liverpool in July 1958 and made his final appearance for the club in December 1969.

Hunt was signed by Phil Taylor from non-league Stockton Heath but was kept on by Bill Shankly, and helped the club out of the old Second Division in 1962, going on to win league titles in 1964 and 1966.

He also won the FA Cup with Liverpool in 1965.

Hunt's overall Reds scor-



RIP: England's
Roger Hunt in 1966

ing record was broken by Ian Rush in 1992 but no-one has yet scored more league goals for the Merseysiders.

Hunt won 34 caps for England, scoring 18 goals, and earned his first under Walter Winterbottom in 1962 when Liverpool were still in the second tier.

In that season, he scored 41 goals in as many games for the Reds.

Hunt scored three goals in helping England get out of their

group at the 1966 finals, and played in every game, such was his importance to Sir Alf Ramsey's team.

Current Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said: "It's really sad news and our thoughts and our love go to his family.

"Unfortunately, it feels too frequent in this moment we are saying farewell to these giants of our club.

"Roger Hunt comes second to no-one in his importance in

the history of Liverpool FC, that much is clear.

"To be the goalscoring catalyst of the Shankly team to actually achieve promotion and then go on to win those precious league titles and the FA Cup puts him in a bracket of LFC legends who are responsible for making us the club we are today.

"Not only that, he was also a World Cup winner in 1966, too. "I am told the Kop chris-

tened him 'Sir Roger' for all his achievements. A goalscorer who never stopped working to help his team-mates; I believe he would have fit in well within our current team.

"So, it is Sir Roger we will remember, honour and pay tribute to over the coming days. You'll never walk alone."

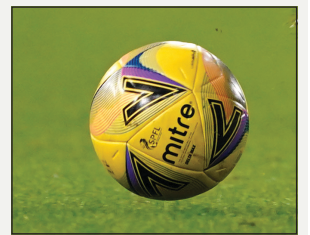
Former Reds defender Jamie Carragher said: "RIP Sir Roger Hunt one of the greatest goal scorers our club has ever seen. Sir Roger along with the other Legends from the '60s made LFC the club it is today."

Robbie Fowler, sixth in Liverpool's all-time record goalscorers list, simply tweeted: "Rest in peace, Sir Roger Hunt."

England acknowledged the integral role Hunt played in the nation's World Cup win in 1966.

The Three Lions tweeted: "We're extremely saddened to learn that Roger Hunt, who was a key member of our World Cup winning side in 1966, has passed away at the age of 83. Our deepest condolences go to Roger's family, friends and former clubs."

Liverpool's Merseyside rivals Everton tweeted their condolences, saying: "Our thoughts are with Roger Hunt's loved ones and everyone at LFC at this sad time. RIP."



FOOTBALL

Scottish grassroots receives £1.5m boost

SCOTTISH grassroots football has received a £1.5 million donation from philanthropist and Hearts director James Anderson.

The donation to the Scottish Football Partnership Trust (SFPT) will rise to £1,875,000 through Gift Aid.

Anderson said: "It seems clearer to me that a flourishing grassroots football system is a major contribution to health, well-being and happiness."

Grassroots clubs and other charitable community football organisations will be able to apply for grants of up to £40,000 to purchase equipment such as goalposts, floodlights, maintenance equipment, or to refurbish changing rooms and improve pitches.

Chief operating officer Stuart McCaffrey said: "Our aim at the SFPT is always to promote inclusive participation in football at grassroots level with physical well-being and mental health being central to charitable aims and objectives.

"By investing in facilities, we can bolster hubs and homes for clubs enabling more people of all ages, regardless of their ability or social circumstances, to participate in a safe and modern environment."

MEN'S FOOTBALL

Spurs fans seek meeting with the board

by Our Sports Desk

TOTTENHAM Hotspur Supporters' Trust has requested a meeting with the club's board to discuss the "short and long-term strategic vision" for the club.

Spurs have suffered successive Premier League defeats to London rivals Crystal Palace, Chelsea and Arsenal.

They appointed former Wolves boss Nuno Espirito Santo in June following a protracted search for a new manager after Jose Mourinho was sacked in April.

But, despite topping the table after beginning the new campaign with a trio of 1-0 wins, the Portuguese coach's position is already coming under intense scrutiny on the back of recent poor results, includ-



CONCERNING:
Tottenham chairman
Daniel Levy

ing Sunday's 3-1 north London derby loss at the Emirates Stadium.

"Over the past few weeks, we've been contacted by an increasing number of trust members and the wider fan base who are extremely concerned about the current direction of THFC," read a statement from the fan group.

"We have asked for a meet-

ing with the club's executive board to discuss both the short and long-term strategic vision for the football club.

"This [potential] meeting, therefore, is an opportunity for the decision makers at THFC to explain their plans to supporters.

"This explanation should include plans for this season and beyond, an explanation of

how success will be measured and how the club's DNA will be regained."

After the dismissal of Mourinho, Ryan Mason took charge of Tottenham for the remainder of last season on a caretaker basis.

Spurs were interested in Mauricio Pochettino returning to north London but Paris St Germain were unwilling to let him go.

Former Chelsea boss Antonio Conte, ex-Roma manager Paulo Fonseca and former AC Milan and Napoli coach Gennaro Gattuso each looked set for the role before Nuno was eventually unveiled on June 30.

His appointment coincided with prolonged speculation regarding the future of star player Harry Kane as a tumultuous period for the club continued.

England captain Kane was heavily linked with a move to champions Manchester City but remains at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

The 28-year-old is yet to score a Premier League goal this term and Spurs' dip in form is compounded by some damning statistics.

They rank 20th in the Premier League for shots and chances created this term and have covered less distance than any other team.

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TODAY'S TIPS

Farringdon's Doubles

STAMINA CHOPE
Bangor 1.10 (nap)

JUNGLE BEE
Catterick 2.20

Houseman's Choice

WALLEM
Nottingham 3:30

MSTAR 2021-09-29 WED 1.2



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