

# Labour Affairs

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## Central Bank Independence

Readers will be familiar with the term ‘independence of the central bank’. Of late, it has been much referred to in the media. The tone is always that this independence is a good thing. And Labour proudly remind us that the Bank of England (BoE) was made independent by Gordon Brown in 1998 when he was chancellor in Tony Blair’s first administration. It is worth examining what this independence consists of.

One of the main functions of the BoE is to create money. It, and it alone, has the ability to create money that the government will accept in payment of taxes. One would expect an independent BoE to decide when and how much money to create. In fact it has little power to control the amount of money created. Nor does that power reside with the government. Only Parliament can decide how much money is created. All this is carefully laid out in the 1866 Bank of England Act, enacted when Britannia ruled the waves. The 1866 act ensured that the BoE would be an effective tool for Britain’s imperial objectives.

The core principle of the 1866 act is that, when any expenditure is approved by Parliament, then the BoE must create and put into the government’s account the money required to finance that expenditure. The BoE has no independence in this matter. It is exactly the job of the Bank of England, as laid down in the 1866 Act, to finance whatever debts the government issues which have been approved by Parliament. By law it has to do so. As Berkeley, Tye and Wilson make clear in their detailed account of the

UK Exchequer:

“Once Parliament has authorised Supply there is no mechanism within the UK monetary system to stop that spending happening. The Bank has no power to refuse and there is no legal mechanism by which a balance has to be checked for available funds. The Bank accommodates the expenditure by balance sheet expansion ... Parliament effectively legislates money into existence.” An Accounting Model of the UK Exchequer, Andrew Berkeley, Richard Tye & Neil Wilson p116.

The BoE cannot independently decide that it does not approve of any particular government expenditure and refuse to create the required money. By law, by the 1866 Act, it must create the required money. In one of its main functions, therefore, the BoE has no independence.

The BoE is also tasked with using monetary policy to achieve a rate of inflation chosen by the government, currently 2%. In this context, monetary policy means adjusting the Bank rate, the interest rate at which the BoE is prepared to create and lend money to the commercial banks. Over the last 18 months, that rate has increased by a factor of 50 from .1% to 5%.

This is where the claim to independence really lies. Before 1998, the BoE could only change the interest rate with the agreement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Gordon Brown’s 1998 act altered that, so that the BoE no longer has to get government approval for any change in the interest rate.

It’s an odd development. For instance, if

the government believes that an expansion of state economic activity is required to minimise the chances of a recession, but the BoE believes a contraction in economic activity is required to reduce inflationary pressures, then the BoE might end up taking actions to counter the actions of the government. Since the government can only take action approved by Parliament, effectively the BoE could be acting against the wishes of the elected representatives of the people in Parliament.

There was an element of that in the Liz Truss debacle in October 2022. The government proposed a fiscal policy—lower taxes—that was supposed to increase demand in the economy and lead to growth. At the same time, the BoE was pursuing a policy of reducing demand by increasing interest rates. The government's fiscal policy meant the BoE would have to further increase interest rates to counter the government's fiscal policy. Since this would reduce the value of already issued government bonds, the markets rushed to dump these bonds. There was much nonsense in the main stream media that the markets would not want to buy government bonds. In fact, the markets were just positioning themselves to buy newly issued bonds at a higher interest rate. Nevertheless, it is remarkable

that the BoE should have the legal power to raise interest rates if Parliament did not want them to be raised.

Legally, Brown's 1998 Act does allow the Treasury to override the BoE in extreme situations. But in practice, it would be difficult for the government to do that because of the political repercussions.

The current government, led by Sunak, does however agree completely with BoE policy of creating a recession to control inflation. The 1998 Act works very much in Sunak's favour since Sunak and the cabinet can pass responsibility for any recession on to the independent BoE. The independence of the BoE is a fig leaf for the government's austerity policy.

A future Labour government under Starmer will take a similar approach. Indeed Labour is already adjusting the fiscal policies it will put before Parliament where those might clash with the policies of the BoE.

Brown's 1998 Act has effectively gone against 400 years of English political development by ending Parliament's sovereignty in monetary policy. The Act needs to be reversed, and Parliament's sovereignty in monetary policy needs to be brought back.

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# Newspaper Proprietors

By Eamon Dyas

[The Daily Herald was an important publication, being the only paper in Britain oriented towards the interests of the working class. It always struggled financially not having wealthy owners. It started in 1911 by trade unionists; its line was always to support workers and strikers; it was against the war in 1914 and supported conscientious objectors; it welcomed the Russian revolutions of February and October 1917 and campaigned against British anti-soviet military action in 1919. Ernest Bevin was a director of the paper. We publish two items, one from 1915 and one from 1928, with an introduction by Eamon Dyas.]

The first item from 1915, is a review in the Daily Herald of a book by Fred Henderson which outlines the way in which the First World War was represented as an opportunity for the labour movement to construct a new enlightened society in its aftermath.

The second, from 1928, is a measure of how that dream was never realised and is an explanation by the Daily Herald of the way in which the British national newspaper media was in thrall to the capitalist investor. The Daily Herald contrasts this with its own case as a daily newspaper under the ownership of the Labour Party and the TUC.

In 1930, a mere two years after it was making this boast however, the TUC sold 51% of its shares in the paper to Odhams Press, then owned by Julius Elias (later Viscount Southwood) a labour politician and magazine and newspaper publisher. Within three years, in 1933 the Daily Herald had become the world's best-selling national daily newspaper with daily certified sales of 2 million. Under the ownership of Odhams the paper adopted a ferocious anti-Stalin position condemning the Nazi-Soviet Pact and in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Finland on 30 Nov. 1939, it stated in an editorial:

"We have not fought against the immorality of power politics at home to acquiesce in these policies abroad because they are adopted by a dictatorship which once seemed as though it might provide a Socialist model for the world.

"Socialism is not only an economic creed, it is a moral philosophy, a belief that between nation and nation as between man and man there should be justice and honourable dealing and a respect for the integrity of the weak no less than the strong.

"Stalin's Russia sets all that aside

in international affairs as it earlier set aside all democratic freedom in internal affairs.

"It accepts the philosophy of the old imperialism and the new Nazism, of the right of great nations to dictate to small.

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is dead. Stalin's new imperialist Russia takes its place." (Daily Herald, editorial, 1 Dec, 1939, p..6)

The paper went into decline in the aftermath of the Second World War but there remained a loyal and significant working class readership. In 1961 Odhams sold its shares in the paper to the International Publishing Corporation and the minority shares owned by the TUC were sold at the same time.

In 1964 the Daily Herald was reborn as The Sun but it failed to revive sufficiently and was sold in 1969 to Rupert Murdoch.

Such was the history of what started out as an independent voice of labour and ended up as the main source of income for one of the most voracious capitalist media moguls in history.

Eamon Dyas

**From: The Daily Herald.  
27 March 1915, p.12.**

THE NEW FAITH

**The New Faith: A Study of Party Politics and the War.** By Fred Henderson. Jarrold. Is. net.

More than once before has Mr. Fred Henderson given us profound and convincing analyses of national dangers or possibilities. Conversant as he is, through years of patient and detailed work in local government, with the actual facts, the sordid, muddled,

bewildering conditions which form the economic basis of "civilised society," he brings to the examination of those facts a clear insight and shining faith. He unites in an astonishing degree the careful knowledge of the practical politician and the inspired fury of the prophet. Consequently, the war has given him a great opportunity—the opportunity of indicating how a new and better state can be fashioned from the fragments of the old: and he has taken his great opportunity greatly. This little paper-covered shilling book is one that literally everyone should read, and would get good reading. Its propaganda value is incalculable.

Mr. Henderson takes the war for granted. He does not spend a single sentence discussing its diplomatic origins: to him, it was forced upon the British people "by Germany's violation of the public law of Europe." Anyway, we are in it: the great thing now is to see that the sacrifices it involves are not wasted. We get no windy abstractions about "smashing German militarism": we get a courageous realisation of the fact that the problem of reconstruction is a mental, a spiritual one - not national, but universal. The war "raises issues compared with which the mere alteration of frontiers on the map of Europe is a trifling game for children." . . . "To see in such a war only its ghastly details would drive any man mad. . . . There is no middle judgment possible for us, no complaisant toleration such as indifferent things might rely upon for dismissal. Either we are out to win a new life through all this, we Europeans, or we are loathsome, the very scum murder and degeneracy."

The war, then, is to illustrate —

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has indeed already to a great extent illustrated—a change in the public attitude towards the opposing principles of “private-mindedness” and “national service.” “As for the food-storers, I cannot think of any of the old virtues but would crown their conduct with esteem and high distinction. Prudence and foresight in preparing for a rainy day, the essential spirit of thrift, taking the market at its lowest; who could have better lived up to the gospel private-mindedness in all these respects than they did? And yet they were disliked, angrily disliked, to the very border of personal violence!” That is the essence, according to Mr. Henderson’s argument, of the spiritual truth war has shown us: the wickedness and ultimate futility of all those self-regarding principles in which - whether we belonged to the Manchester school or the Birmingham, whether we were “fat men” or workers, whether we boasted ourselves Christians or atheists—we were all inevitably entangled, merely because we belonged to a community built up on private ownership of the means of production. We have realised now that private ownership is no sacred inviolable law overriding national needs. The nation comes first. Party politicians, in anticipating that they can resume their stale quarrels on the old lines after the war, are making “appointments to meet again at the bottom of Niagara.”

Now, this change has doubtless been dimly perceived by most people; it has been half-admitted by the very organs of capitalism. But it is regarded by many others besides party politicians as a *temporary* change - “for three years or the period the war.” Mr. Henderson’s special service is to carry the battles of logic into the farthest corners of the opponents’ country, to smash their last defences, to show how in every detail of our communal and individual life have bound our hands and poisoned our activities with “private-mindedness.” The thing is magnificently done, with a fine gusto of exposition and an ironic ease of confutation. “The law of supply and demand is merely fine name for a hoggish disposition on the one side, and on the other side for national folly allowing things essential to the national life to be controlled for private gain.” Pointing to the magnificent selflessness of those hundreds of thousands who have enlisted against their own personal advantage, and taking that as an instance of how the law of supply and demand does *not* work, Mr. Henderson goes on to plead passionately for that lesson to be applied in the ensuing years of peace. There must be no more “private-mindedness,” private ownership of essentials, “social reform” legislation to

keep “the poor” quiet by “being good to them.” There must be a clean sweep of the old parties and the old policies, and the new faith of real National Unity must be established.

**From: Daily Herald,  
2 February 1928 p.p.1-2**

## **YOUR MORNING PAPER**

### **Millionaires and other Press Lords.**

#### **Whose Opinions?**

The latest London Press deal, involving the fusion of two Liberal morning journals, serves to focus public attention on the true character of those eight daily newspapers which, published in London, enjoy nation-wide circulation and are in a position powerfully to influence public opinion.

The eight are: Daily Chronicle, Daily Express, Daily Herald, Daily Mail, Daily News and Westminster Gazette, Daily Telegraph, Morning Post, and Times.

Below is an analysis of their several directorates and controlling interests. After the name of each director is stated, in brackets, the industry or industries, other than newspapers, in which he is also a company director. Names of directors who have no such external interests are omitted.

This analysis shows how the interests of these newspapers (with one exception) are identified with interests of great capitalist concerns. The one exception is the Daily Herald, which is the property of the organised British Labour Movement.

#### **A £3,000,000 Deal.**

The Daily Chronicle. – The Daily Chronicle was sold recently by Mr. Lloyd George, for the sum stated to be nearly £3,000,000, to the Daily Chronicle Investment Corporation, the directors of which include: Lord Reading (banking, insurance, chemicals, electricity); Sir David Yule (banking, insurance, electricity, engineering); Sir T. S. Catto (insurance, coal, oil, tea, shipping); Sir C. C. Barrie (banking, milling, shipping, railways); and the Liberal Chief Whip, Sir R. Hutchison, M.P. (rubber).

#### **Cementing Empire.**

The Daily Express. – The Daily Express is controlled by Lord Beaverbrook, a millionaire peer, with big business interests in Canada and elsewhere, the foundation of whose fortunes was laid by activities in the Canadian cement industry. The declared policy of the Daily Express is “to cement British interests throughout the world.”

This newspaper is owned by London Express Newspapers Ltd., the directors of which include: Mr. W. May (multiple

grocery stores, electricity); Mr. E. J. Robertson (cinema films); Major-General Sir F. H. Sykes (tramways, London underground railways, chemicals, motors); Lord Wargrave (banking, beer, chemicals, electricity, gas, motors, tramways).

#### **Mr. Szarvasy.**

The Daily Mail. – This newspaper is published by Associated Newspapers Ltd., the controlling interest in which is held by the Daily Mail Trust Ltd., of which the directors include: Lord Rothermere, a millionaire peer; Sir Hardman Lever (banking, rubber); Mr. F. H. Sykes [see Daily Express]

#### **Cocoa.**

The Daily News and Westminster Gazette. – The new board just formed includes: Lord Cowdray, a millionaire peer associated with S. Pearson and Son, a well-known firm of contractors with worldwide interests; Mr. L. J. Cadbury (cocoa and chocolate); Lord Dalmeny (insurance); Mr. W. T. Layton (insurance); Mr. J. B. Morrell (biscuits, cake, chocolate, confectionary, cocoa, printing and stationary, refreshment rooms); Mr. H. Simonis (paint).

#### **Coalowners.**

The Daily Telegraph. – This twopenny journal recently changed hands and passed into the ownership of: Sir William Berry (coal, cotton, iron and steel); Sir Gomer Berry (coal, cotton, iron and steel); and Sir E. Iliffe, M.P. (insurance and motors).

#### **Mining Royalties.**

The Morning Post is owned by the Morning Post, Ltd., the directors of which include the Duke of Northumberland, a millionaire peer and coalowner, who told the Coal Commission at the end of 1925 that he derived £75,000 a year gross from mining royalties; Sir P. Bates (shipping and banking); Major J. S. Courtauls, M.P. (finance, land development and Rand mining); Mr. C. V. Sale (insurance, oil, metals, shipping); Mr. R. W. Lloyd (bleaching).

#### **“Times” Directors.**

The Times is the property of the Times Publishing Co., chairman of which is Major J. J. Astor who went to New York in 1763 and acquired a fortune by trading with the Indians for furs. Major Astor’s father, great-grandson of the foregoing, was naturalized in Britain in 1899 and made a peer in 1916.

The directors of the Times Publishing Co., include: Mr. J. Walter (insurance); Mr. R. Grant, jun. (banking, insurance,

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# Ukraine and the Western Media

**From concocted assassination of Russian dissident to employing U.S. transgender activist – the evolution of Kiev’s relationship with the western media.**

**By Eamon Dyas**

The feature that epitomises the western media’s relationship with the Kiev regime is its uncritical approach to Kiev’s propaganda no matter how crude that propaganda might be.

This was not always the case as evidenced by previous exposés by western media of the extent of corruption in the country and the presence of Nazi influence in its security services and wider society.

It is only in the aftermath of 2014 when the US State Department realised that Ukraine was there for the taking that the media began going soft on Ukraine. After that there continued to be some pulses of principled life in the media - witness BBC’s Newsnight post-Maidan documentary on Nazi influence [see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hE6b4ao8gAQ>]. However, that gradually fizzled out as an awareness of what the US State Department required of the media percolated through the decision-making processes.

Moving an entire international media machine from a position of honest reporting on a country that was previously viewed in negative terms to where that same media becomes the enthusiastic and uncritical mouthpiece of its propaganda is not something that can be done overnight. It’s not a simple matter of making an executive decision. While such a decision would be enough to convince the majority of

ambitious journalists there is always the conscience of the minority that needs to be taken into account. It was here that the egos of such journalists eventually became the key to them falling into line. With such people it was a matter of waiting for the combined effect of the reporting of those already on board and the endorsement by national politicians to reach a stage where even the most honest of journalist succumbs to the “national” wish to be associated with what by now is seen as the side of the angels. For not to do so runs the risk not only to a journalist’s career but, more importantly for the ego-driven journalist, the loss of the kudos already built up among one’s peers and the inevitable descent into the obscurity of social media.

But until this process reached fruition, from the point of view of the Kiev regime, there remained the issue of just how far it could push the western media into regurgitating its propaganda. It was one thing with regard to its domestic media which was directly controllable through its legal machine but it had to rely on something else when it came to the wider western media. It had to rely on a willingness on their part to be complicit. But how far could the Kiev regime rely on the complicity of a western media? This was after all a media built on a reputation of independence from their respective national governments. It wasn’t that

this reputation was true but that enough journalists actually believed it to be true to cause anxiety. The answer to that anxiety came in March 2018.

On 4 March 2018 Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia Skripal were poisoned by an unknown substance in Salisbury, England, and underwent intensive hospital treatment prior to them being disappeared by the British State. The British media subsequently reacted to these events in their best uncritical mode and blindly accepted and regurgitated the line fed to it by the British security services. But, back in Kiev anxiety persisted as to the level of complicity that could be expected of the wider western media in how the regime intended to behave in its ongoing dispute with Russia. So, as if by coincidence, Kiev experienced its own version of the Skripal scenario but with a local twist. With hindsight this particular event in Kiev could be seen as a “testing of the waters” by the Kiev regime to establish how deeply the western media would commit to it in its ongoing defiance of Russia’s concerns.

The “test” took the form of a story about the assassination on 29 March 2018 – a matter of weeks after the Salisbury incident - of a Russian dissident journalist, Arkady Babchenko, who had “fled” to Kiev the previous year.

According to NBC News:

“Babchenko has been scathingly critical of Moscow’s annexation of Crimea, the Kremlin’s support for separatist insurgents in eastern Ukraine and the Russian campaign in Syria.”

And according to what was called the Kiev national police:

“the Russian journalist, who has been a harsh critic of the Kremlin, had been shot in a targeted killing. Babchenko was reportedly found by his wife bleeding at their apartment building in Kiev. Ukrainian authorities said she had called an ambulance but that Babchenko had died on the

Continued From Page 4

coal, electricity, iron and steel – also the American Chamber of Commerce in London of which he is the hon. treasurer); Mr. P. J. Pybus (cement, insurance, electricity, engineering); the Hon. R. H. Brand (banking, insurance, electricity).

## **Common People.**

The Daily Herald. – This, the only Labour daily newspaper, is the property of the organised British Labour Movement, which, through the Trade Union Congress and the Labour Party owns the Victoria House Printing Company, which in turn, owns the Daily Herald newspaper.

The Daily Herald directors are Messrs. Ben Turner (chairman), Ernest Bevin (vice-chairman), Clifford Allen, W. M. Citrine, C. T. Cramp, G. Hicks, W. H. Hutchinson, Herbert Morrison, A. A. Purcell, M.P., and R. B. Walker – members of the Trade Union and Labour Movement, appointed by the governing bodies of that Movement.

way to a hospital. Police had said he had multiple gunshot wounds to his back.” – NBC News, 30 March 2018.

In other words, as far as Babchenko was concerned he represented the embodiment of the spectrum of anti-Russian opinion that embraced both the west and Kiev. Consequently, when news of his “assassination” was made public by the Kiev security authorities the finger was very publicly pointed at Moscow. The predictable media frenzy ensued with the instinctive Russophobia tendency of the media ensuring that it reacted as hoped for. So far, so good, but how would the western media react if this story was taken to the next step? A step that would expose the Kiev regime to charges of cynical media manipulation. How would the media react then? The answer didn’t take long to arrive. On 30 March 2018 Babchenko was miraculously resurrected to appear at a well-staged police press conference (“to gasps and applause” from the assembled journalists) announcing that it was all just a ploy ostensibly to flush out the would-be Russian assassins.

As things turned out the ploy was more successful as a means of testing the media’s credulity and its willingness to forgive and forget not only the Kiev regime’s tenuous connection with the truth but its willingness to fabricate the most outrageous of lies. The exercise gave the green light for Kiev to refine and develop its manipulative machine in the confidence that whatever it would come up with the media would continue to give it a non-critical licence as long as the object of that manipulation served an anti-Russian purpose.

So by the time of Russia’s Special Military Operation at the end of February 2022 the west’s media machine was already primed to respond in a manner which ensured that any honest context for that action was eliminated from the printed pages and screens of the western media and any remaining journalist who might be honest enough to place these events in their actual context was exiled to the far reaches of social media. At the same time western governments placed restrictions on pro-Russian media in

ways that precluded the possibility of the context of Russia’s actions reaching any meaningful western audience. Towards this end all the paraphernalia of the traditional propaganda coercive tools were brought into play and charges of disinformation and ‘Putin puppets’ were brought against those remaining dissenting voices to cluster-bomb them into silence.

Since then Kiev’s continued bombing of civilian populations in Donetsk was guaranteed a silent licence from the media while its claim of non-involvement in political assassinations inside Russia, the blowing up of the Nord Stream pipeline, the attacks on the Zaporizhzhia power plant, the blowing up of the Khakhovka dam, attacks on the Crimea bridge, the invasion of Belgorod, were provided with unjustified credibility. Despite this, it is arguably the case that what has been more important for Kiev’s continued success in depicting itself as a force for good in the world is also the outcome of its intimate connection with the western media (and of course its associated entertainment industry with personalities like Sean Penn from the film industry and Bono from the music industry lining up to endorse the Kiev regime as their latest “good cause”).

What this relationship between Kiev and the western opinion formers has taught both parties is the importance of maintaining a subtle manipulation of western liberal sensibilities in ways that continue to portray Russia as an entity that is alien to those sensibilities and Kiev as their most enthusiastic proponent.

The success of the western media propaganda in this regard can be gauged by the fact that a regime that relies on the commitment of organised exponents of a Nazi doctrine to provide significant military support for its survival is now depicted as one that is so progressive as to be able to accommodate an openly gay battalion as part of those same armed forces. Just as Zelensky’s Jewishness was used as an argument designed to deny the influence of Nazi doctrine in the Kiev regime’s armed forces so now, the idea of a gay battalion in the Ukrainian Army

is used to reinforce Kiev’s supposed progressive credentials. And just to show how Kiev is so infused with western liberal values the latest cause of those values – transgenderism – has become the latest expression of those credentials.

It appears that a spokesperson working for the Media Department of Ukraine’s Territorial Defence Forces is someone who has transitioned from a man to a woman. But, just as the media evidence of these Kiev credentials previously relied on nothing more than a photoshoot and an interview with a couple of gay individuals in a Kiev coffee shop, so too the presence of a transgender individual in the Media Department of the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces is both more and less than it seems in the person of Sarah Ashton-Cirillo, an anti-Russian US citizen and self-admitted anti-Trump spy in the Republican camp (see Wikipedia entry: [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah\\_Ashton-Cirillo](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Ashton-Cirillo)).

With the advent of Sarah Ashton-Cirillo the Kiev regime has been upgraded to the latest version of western liberal sensibilities and the re-fashioning of the Kiev regime is now complete. However, no matter how much the western media burnishes Kiev’s image that image is not representative of anything substantive in Ukraine society. Like the rest of the ex-Soviet bloc countries the main component of Ukraine’s sense of nationhood remains grounded in extreme anti-Russian sentiment. That sentiment could only survive the Soviet era because it was based in the antithesis of what the Soviet Union represented and that was something that was most effectively expressed through fascism. The current conflict with Russia and the manner in which the West has enabled Kiev to survive that conflict may have infused some of the West’s liberal values in Ukraine but it cannot replace the fuel that provides the ideological and practical energy driving the most effective element in Kiev’s resistance to Russia.



## BBC Interview with Sharon Graham

**Labour needs to be “bolder” and “more ambitious”, rather than “tinkering around the edges”, the head of the UK’s second largest union has told the BBC.**

Unite leader Sharon Graham warned that otherwise “apathy” would be the winner at the next general election.

The union gives more money to Sir Keir Starmer’s party than any other.

Ms Graham saw off a bid this week by some members to end Unite’s affiliation to Labour, which guarantees the party nearly £1.5m a year.

She argued it would be the worst time to leave the Labour Party when it was “within touching distance of power, because that would reduce union influence”.

Ms Graham’s membership spans public and private sectors, so what influence does she want to exercise?

Next Saturday, Labour’s National Policy Forum meets behind closed doors in Nottingham.

It brings together trade union representatives with MPs, grassroots members, and some shadow ministers.

Although any policies agreed there are not guaranteed to be included in the next election manifesto, trade unions can make very clear where their priorities lie.

For Unite, taking energy companies and the struggling steel industry into public ownership are near the top of its agenda.

During a number of meetings with the Labour leadership, Ms Graham has pressed her case that it would be cheaper to buy a steel industry that has lost much of its market value, than to bail out its private owners.

The Labour leader was publicly urged to do this when he spoke at Unite’s policy conference in Brighton this week.

But while he has talked of “preserving” the industry if Labour wins power, he would not commit to acquiring it for the state.

### People power

Ms Graham is now intending to take a less conventional approach to policy-making.

The plan is for “hundreds of organisers” to go to marginal seats and talk to voters there about the case for taking key industries into public hands.

The message will be reinforced by Unite-funded billboards.

The hope is that then voters will press local Labour parties and local candidates to commit to backing nationalisation.

“We will take our ideas to the people,” Ms Graham told me.

“The real decision-makers are the voters. If they push those ideas, politicians tend to move when they speak to voters.”

Her over-arching criticism is that Labour’s leadership is not setting out a distinctive enough alternative to the government, and feels too constrained by the state of the

economy.

She argued that “we need be as bold as the 1945 Labour government” which created the NHS. “There wasn’t much money about then, I can tell you,” she said.

The next Labour government could leave a lasting legacy, she suggested.

“People will say they remember when energy companies were privatised and when they paid massive bills, and it was a Labour government that stopped all that.”

The Labour leadership would argue that unless the party is trusted on the economy, many of the things trade unions want - like increased employment rights - simply won’t happen.

Its strategists also believe that it has to be seen to be moving away from Corbyn-era policies to win back voters who abandoned the party in 2019.

### ‘Maximum leverage’

But Ms Graham told me that abiding strictly by shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves’s “fiscal rules” had led to “inertia”, and people were beginning to ask: “What’s the difference?” between government and opposition.

“If Labour are saying what’s happening now is awful, and it is absolutely awful, they have to come out with solutions to that.”

While Labour is criticising the number of children in poverty, its shadow ministers have been told they can’t commit, for example, to provide free school meals for all primary children, because that would be a spending commitment.

Ms Graham said the party must “talk about what they can do to change Britain. People want something to vote for.”

She told her members this week that maintaining Unite’s financial link to Labour would give her “maximum leverage” with the party.

But so far she hasn’t moved policy on energy and steel. So by guaranteeing funds to Sir Keir Starmer, wasn’t she actually reducing her bargaining power?

“The affiliation fee is what you pay to be part of the club. But most of the money we gave Labour traditionally was outside the affiliation fee,” she said.

For example, the union donated an additional £3m to Labour before the last election.

But Ms Graham warned there were “no blank cheques”.

“I want to see some movement if we are going to give what we usually give... We would be better off with a Labour government, but I am very, very disappointed with the lack of ambition.”

BBC 14/7/23

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-66203880>

# Housing in Red Vienna and the question of reform v. revolution

By Eamon Dyas

Although the phenomenon that is usually referred to as “Red Vienna” began with the election of the Social Democrats to the City Council in May 1919 the legacy of that phenomenon can be dated to the imposition of the taxation system introduced in 1923. It was the funds generated from that taxation that enabled the city to embark on its ambitious housing programme which began with the building of 25,000 municipal housing units financed by the new taxes on land, rents and luxury goods. What this gave rise to has since become the main symbol of the legacy of “Red Vienna”. Just as the National Health Service introduced in 1948 is the remaining legacy of the 1945 Labour Government so too is Vienna’s municipal housing the legacy of the Social Democrats who came to power in the City of Vienna in 1919. Both represent an abiding political development that have benefited their respective working classes.

Over the past few years I have visited many of the municipal housing projects built during the days of “Red Vienna” and these projects continue to act as examples of what is possible when a municipal authority has the will and the means to prioritise municipal housing. The 1945 Labour Government, like the Social Democrats in Vienna in 1919, viewed housing as an integral part of the population’s health. So it is not surprising that the 1945 Labour Government in Britain also embarked on an ambitious housing programme that, with admittedly some significant modifications, was continued by subsequent Conservative Governments. Until, that is, the 1979 Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher. Up to then successive Labour and Conservative Governments oversaw some important advances in municipal housing. But whereas in Britain those advances were set to nought by the advent of the 1979 Thatcher Government, in Vienna, despite the subsequent disruptions of the Second World War and the Cold War, the housing legacy of the 1919 Vienna Social Democrats remains largely

intact with the municipal authorities continuing to prioritise the provision of housing.

But, that is not to say that there are no significant threats to the City of Vienna’s housing legacy. When Austria joined the EU in 1995 (it applied in 1989) that event provided the country with access to its traditional central and eastern European markets that had more or less been closed to it since the First World War. This brought with it certain commercial opportunities that have benefited the country as well as Vienna. However, joining the EU also brought with it the compulsion to comply with the free-market orthodoxy (given impetus by post-Thatcher Britain) as a requirement of membership and this had implications for the extensive state and municipally controlled assets and services that had been a feature of the country’s economy with particular pressure being applied in favour of privatisation of those assets. Although the privatisation of state and municipally-owned assets had begun under a coalition government led by the Social Democratic Party in 1987 those privatisations were on a level commensurate with what could be defined as something consistent with the state or municipal management of publicly-owned assets. In other words, those privatisations had taken place in a situation where the respective state or municipal authority continued to retain the ultimate control over the management of decisions regarding privatisations. But what membership of the EU brought in its wake was the potential removal of such management where it was no longer under state or municipal control but rather subject to an external authority which was dominated by a free-market orthodoxy.

The extent of the threat posed by this development is obvious in the way that state and municipal-owned assets have been in the sights of the free-market academics for some years now:

“Although a substantial privatisation took place [since the joining of the

EU – ED], the privatisation potential in Austria is still quite large. In most cases, the Austrian government kept substantial shares in partly privatised enterprises. Taking into account the federal, state and community level and including all public utilities, there is a privatisation potential of 45 billion euro from which the federal government owns 62%, the city or state of Vienna 13%, all the other states (e.g. Upper and Lower Austria) 14% and the communes (without Vienna) 11%.” (Privatisation in Austria: Response to Internal and External Pressures, by Ansgar Belke and Friedrich Schneider. See <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6630953.pdf>)

There have been more privatisations of state and municipal assets since then with the contracting out of services also a feature of what is happening in Vienna in recent years.

When it comes to housing the most immediate aspect of what is happening in Austria is in the area of private rents. The centenary of “Red Vienna” has been the occasion of some effusive reporting in the British mainstream media. For instance the *Financial Times* on 30 December 2022 was full of praise for the achievements of modern Vienna and cited such things as the fact that 60% of the residents of Vienna live in high-quality subsidised social housing and that:

“Competition for rental homes in London is now at an all-time high. According to Rightmove, the average monthly rental price in London is now £2,343, a rise of 16% in the past year. . . . In Vienna, the wide availability of subsidised housing has moderated rents in the private sector – the average monthly price for a 60 sq. m, flat in the city is 767 Euro . . . Added to that, tenants have high levels of protection against rent rises and evictions.” (Lessons from Vienna: a housing success story 100 years in the making, by Kirsty Lang, *Financial Times*, 30 Dec. 2022).

What the author omits from her account is that the city’s capacity to maintain the low-rental private sector has been under pressure for some



time. The significance of Austria joining the EU may have led to the transformation of the city from one of relative poverty to relative prosperity but it also places the municipality in a precarious position with regards to its rent control policies. This is because those rent control policies are reliant on the continuance of the current tenant protection laws and those laws rested on two components. The law provides an almost absolute guarantee that a tenant has the right to reside in a privately rented property for as long as they choose to live there or until they die. The law also ensured that any rent increase sought by the private landlord at the expiry of an existing rental arrangement could not be inflated to a level that was viewed as a means of inducing the tenant to leave the property. Consequently, those rent increases had to be officially authorised by a body which ensured that the rise was deemed reasonable according to existing market values. This arrangement was something that those espousing the free-market orthodoxy believed was an impairment of the free market in property and the landlord's right to fully utilise their investment in that property with the result that it has been significantly diluted since Austria joined the EU. However, the results of this dilution have yet to be fully felt in the Viennese private rental sector. This is because landlords are compelled to honour the contracts they entered into at a time when the tenant protection law prevailed and naturally those tenants who entered into their arrangement at that time are not liable to voluntarily give up the arrangement particularly when their next contract with a landlord would not have such protections built in. The result is that the changing arrangement is happening slowly as in most cases the landlord is compelled to wait until the tenant voluntarily leaves or dies before they can enjoy their new rights as a landlord. But slow as this process is happening there are significant implications for the wider property market.

Prior to the relaxation of the tenant protection laws, landlords could expect a reasonable and regular income from their investment and

this had the effect of keeping property values low. With the relaxation of the tenant protection laws the prospect of making more generous returns from rented property has helped fuel the property market in Vienna over the past twenty years to the point where the cost of purchasing apartments in the city has reached unprecedented levels. This in turn has implications for the city's municipal housing policies as, with property values rising dramatically in recent years, there will undoubtedly be a growing pressure to encourage those who are currently municipal tenants to be given the right to purchase their properties. When Austria first embarked on its limited privatisation programme in 1987 it was accused of being, as usual, behind international economic trends (trends in privatisation practices that had been initiated by Britain). When it comes to municipal housing policies Vienna could also be seen as currently behind international trends. With Britain having also taken the lead in establishing those trends it is worth looking at where those trends are likely to lead Vienna should they not be checked in time.

In 1980 31% of the British population was accommodated in a municipal housing stock consisting of over 5 million council homes. By 1997, around 20% of the population was similarly housed. Between the 1980 figure and 1997, 1.8 million of these council homes were sold under the Thatcher-initiated privatising "Right to Buy" scheme. (See: Municipal Dreams: the rise and fall of Council Housing, by John Boughton, Verso Press, 2019, p.171). Since then, the idea of the municipal council home has almost disappeared. What we have instead is a category defined as "Social Housing". This category disguises a multitude of sins of omission but even using the latest Government figures for "Social Homes" (figures that include both private and local authority registered providers) the figure as of 31 March 2022 for such homes was 4.4 million – still 600,000 short of the number of municipal council homes that existed in 1980. But the situation is even worse for those who traditionally relied on local authority council

homes as the 4.4 million "Social Housing" sector includes categories such as "affordable rent" and "low cost home ownership" which are commonly known to be anything but affordable for the average couple as both "Affordable" and "low cost" are defined in terms of a runaway and unrestricted rental and property markets.

As to the future of the "Red Vienna" housing legacy this is something that should be defended as vigorously as possible not only for the sake of the working people of Vienna but also so that Vienna continues to provide an example for those interested in seeing a similar arrangement in Britain and elsewhere. It has been said that because the municipal housing policies of Vienna benefit the professional and middle class the housing policy of Vienna should be modified to ensure that this kind of accommodation is exclusively reserved for the working class. This would be a mistake. It is because the municipal housing in Vienna accommodates those who wish to avail of it that it has survived so long. It is akin to the way in which the National Health Service was always meant to be open to all at the point of need that enabled it to be immune for so long against the erosion of private health schemes. The National Health Service is now at its most vulnerable precisely because the policies adopted by both Tory and Labour Governments in the past twenty years have driven the more affluent working class and professional and middle class people increasingly to the private sector and this in turn has provided a momentum which is proving ever more difficult for the health service to withstand. This isn't only because of the loss of this component of the electorate to the cause of the National Health Service but the movement of these "customers" from the public health sector to the private health sector also provides the latter with a growing market from which it can generate the resources to position itself as a more efficient provider of health facilities and therefore a greater threat to the NHS. The same thing would happen to the ability of the city of Vienna to preserve its housing policy. Should

the professional and middle class desert municipal housing the only place they could go would be to the private property market. That added influx to the private property market - already buoyant as a result of the dilution of the city's rent protection policies - would create a situation that would add to the pressure on the city to ensure that its working class tenants were given the same opportunity to "have a fair chance" to make money out of their homes by the introduction of a "Right to Buy" arrangement similar to the one that destroyed the municipal housing stock in Britain.

The housing achievements of "Red Vienna" arose in the revolutionary circumstances of post-First World War Austria and within the parameters of conventional left wing thinking much of what was achieved in Vienna at that time could be said to have been the result of a ruling class fearful of the revolutionary potential of the working class. In other words things like a radical housing programme was the price the ruling class was prepared to pay in order to maintain its position. But there is another way this could be viewed. These developments can also be seen as outcomes of a situation where the Vienna working class benefited from a kind of auction among the contending parties after the First World War. Those contending parties were the Catholic Church - which was a significant early investor in social housing in Vienna; upper class philanthropists - there remain several examples of significant philanthropic investment in social housing in Vienna by individuals that date from before the First World War, and the Vienna city authorities.

While it can be argued that the provision of such housing had the effect of preventing anarchy as an outcome in the immediate aftermath of the First World War that consideration was not the only, or in many cases, even the main, consideration of those who supplied such housing. In terms of national politics we have been taught to view anything that emerged in Germany and Austria-Hungary before the First World War as inherently bad. In terms of working class politics we have been taught to view anything that emerged in those countries by way of social advancement prior to the Russian Revolution

as bad because it defied the

revolutionary potential of the situation. The combination of these two vantage points has in many ways hindered any prospect of our understanding of Europe and has prevented the emergence of any useful assessment of the significance of the actual behaviour of the working class as functioning elements in their respective societies.

Unfortunately, societies and class relationships are not so easily compacted into either of these perspectives. Both Bismarckian Germany and Hapsburg Austria-Hungary offered their respective working classes a lot more than was on offer from the Anglo-Saxon world that went on to defeat them. It has to be remembered that it is precisely the perspective of these victors that has determined how we now look back on the predicament of the working class during those times. But looked at objectively, even before the advent of "Red Vienna", an important aspect of governance in the Hapsburg world was one that emphasised social responsibility and this was reflected in the way that the city of Vienna was managed in terms of housing. In May-June 1910 the 9<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Housing was held in Vienna and such was the importance attached to it by the Hapsburg Government that the *Daily News* correspondent commented that the person presiding over proceedings at the Congress was a former Minister of Justice of Austria and the current Minister of Public Works made a point of taking a direct part in the opening session. The *Daily News* correspondent also observed "that almost all the Governments of the Continent are officially represented (our own Government, I need hardly say, is not), among them being fewer than eleven of the German States." (*Daily News*, 2 June 1910)

With all this in mind it is a mistake to view the relationship of the working class to these societies as one that can be reduced to its revolutionary potential versus its capacity to be "bribed" with concessions that blunt that revolutionary potential. When it came to housing in Vienna, aside from the commitment of those governing the City, the Catholic Church was always committed to housing the poor without any reference to how such provision might blunt their

revolutionary potential. Their prime concern was for the impact on the morals of a population when forced to live in over-crowded and unhealthy conditions.

All in all, societies can only function when the various components that comprise them have reached an equilibrium between their contending interests. From time to time that equilibrium is thrown out of balance and in the attempt to re-establish equilibrium those contending interests either re-establish the old equilibrium or devise a completely new one. The First World War had the most devastating impact on the equilibrium of all the societies of Europe and we continue to experience the reverberations of that destruction.

In that context whether the achievements of "Red Vienna" are seen as a "bribe" forestalling the working class attaining its rightful place in a revolutionary world is irrelevant. Those developments had their genesis at a time when post-First World War Austrian society was attempting to re-establish a new equilibrium and where the working class continued to assert a place for itself on its own terms. A more accurate assessment would be to view those achievements as the inevitable outcome of an attempt by the components of Austrian society to re-establish social equilibrium in the aftermath of the destruction by the Allies of the old equilibrium after the First World War. The results of what was eventually restored was what the working class has been quite prepared to accept as an arrangement that enabled it to live comfortably and with dignity. The problem with continuing to treat such radical reforms as those instigated by the Social Democratic authorities in Vienna as mere "bribes" to sate the revolutionary potential of the working class is that it diminishes the ability of the working class to defend those reforms when they are under threat. As the example of the current threat to the "Red Vienna" housing legacy shows, such an attitude can end up leaving the road clear for those who would claim that a release of municipal housing to the market is ultimately a better way of serving the working class by concentrating on their interests as individuals rather than as a class.

# France's hopeless left opposition

By Froggy

In France political movements and the remaining political parties (Socialist party, Communist party) hold annual 'summer universities' rather than conferences. The Melenchon outfit with a ridiculous name designed to put off adults (France Insoumise/France Unbowed) held its summer university where a grown up actually spoke. This is François Ruffin, deputy for France Insoumise in Northern France. He is known for a film—*Merci Patron*—about Bernard Annault, the chairman and CEO of the Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy (LVMH) group of luxury brands and the world's richest man, on the occasion of a trade union battle. He is also known for his magazine 'Fakir', a platform for workers life stories of holding down three jobs, of getting sacked, or low pay and precarious employment.

The magazine is light on theory

and heavy on case studies.

At the Summer University François Ruffin tried to persuade the militants present that the left needs to present itself to the population as reassuring and common sense. This is a newspaper report of his efforts:

"For several long minutes, François Ruffin explained to an audience that was far from convinced that "what we need to do is reassure people and bring people together". "We're telling the French that we want to take the helm of the liner France but that the hull has a hole in it, there will be a storm, and that the crew is inexperienced and screaming at each other ... There must be a better way of instilling confidence," he says. So much for the idea of bringing people together. But reassurance seems even more important in the MP's mind because, he asserts, "today in

France it's not so much happy days as fearful days". François Ruffin assures us: "What we should say is not that our project is radical, but that it is based on common sense". And he asks the question: "What does 'radical mean'? Are we trying to win the applause of a general assembly of Social Science students at Nanterre University or are we trying to convince people in Moselle or Picardy and other places in France?"

François Ruffin did not go down well when he tried to join the Gilets Jaunes on the roundabouts in 2018, in fact no one would talk to him. He didn't go down well at the summer university this August. He does put his finger on one of the left's problems, but doesn't have a programme of his own.

## Palestine Links

Killings, pogroms, expulsion: Israel dispossesses Palestinians of their lands using settler violence (B'Tselem, 10 August 2023)

['Watershed moment': Over 700 academics equate Israeli occupation with apartheid \(Middle East Eye, 8 August 2023\)](#)

[Israeli Minister Ben-Gvir praises settlers who killed teen as "heroes" \(Tamara Nassar, Electronic Intifada, 6 August 2023\)](#)

[90 years ago, a negotiated 'transfer' led over 50,000 German Jews to Palestine \(Le Monde, 6 August 2023\)](#)

[UN agency reports nearly 600 settler attacks over past six months \(Times of Israel, 3 August 2023\)](#)

['Israel Is an Apartheid State': Progressives Explain Decision to Boycott Israeli President's Speech \(Common Dreams, 19 July 2023\)](#)

['The escalation is frightening': Jerusalem Christians fear for their future \(Natan Odenheimer, +972, 14 July 2023\)](#)

[Three Worlds: The high price Arab-Jews paid for the Zionist project \(Victoria Brittain, Middle East Eye, 12 July 2023\)](#)

[Palestinians removed from Jerusalem home to make way for Israeli settler takeover \(Middle East Eye, 11 July 2023\)](#)

[UN Special Rapporteur, Francesca Albanese, accuses Israel of sexually abusing Palestine prisoners \(Middle East Monitor, 11 July 2023\)](#)

[US intelligence assessment says Iran not currently developing nuclear weapons \(Yahoo News, 11 July 2023\)](#)

[Palestinian Population Census Published: These Are the Numbers \(Palestine Chronicle, 10 July 2023\)](#)

[US State Department dodges question on whether Palestinians have right to defend themselves \(Michael Arria, Mondoweiss, 10 July 2023\)](#)

[Israel Killed Civilians, Targeted Hospitals in Jenin With US Weapons and Support \(Marjorie Cohn, Truth Out, 10 July 2023\)](#)

[Oom-Shmoom: Israel's Battle against the United Nations \(Professor Avi Shlaim, Jadaliyya, 9 July 2023\)](#)

[Over 1,100 Palestinians said held by Israel without trial, highest figure since 2003 \(Emanuel Fabian, Times of Israel, 2 July 2023\)](#)



# Notes on the News

By Gwydion M. Williams

*Sick Britain*

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## Sick Britain

From the 1980s, Britons were tricked into voting for a system that helps only the very rich.

“Bosses at Britain’s biggest companies saw their pay rise by almost 16% on average last year as most workers’ wages were squeezed by rising prices.

“£3.91m in 2022, up from £3.38m in 2021.

“118 times more than a typical UK worker on £33,000 a year.”<sup>1</sup>

None of Thatcher’s promises have been met. More power for employers hasn’t boosted wealth creation in Britain or the USA. Slowed it in Italy and Japan, and in West Germany expanded as United Germany.

Brexit has made things worse.

“Millions of UK families using credit cards and loans to pay basic bills”.<sup>2</sup>

Promises to small businesses were unreal:

“‘It’s bleak’: string of family firms shut in Rishi Sunak’s Yorkshire seat”.<sup>3</sup>

Much the same in the rest of Britain.

Sensible ideas like charging interest on unpaid debts to small companies by big corporations somehow never got realised.

When rich speculators almost crashed the global economy, they were bailed out. Banks shut down many small businesses, to beef up their balance sheets.

Small businesses have always suffered from unrestricted capitalism. Few of them understand the connection. All they notice is that the state can get in their way.

The left from the 1960s also spread the idea that the

government was bad news. Offered an Ideal Socialist System as an alternative, but few believed this. And unwisely rejected Labour’s push in the 1960s and 1970s for Incomes Policy and Workers Control.

We in what’s now the Ernest Bevin Society were almost alone in seeing these ideas as the best Socialist Future that might actually happen.<sup>4</sup>

The Populist Right sounded much more logical. The government was there just to steal your money and waste it on something foolish.

Not that governments are actually smaller or less intrusive. But the main trend was that the middle class lost its morals. Relaxing on sex, thankfully. But also moved away from social responsibility. Increasingly asocial outside of families and close friends.

It does not even match Goldsmith’s 18<sup>th</sup> century complaint: **wealth accumulates and men decay**. Just now, *everything* decays. The big financial gains come either from luck or trickery – mostly a mix. Also hard work, but for something that would have happened anyway, or was never needed.

Austerity was cruel and pointless. Money is just one measure of Real Material Wealth, and often not the best.

The New Right cripple the society with their money obsession. Disappointed critics are still unwilling to praise the denounced system of tax-and-spend. Something that actually worked quite well.

## The Global South Stands Solid

The BRICS summit was an amazing triumph for China.

The Global South is content for China and Russia to be major rivals to NATO. Would let Russia keeping its gains in Ukraine, just as Turkiye keeps Northern Cyprus.

They reject a world dominated by Europe and its Settlement Colonies. Settlement Colonies on lands cleared of most of their native inhabitants, with the USA the biggest offender.

Japan and South Korea are still loosely attached to this fading ‘West’. But culturally they are very different. The link could vanish very suddenly.

And however things were in the past, ordinary Europeans are not gainers. Nor are those once defined and cherished as part of the Global White Race. The elite no longer believe in racism.

1 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-66574218.amp>  
2 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jul/30/millions-of-uk-families-using-credit-cards-and-loans-to-pay-basic-bills>  
3 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/jul/31/its-bleak-string-of-family-firms-shut-in-rishi-sunaks-yorkshire-seat>

4 <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/very-old-issues-images/magazines-010-to-019/magazine-019-xx/interview-with-barbara-castle/>

Their elected politicians dangle camouflaged racism, as a lure to voters silly enough to trust them. But in the USA, many of their own kids of all colours stay uneducated or badly educated.

The elite flourish by importing all sorts of talented foreigners. Obama had a Kenyan father living in Hawaii. The current Vice-President is the child of a South Asian and a Jamaican.

It's a bad system, and overdue to fall. Unpopular.<sup>5</sup> But uniting countries with little in common beyond being non-European was never going to be easy.

Admitting Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates gives BRICS a strong Muslim presence. Many doubted India would allow it.

Somehow they got a deal.

Of course Modi seeks a strong separate sovereign Hindu identity, and has some Muslims voting for him. For Muslims living in what's now functionally Hindustan, a lesser but safe position may be their best option. It's a world where US influence has wrecked the semi-socialist Universalism that dominated until the 1980s.

'BRICS Plus' must weaken external support for Muslims within the Republic of India. One more minority not actually protected by the USA's New World Order.

Modi must also be offended by many US politicians lumping India with China when it might cost them money. Demand that both make most of the big sacrifices to fix Climate Change.

But China gains the most. They build on recent success in cultivated Iran and Saudi Arabia. Persuading them that both are stronger if they do not confront each other.

Will Saudi Arabia and the UAE shifts some of their gigantic financial power to helping the Global South? Cease to be Sleeping Partners in the Western system of keeping down the poor?

<sup>5</sup> <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/problems-magazine-past-issues/the-west-fails-in-five-civilisations/the-west-fails-in-five-civilisations-2/>

The USA's total failure in Afghanistan and then callous neglect of their Afghan friends must count. They might have kept the Taliban more moderate by not cutting them off from overseas funds.

They preferred to make angry demands that the Taliban should not act as if they'd won decisively.

At least some people in the US government must have known how things would then go.

### China In Chaos?

Back in December 2021, Western media were already bad-mouthing the Chinese economy. So I. blogged *'Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Isn't'*.<sup>6</sup> Pointing out that the elite did not act as if they believed it.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE see China as a good partner. On this matter, their money and mouths are in harmony.

China's property crisis means that some foreign investors have lost, and so have many rich or speculative Chinese. But isn't that just what should happen, if you read the market wrongly?

The reality from the 1940s and down to the present moment has been a Mixed Economy, with no serious effort to restore the lightly-regulated capitalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> The real capitalists never allowed it.

Ayn Rand thought differently, but 'Ayn Rand' was a displaced Russian Jew, born as Alisa Rosenbaum. She concealed her Jewishness as far as she could, and ended up needing US government welfare.

Such inconvenient truths get covered up by well-paid experts. But the big problem with lying is that it's not true. Live in a fog of comforting lies, and you will keep bumping into unwelcome realities.

(For the philosophically inclined, I did a detailed explanation of why subatomic physics does not actually support the old and foolish notion that

<sup>6</sup> <https://mrgwydionmwilliams.quora.com/China-Putting-Your-Money-Where-Your-Mouth-Isn-t>

<sup>7</sup> <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/problems-magazine-past-issues/the-mixed-economy-won-the-cold-war/>

we can make reality what we want it to be, just by wishing hard enough. See <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/problems-magazine-past-issues/in-a-hole-in-a-hole-dwelt-a-nothingness/>.)

To most of our Western pundits, it is literally unthinkable that a successful economy would not give maximum protection to members of the elite. After the West's 2008 crisis, the state picked up their gambling debts under the confusing label of 'quantitative easing'.

To keep 'sound money', spending for the rest of the society was cut.

The New Right logic is to make the poor suffer to protect the rich. Even to strangle the real economy, to avoid damage to fancy financial games.

They may also believe stories about China having been ruined by Mao, and generously saved by Nixon and Kissinger teaching them how to be good capitalists. The actual China experts know better. They mention that China was still poor when Mao died in 1976. But not that it had been a failed state and extremely poor back in 1949. That it had been growing faster overall than the USA or Britain.<sup>8</sup> Fast even during most of the now-denounced Cultural Revolution years.<sup>9</sup>

China has a problem with rising unemployment for new workers under 24.<sup>10</sup> But what's kept obscure is that unemployment for those 24 or over is both low and stable. The young people are likely to get jobs in time, though mostly more modest than they had hoped for.

I also found this in the middle of a general denunciation of China:

"Under the banner of 'common prosperity', Mr Xi has aimed to increase social mobility and reduce inequality. But much of this has backfired. In going after property developers, tech firms and the tutoring industry, he has harmed new graduates' most reliable

<sup>8</sup> <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/recent-issues/2019-11-magazine/2019-11/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/problems-magazine-past-issues/how-mao-greatly-strengthened-china/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/08/business/china-youth-unemployment.html>

employers.”<sup>11</sup>

Pain, but pain with gain.

## Climate Change Inferiority for China and India?

Most US politicians are saying that China and India must make the big cuts in Greenhouse Gases. The USA should sit on its hands until those disobedient foreigners start behaving.

Those fast-growing economies do count. India comes third in total greenhouse gases, with a staggering 2.5 thousand million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year in 2016. China comes first, with 10.4. The USA only 5.0.

But India's population is 1.3 billion – far larger than the USA, though the USA has ‘bulked up’ with vast numbers of diverse immigrants. Individual Indians are among the least guilty, with a mere 1.89 tons per head.<sup>12</sup>

China has a middling 7.44 tons.

Per head, US citizens average 15.32 tons. And vastly worse, if you consider all of the decades when they and we Europeans pumped out most of the damaging gases.

The US wants each US citizen to go on doing twice the climate damage as each Chinese. Over eight times the allowance for each citizen of India. And expects them to cut first.

The West's politics from the 1980s have extended the privileges of those who already had more than their fair share. The rich within Western nations, and Western nations lording it over the rest of the planet.

They want Chinese, in particular, to accept permanent inferiority. But also want India in an even more inferior position. Which must have helped Mr Modi decide which way to jump, when he had the option of not letting BRICS expand.

Probably every other major Indian politician will think the same.

## War Until the West Runs Out of Gullible Ukrainians?

From 2014, I've insisted that it is a

Ukrainian Civil War. Russia stepped in to defend ethnic Russians. A Russia-orientated minority who are a majority in the regions Russia now holds.

People left vulnerable by Yeltsin's carelessness or callousness. (Do people remember how he insulted the leaders of Ireland, by refusing to get off his aircraft when they were waiting to greet his arrival.)

Putin had to keep Crimea, which was part of Russia until 1954. He needs it to keep safe the vital Black Sea Fleet.

Putin didn't particularly want the Donbass, or the anti-Kiev regions that now form a bridge between the two regions.<sup>13</sup> But nor could he sit back and allow vast numbers of Russian-speakers to be ethnically cleansed. Not let them share the fate of ethnic Serbs cleared from Croatia, and now at risk in Kosovo.

Historically, Ukrainians never managed a successful fight for their own independence. Cut lose when the Soviet Union collapsed, they failed to turn their vast potential into actual prosperity. Now they invent an heroic past for themselves, with Russians as foreign oppressors. Past hatreds of Poles and Jews are set aside, at least for now.

Also previous oppression and slave-raiding by Crimean Tartars. And since most Westerners know those Tartars just as victims of Stalin, though also pro-Nazi, I'll give you a source detailing their historic sins:

“Until the beginning of the 18th century, Crimean Nogays were known for frequent, at some periods almost annual, slave raids into Ukraine and Russia. For a long time, until the late 18th century, the Crimean Khanate maintained a massive slave trade with the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East which was one of the important factors of its economy.”<sup>14</sup>

This is worth mentioning in debates over slavery. Black Africans were just the final wave of victims. Unusually badly treated: the commercialised slave trade to the

New World worked to death most of those it purchased. Only a minority left behind modern descendants. But the ‘heroic’ Vikings were also major slave traders, with the rich Muslim world as major customers. And the British elite before the Roman invasion was happy to sell ordinary Britons as profitable exports.<sup>15</sup>

In our own times, Yeltsin did a deal with sympathetic elected rulers of Ukraine and Byelorussia, to end the fading power of Gorbachev as ruler of the Soviet Union. And being a loud-mouthed fool, he didn't get written promises that NATO would not move eastward. Got no binding promises of cultural and language rights for Russian-speakers outside of Russia. Many other sovereign nations accept such things: he saw no need.

Sadly, Ukrainians left free to choose their own rulers never could elect a decent government. They've had a string of Presidents elected with enthusiasm, but widely despised by the end of their term. And keep continuous stifling corruption, whereas Putin by authoritarian methods recovered modest prosperity. So many preferred to return to Moscow's authority:

“I became a witness to a number of Ukrainians, some of them entire families, trying to cross the border and to immigrate to Russia. Indeed, the only other type of passport (besides my U.S. passport) I saw amongst those held over for questioning and processing was the blue Ukrainian passport. This is evidence of an inconvenient fact to the Western narrative of the war that portrays Russia as an invader of Ukraine. In fact, many Ukrainians have an affinity for Russia and have voluntarily chosen to live there over the years.

“Between 2014—the real start of the war when the Ukrainian government began attacking its own people in the Donbas—and the beginning of Russia's intervention in February 2022, around one million Ukrainians had already immigrated to Russia.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2023/08/17/why-are-chinas-young-people-so-disillusioned>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.worldometers.info/co2-emissions/co2-emissions-per-capita/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://mrgwydionmwilliams.quora.com/Ukraine-Mariupol-and-the-War-for-the-Oblasts>

<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimean\\_Tatars#Golden\\_Horde\\_and\\_Crimean\\_Khanate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimean_Tatars#Golden_Horde_and_Crimean_Khanate)

<sup>15</sup> <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/past-issues/isolated-labour-affairs-pages-before-2015/slavery-in-the-british-empire/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://covertactionmagazine>.



They feel closer to Russia, now that Kiev has defined itself as a bitter foe of all things Russian and everything from the Soviet era. Prefer to identify with a Red Army that did more than half the work of breaking the formidable German Army,<sup>17</sup> rather than a bunch of chancers who swung between working for Hitler and trying to be a third force.<sup>18</sup> Who achieved little beyond mass murder, but were kept in Canada by the CIA until a use was found for them.

It is unreasonable to hold citizens to choices made when Kiev governments were more moderate. When its prospects were not obviously worse than those of the Russian Federation.

## Snippets

### A Very English Ruthlessness

Channel 4 recently showed *Becoming Elizabeth*,<sup>19</sup> with the future Tudor Queen learning to lie and flatter during the reign of her brother Edward 6th.

It ends with his health failing, and dread among the Protestant Lords. Mary the daughter of Catherine of Aragon was heir in a nation that had a majority inclined to traditional Catholicism. Though not fond of the Pope or the Counter-Reformation, as Mary was to discover.

There were plans for a second season, which would have opened with the failed bid to make Jane Grey queen. She is given a lot of build-up, and more as offender than victim.

It looked likely to continue to show the real affection between Mary and Elizabeth – something I had independently noted as significant.<sup>20</sup>

Sadly, it was cancelled with just

[com/2023/08/10/russia-donbass-and-the-reality-of-conflict-in-ukraine/](https://www.quora.com/2023/08/10/russia-donbass-and-the-reality-of-conflict-in-ukraine/)  
17 <https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams/>

[Nazi-Germany-Was-Defeated-in-Russia](https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams/Nazi-Germany-Was-Defeated-in-Russia)  
18 [https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams.quora.com/Ukraine-Western-Media-in-2014-Reported-Nazi-Links](https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams/quora.com/Ukraine-Western-Media-in-2014-Reported-Nazi-Links)

19 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Becoming\\_Elizabeth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Becoming_Elizabeth)

20 <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/past-issues/labour-affairs-before-2014/mary-tudor-and-elizabeth-almost-a-beautiful-story/>

the one season. Maybe it was too realistic to be acceptable. ‘Bloody Mary’ is honest and loyal, while Elizabeth is increasingly cold and scheming. And not actually a virgin.

\*

### India On The Moon

Did China give India a free run at being first to soft-land at the lunar south pole? China has already done harder tasks – the far side, and flying moon-rocks back to Earth. Their own south pole landing will come later, and should return samples to Earth.

The hope is for water-ice in craters that stay in eternal shadow. Oxygen to breath and hydrogen for fuel; a lot cheaper than bringing it from Earth. But it’s just a hope.

India getting there is still a fine achievement, done cheaply.

India is doing fine, with its own equivalent of fascism. Tough for non-Hindu minorities, but Congress failed to create a strong national identity.

I think it regrettable that Indira Gandhi’s spell of secular authoritarian rule in the 1970s was cut short.<sup>21</sup> It was the most likely way of making a successful Indian Republic that remained close to Western values. I can’t now see that happening, even if Modi loses the next election.

\*

### Israel – Losing Westernisation

You can’t hold a man down without staying down with him. Booker T. Washington explained this to Southern Whites.<sup>22</sup> Sadly, they *preferred* to be under Northern Whites, but above Southern Blacks.

Covered it with blather about being heroic upholders of Christian Civilisation. I’d rate them as the worst instance of whatever’s positive in Anglo values.

For Israel, a minority of secular European Jews had a dream of a restored Israel as a place they’d be at home in. The awkward fact of vast numbers of non-Jews living there was mostly evaded, but did get one neat summary;

21 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Emergency\\_\(India\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Emergency_(India))

22 [https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Booker\\_T.\\_Washington](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Booker_T._Washington)

### "The bride is beautiful, but she is married to another man."<sup>23</sup>

But everything changed after Hitler’s mass killing of Jews. I’m puzzled why no one thought of carving out a specifically Jewish nation from parts of Europe where Jews had been large minorities, though clearly this would have been difficult and unpopular.

What actually happened was that Europeans and the USA preferred to dump the problem on the Arab World. They took up a half-hearted British scheme that had defined a specific Palestine from parts of several Ottoman Empire provinces.

Partition could have worked, but only if Israel had allowed a real sovereign Palestine to exist alongside Israel. And sadly, when the Soviet collapse made this acceptable to the main Palestinian leaders, it also seemed feasible to most Israelis that they could take more.

Israel always had a tension between the Europeanised founders and Jews from the Muslim world. These now dominate, and ignore the minority who protest about stopping the judges from overriding the majority will.

None of them take note of the extreme danger if the rival forces within the Islamic world stop fighting each other. This is being brokered by China, and accepted by India for ‘BRICS Plus’. Neither of these have strong feelings about Jews or Israel. But they are likely to do little if some strong anti-Israel coalition emerges.

If joined by Pakistan, which has nuclear weapons to match those that Israel secretly possesses, they could force some harsh partition on Israel.

Or it might be much worse than that.

\*

Old newsnotes at the magazine websites. I also write regular blogs - <https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams>

23 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_bride\\_is\\_beautiful,\\_but\\_she\\_is\\_married\\_to\\_another\\_man](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_bride_is_beautiful,_but_she_is_married_to_another_man)

# How to pay for it.

## The case for the elimination of the cap on child benefit.

### An imaginary interview between the BBC and a progressive Labour Party

BBC: Labour says that it will eliminate the cap on child benefit. That will cost some £1.3 billion. How will Labour pay for it?

LP: A Labour government will pay for it the way British governments pay for everything that has been approved by parliament. It will transfer funds to the commercial banks (NatWest, Lloyds, etc) and instruct them to mark up the deposit accounts of those entitled to the payment.

BBC: But what happens if there is not sufficient money in the government's account?

LP: There will always be sufficient money in the government's account. The Bank of England will simply expand its balance sheet and loan the government whatever funds have been approved by Parliament.

BBC: But the Bank of England is an independent institution. It might decide not to do that.

LP: It is exactly the job of the Bank of England to finance whatever debts the government issues which have been approved by Parliament. By law it has to do so. As Andrew Berkeley et al make clear in their detailed account of the UK Exchequer:

"Once Parliament has authorised Supply there is no mechanism within the UK monetary system to stop that spending happening. The Bank has no power to refuse and there is no legal mechanism by which a balance has to be checked for available funds. The Bank accommodates the expenditure by balance sheet expansion ... Parliament effectively legislates money into existence." An Accounting Model of the UK Exchequer, Andrew Berkeley, Richard Tye & Neil Wilson p116.

BBC: So the government is printing money?

LP: Printing money is a rather outdated phrase. The government, for the most part, just increases the balance in people's bank accounts. Creating money might be a more appropriate description.

BBC: Either way, printing or creating money, it is increasing the national

debt. That cannot be a good thing.

LP: Why is it not a good thing? It will take a lot of stress off many families with more than two children who are struggling to cover their costs of living.

BBC: But it's increasing the national debt which our children will have to pay off.

LP: It's important that we understand the sequence here.

Parliament approves child benefit payments for all children.

The BoE marks up the government's account with the required funds.

The government instructs the commercial banks to mark up the deposit accounts of those entitled to the payments and puts the required funds into the deposit accounts which the commercial banks hold at the BoE. (These deposit accounts have the special name of reserve accounts.)

The private sector is now wealthier by the amount of child benefit that has been paid to it by the government.

National debt is just the cumulative difference between what the state has created and spent into the economy and what it has taxed out. Assuming there has been no increase in taxation then national debt will have increased. Private sector wealth will also have increased by exactly the same amount.

BBC: Won't this debt have to be paid back?

LP: No. National debt should be reduced when it makes sense to reduce it. And please note that national debt can only be reduced by reducing private sector wealth.

BBC: But why then does the government issue bonds on which interest rate payments have recently greatly increased?

LP: Issuing bonds and deciding what interest should be paid on these bonds is a political choice, not an economic choice. The purpose of the bonds is **not to raise money**. Rather it is to give savers a riskless, interest earning asset.

BBC: But what if the private sector does not buy the bonds?

LP: That's fine. The purpose of the bonds is not to raise money. Indeed, it would be more appropriate to call them savings certificates. It's up to the private sector what to do with their savings. The government does not need them. It issues bonds because they

are useful for institutions like pension funds.

BBC: But, if the government can spend without limit, why does it not just do that?

LP: The government could indeed spend without limit. The government is not financially constrained. The BoE must, by law, create money to pay for anything approved by Parliament. But the government is resource constrained. Before spending a government should always consider whether the resources are there to be bought. During the pandemic, Sunak had limitless funds but they could not magic up Personal Protection Equipment.

BBC: How would this apply to the issue of ending the cap on child benefit?

LP: If Parliament has approved the ending of the cap on child benefit, the BoE will create the required funds and make them available to the government. The government will then use the commercial banks to mark up the accounts of those who would be entitled to the payment. What are the recipients of this money likely to spend it on? Probably on food and clothes. This would require that some extra food and clothes were available to be purchased. Since some 4% of working age people are unemployed or underemployed, it would seem that the extra demand for food and clothes could be easily met with no inflationary consequences and could possibly lead to a small reduction in unemployment.

BBC: So we would have better fed and clothed children, possibly lower unemployment and a higher national debt.

LP: That's right. But the national debt is just the difference between what the government has spent into the economy and what it has taxed out. No one should worry about its size. The only concern should be whether the spending and taxing has good effects on society. We have argued above that spending to end the cap on child benefits would appear to have good effects on society: happier and healthier children and even a small reduction in employment. There would appear to be no inflationary consequences. So let's do it. The increased size of the national debt is a matter of no importance.

# BRICS 15th Summit Conference 22-24 August 2023

By Michael Murray

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## ***Not just another BRIC in the Wall***

This week, at its 15th Summit Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, BRICS announced it was inviting 6 countries to join the existing Five BRICS members, more than doubling its membership. The countries are: Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Ethiopia, Argentina. If the invitations are taken up by all, membership would come into effect as early as January, 2024. BRICS' share of global GDP would then reach 29.3% and combined population would equal 46% of world's population. (*IMF estimates*)

In the year 2021-2022, China, the largest member of BRICS, perhaps its powerhouse, contributed more to world economic growth than the G7 combined: 38.6% compared to 25.75% of which the US share is 18.6%. (World Bank database, tweeted by Hua Chunying, China Foreign Affairs Ministry).

Dozens of other countries have applied to join in the last year alone, reflecting an acceleration of interest. Many others have signalled they are considering joining and have already begun to participate in the myriad activities of BRICS, including involvement with the newly opened BRICS bank (described below). 67 countries were invited to the Summit. 34 Prime Ministers/

Presidents and other senior officials were in attendance at the 3 day event.

All this can be seen as heralding a geopolitical game changer in favour of the EMDCs (Emerging Markets and Developing Countries). As Cyril Ramaphosa, South Africa's President and Summit host said *"An expanded BRICS will represent a diverse group of nations with different political systems that share a common desire to have a more balanced global order."*

## ***Why the interest in BRICS from developing countries?***

The call for a more balanced global order can be said to date from the end of the Cold War when the role of the IMF (International Monetary Fund), The World Bank; and the WTO (World Trade Organisation), with their beginning circa 1944 began to be seen as no longer reflecting the interests, or involving meaningful participation of the majority of the developing world. And, it could be argued, parts of the developed world also. Included in all that is the issue of the continued existence of a US dollar-based payment system which denotes all currencies in relation to the US dollar and is seen to be increasingly weaponised by the US in pursuit of its own narrow interests.

*"Debates about the centrality of the US to the global system have been revived, and ideas about finding alternative approaches to coordinating global economic, financial and trade activity are engaging policy makers around the world," Julius Sen, "The Weaponisation of the Dollar, policy options for small countries," LSE Ideas Strategic Update, August 2019.* Sen is right about that, although, having all but dismissed G20 as an option in its current state, he does not posit BRICS as the go to for small countries.

A number of financial crises, culminating with the big crash of 2007/8, and how that panned out, has

a lot to do with the growing interest in BRICS. The endless wars after 9/11 driven by a hubristic US pursuit of unilateralism and hegemony accompanied by an arrogant and aggressive presumption that *"those who are not with us are against us - and if you're against us: look out"* also contributed. The result has been a polarisation of the "West," now representing no more than 12 to 15% of the world's population.

Another thing that's dawned on the world is the truth of Kissinger's quote; *"to be an enemy of America can be dangerous, but to be a friend can be fatal."* Take the case of Germany's gas pipeline being blown up and wrecking its industry. Or another loyal ally: Japan in the 1980's as it started to outperform US industrially and had to be taken down. President Xi nailed it when he said the US had *"gone out of its way to cripple the emerging markets and developing countries. Whichever country is developing fast becomes its target of containment and whichever country is catching up becomes its target of obstruction."* He went on to say: *"The BRICS expansion will inject fresh vitality into BRICS cooperation mechanism and further strengthen the forces for world peace and development"* (*Xinhua, 24 August, 2023*) More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic put the cap on the world's problems, exacerbating its inequities.

Economist Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel prize-winner and good friend of Corbyn's Labour, wrote in the Scientific American: *"The pandemic has exacerbated all inequalities according to data pulled together in Nature. By the end of 2022 the World Bank estimates that an additional 75 million will have been pushed into poverty (defined as living on \$1.90 a day) than had been predicted before the pandemic. That would bring the total number of people living in extreme poverty to 677 million by the end of the year - a staggering two-thirds of those (500 million) could be in sub-*



*Saharan Africa.*" (29 June 2022) Add to that the sense of grievance at the non-availability of vaccines, face masks - and expensive items like ventilators and oxygen masks due to profiteering and the dearth of manufacturing capacity to respond to the crisis.

UN General Secretary, António Guterres, in June this year described the IMF and World Bank 's response to the COVID-19 pandemic as a "*glaring failure that left dozens badly indebted.*" He also said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had benefited rich countries instead of poor ones.

Of course, the current-day role of the UN has itself been criticised as unfit for purpose and, as we shall see later, it is prioritised for deep-rooted reform by BRICS.

As the core of the UN, the Security Council has come in for the most criticism. Whatever the justification for its post -WWII design: 5 permanent members, each with a veto, and 10 temporary members, it's long overdue a makeover. But with the current stand-off between the US and allies on one hand and Russia and China on the other - taken together and separately - any attempt at changing its composition would not end well. In the meantime, the entire continents of Latin America and Africa remain unrepresented amongst the permanent members of the SC - as well as the most populous country on the planet - India.

In the short term this situation can only deteriorate as the conflict in Ukraine reaches its denouement and US/ NATO winds itself up for another war, this time with China - on the side of those whom it insisted vacate its UN permanent seat back in 1971 - and fighting those it gave the seat, in recognition of its "One China" status, to the China it now wants to fight. Do they really expect an awakening post colonial world to support that madness?

And as I write this: with one candidate for the US presidency in jail and his opponent, the present incumbent, possibly on his way

there too, is it any wonder an increasing number of countries are searching for a better way to live together on this long suffering planet ?

### ***The founding document of BRICS 2009***

The "*Joint statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders,*" was issued on completion of the 1st formal Summit, held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, 16 June 2009, attended by the leaders of Brazil: Luis Inácio Lula de Silva; Dmitry Medvedev; India: Manmohan Singh; China: Hu Jintao. (The "S" in BRICS above represents South Africa which joined in the following year.) There is no intention of adding new members' initials to BRICS - so it remains the "brand name" for the time being.

Clearly, much thought had gone into the document in the years up to 2009. There is a sense of each paragraph being assiduously scripted: and meant to highlight items for action, not serve as rhetorical flourishes. The statement rewards careful reading: to get a sense of the thinking behind this original idea, and a baseline against which to evaluate later statements.

We'll only comment on paragraphs (1) and (2) here to make a couple of points which might not occur to the reader. In these paragraphs note that it makes it clear that it did not see itself setting up in opposition to existing organisations, such as the UN and, more significantly, G20, which its existing members will be attending later this year, with the Indian Prime Minister, Modi, presiding. Russia, incidentally, will also be attending, represented by Lavrov in person and Putin virtually.

Indeed, BRICS goes out of its way to respect member countries' strategic autonomy. Some examples: this year's host country, South Africa, has trading partnerships with the US, UK as well as with other BRICS countries. India makes no secret of its good relations with US and the EU. The

Saudis maintain strong security relations with the US and EU. Tolerating a diversity of politics and allegiances and the right of sovereign nations to manage their own internal affairs while working together for the common goal of a more equal, inclusive model of pan-global governance is one of the great achievements of this still developing organisation. Being "post west" rather than "anti-west" best describes the BRICS' stance.

The purpose of diplomacy is to identify common ground, resolve conflict and promote cooperation. As the G7 becomes increasingly ideologically lined up behind the USA, its influence is waning while that of BRICS is growing - not least because of its inclusiveness, pragmatism - and consensual decision making seen by the developing world as the way to go - in armed conflict as well as business.

And who cannot but marvel at the success of China successfully brokering a peace agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia - and that culminating in both joining BRICS ? And see how their joint membership of BRICS, along with the other oil producers, resets the middle east's oil industry in favour of this new organisation, its present, and without a doubt, future membership.

### ***Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders***

We, the leaders of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China, have discussed the current situation in the global economy and other pressing issues of global development, and also prospects for further strengthening collaboration within the BRIC, at our meeting in Yekaterinburg on June 16, 2009.

We have arrived at the following conclusions:

1. We stress the central role played by the G20 Summits in dealing with the financial crisis. They have fostered cooperation, policy

coordination and political dialogue regarding international economic and financial matters.

2. We call upon all states and relevant international bodies to act vigorously to implement the decisions adopted at the G20 Summit in London on April 2, 2009. We shall cooperate closely among ourselves and with other partners to ensure further progress of collective action at the next G20 Summit to be held in Pittsburgh in September 2009. We look forward to a successful outcome of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development to be held in New York on June 24-26, 2009.

3. We are committed to advance the reform of international financial institutions, so as to reflect changes in the global economy. The emerging and developing economies must have greater voice and representation in international financial institutions, whose heads and executives should be appointed through an open, transparent, and merit-based selection process. We also believe that there is a strong need for a stable, predictable and more diversified international monetary system.

4. We are convinced that a reformed financial and economic architecture should be based, *inter alia*, on the following principles:

- democratic and transparent decision-making and implementation process at the international financial organisations;
- solid legal basis;
- compatibility of activities of effective national regulatory institutions and international standard-setting bodies;
- strengthening of risk management and supervisory practices.

5. We recognise the important role played by international trade and foreign direct investments in the world economic recovery. We call upon all parties to work together to improve the international trade

and investment environment. We urge the international community to keep the multilateral trading system stable, curb trade protectionism, and push for comprehensive and balanced results of the WTO's Doha Development Agenda.

6. The poorest countries have been hit hardest by the financial crisis. The international community needs to step up efforts to provide liquid financial resources for these countries. The international community should also strive to minimise the impact of the crisis on development and ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Developed countries should fulfil their commitment of 0.7% of Gross National Income for the Official Development Assistance and make further efforts in increasing assistance, debt relief, market access and technology transfer for developing countries.

7. The implementation of the concept of sustainable development, comprising, *inter alia*, the Rio Declaration, Agenda for the 21st Century and multilateral environmental agreements, should be a major vector in the change of paradigm of economic development.

8. We stand for strengthening coordination and cooperation among states in the energy field, including amongst energy producers and consumers and transit states, in an effort to decrease uncertainty and ensure stability and sustainability. We support diversification of energy resources and supply, including renewable energy, security of energy transit routes and creation of new energy investments and infrastructure.

9. We support international cooperation in the field of energy efficiency. We stand ready for a constructive dialogue on how to deal with climate change based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, given the need to combine measures to protect the climate with steps to fulfil our socio-economic development tasks.

10. We reaffirm to enhance cooperation among our countries in socially vital areas and to strengthen the efforts for the provision of international humanitarian assistance and for the reduction of natural disaster risks. We take note of the statement on global food security issued today as a major contribution of the BRIC countries to the multilateral efforts to set up the sustainable conditions for this goal.

11. We reaffirm to advance cooperation among our countries in science and education with the aim, *inter alia*, to engage in fundamental research and development of advanced technologies.

12. We underline our support for a more democratic and just multipolar world order based on the rule of international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and collective decision-making of all states. We reiterate our support for political and diplomatic efforts to peacefully resolve disputes in international relations.

13. We strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterate that there can be no justification for any act of terrorism anywhere or for whatever reasons. We note that the draft Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism is currently under the consideration of the UN General Assembly and call for its urgent adoption.

14. We express our strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the United Nations playing the central role in dealing with global challenges and threats. In this respect, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN with a view to making it more efficient so that it can deal with today's global challenges more effectively. We reiterate the importance we attach to the status of India and Brazil in international affairs, and understand and support their aspirations to play a greater role in the United Nations.

15. We have agreed upon steps to

promote dialogue and cooperation among our countries in an incremental, proactive, pragmatic, open and transparent way. The dialogue and cooperation of the BRIC countries is conducive not only to serving common interests of emerging market economies and developing countries, but also to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

16. Russia, India and China welcome the kind invitation of Brazil to the next BRIC summit it will host in 2010. (*BRICS Information Centre, University of Toronto*)

### ***The New Development Bank of BRICS - High S&P Ratings***

BRICS \$100 Billion New Development Bank (NDB) opened in 2015. “NDB finances projects and innovates tailored solutions to help build a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable future for the planet” says its own blurb. It will focus on energy, water, transport, environment, social and digital infrastructure. Its contribution to the Summit deliberations this year was on the subject of: “*BRICS and Africa: Partnership for accelerated growth, sustainable development and inclusive multilateralism.*” To follow the progress of NDB, including earmarked projects and work in progress, go to [www.ndb.int](http://www.ndb.int) It's a very user-friendly site and very informative.

The Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA) with \$100 Billion at its disposal is intended to provide support in dealing with balance of payments issues arising from currency fluctuations and the like, useful when members wish to trade in each other's currencies. It began its operations around the same time as the NDB.

Both of these could be considered to be in competition with the IMF, though that isn't how they choose to present themselves.

What's important is how they go about their business. Not lose the run of themselves with all the

chat about “de-dollarisation” and “BRICS currencies,” much of it a bit previous, a lot of it misinformed.

In that regard, the good news is that : “On February 27, 2023, S&P Global Ratings affirmed its ‘AA+’ long-term and ‘A-1+’ short-term foreign currency issuer credit ratings on New Development Bank (NDB). The outlook on the long-term rating remains stable,” the statement reads.

“The affirmed ratings reflect our opinion that NDB will establish itself as a catalyst to reduce the infrastructure deficits faced by its BRICS members. At the same time, we expect the bank to continue to instil sound governance and risk management principles across its operations. This expectation supports our assessment of NDB's very strong enterprise risk profile and extremely strong financial risk profile,” the agency explained.

While on the subject: Labour members who attended the Economics workshops in Corbyn/McDonnell's time will be interested to know that Dilma Rousseff, Economist and former President of Brazil, Brazil Workers' Party, who spoke at one of them, that the present writer attended, is the new President of BRICS' New Development Bank. If you don't know of her you should:

Go to YouTube. Conversation: Jeremy Corbyn and Dilma Rousseff. - Progressive International

### ***(5) The Chinks in the BRICS***

Could BRICS exist without China ? A question aired on a TV programme covering the BRICS Summit, going on to make the point that China's GDP was three times that of India, six times than of Russia and eight times that of Brazil - disproportionally outsize its fellow members.

Then the punchline : was China merely masquerading as a champion of the emerging markets and developing countries with a GDP of getting on for 20 Trillion ?

Martin Jacques, author of the encyclopaedic “*When China rules the World*,” 2012 answered: “*This is the moment of the developing world, not just China. China may be the most powerful country in the world, but it has its modern origin post 1945. It was part and parcel of the post 1945 anti-colonialist movement. It is seen as a supporter of many developing countries' aspirations for independence and nationhood - as is Russia, especially in Africa where this year's Summit is being held and the theme of the event is “Africa and BRICS.”*”

But that doesn't wash with the UK's political class. Sunak took advantage of his being on the podium of the G7 Hiroshima conference to call out China as “*the biggest challenge of our age to our global security and prosperity.*”

“China is looking to build a broader coalition of developing countries to extend Beijing's influence and reinforce its efforts to compete with the US on the global stage,” said the Guardian. “*The Summit may see the BRICS group take a clearly anti-western turn. This raises the prospect of a new and re-energised economic and political actor against the US and its allies in world affairs.*” Projection, I think, is the word.

Make the working assumption that if the Chinese say they want to reach a win-win modus operandi of mutual respect and cooperation they mean it. There's some hope for us if you do.

### ***YouTube videos going in more depth into BRICS:***

—Pepe Escobar Michael Hudson on BRICS plus six, Ukraine and the multipolar world economy Danny Haiphong

—BRICS Expansion will make powerful economic bloc - what about politically? Breakthrough News



# Party Politics, Trade Unions and the Scope of Collective Action.

By Dave Gardner

In the July/August editorial of *Labour Affairs*, we drew attention to the British trade unions at their most influential period between the Second World War and the late 1970s. It is worth asking 'What is a trade union?' before going on to the question of the role that they may or may not play in serving the interests of the working class and working people more generally. The basic idea is very simple: individual workers are weak in relation to their employers. They depend on their employer for their livelihood and the employer can withdraw their employment rendering them without means of support. On the other hand, as a collective, employees are a lot stronger. An employer may be comfortable sacking a single awkward worker, he cannot contemplate sacking his entire workforce if no replacements are available. If workers as a collective, withdraw their labour from an employer for long enough then the employer will no longer be able to do business.

Trade unions were for many years illegal in Britain and other countries. They were thought to be both a threat to businesses and to the political order in the country. Trade union rights to representation had to be fought for and many trade unionists suffered and died in the cause of trade unions' right to exist. Today there are many who still doubt their legitimacy and would like to see them fade away, whether through legal coercion or through indifference. Their ability to organise in particular workplaces is usually fiercely contested by employers. Their role in civil society and politics is significant but cannot be taken for granted. Most worryingly, if they are not longer supported by workers they will undoubtedly fade away.

Trade Unions are bodies that organise workers collectively for the purposes of bargaining with an employer or group of employers to further their collective interests. Their main function is and always

has been to ensure adequate wages, working conditions and security of employment for their members. These are clearly vital collective interests for employees and their dependents and cannot be neglected by any trade union worthy of the name. A question arises, however, as to how far other interests should be pursued by their trade union. Should, for example, the trade union negotiate a decent pension for its members? Should a trade union have a say in who gets employed in a business? Should they take an interest in vocational education and the nature of the qualifications needed to become competent in the activities needed by the business? Should they demand representation alongside management at plant level to further their bargaining strength? Should they demand representation at enterprise level for the same reasons? Should they be involved in matters of national importance for workers such as running the national insurance and social security systems? Before we address these issues, it's worth noting that obtaining vital information about the enterprise's operations, including its assets, profits, dividends, liabilities, investment plans and the condition of its rivals may all contribute to making bargaining on the basics of pay and conditions more effective. One way to do this is to employ specialist workers to investigate these issues. Another is to have members on the board of the enterprise so that they can have access to and comment on these matters. The more that workers know about the operations of their employers the more effective they will be in advancing their interests.

By and large trade unions in Britain have seen their role to be focused on improving pay, conditions and pensions through collective bargaining and, where necessary through striking. Sometimes they will conduct forensic investigation of the state of health of the businesses with which they are bargaining – *Unite* is a good example of this. More rarely, they will get involved

in training issues. The *EETPU* under the leadership of Eric Hammond is an outstanding example of this approach. However, the idea that they should assume a role in running the business, particularly at the level of the governing body, the board of directors, is anathema to most, if not all British trade union general secretaries. In the last issue, we described how this approach led to a position where business could not act independently without the consent of trade unions and how successive governments sought to provide a structure in which the great power of the trade unions could operate so as to move beyond stalemate towards at least some form of guarded co-operation on matters of common interest and how these attempts failed through trade union unwillingness to engage.

Such an institutional framework would have made trade unionism a part of the British constitution, both legally and in terms of established institutions and practices. As we noted, with the exception of some outstanding leaders such as Jack Jones and Clive Jenkins, this approach was rejected in favour of an approach that entrenched the class stalemate. On this view, workers and bosses have antagonistic interests which cannot be reconciled. It's management's right to manage and workers' right to oppose management. Effective opposition to management leads to better pay and improved conditions, something which no employer will willingly concede. We noted that this approach, when conducted from a union position of strength, ultimately led to the long term and continuing decline of trade unions in Britain. Once a certain level of power had been obtained by the trade union movement it did not have a way forward. In the absence of any initiative to expand union power into the realm of governance and management and hence into economic responsibility and responsibility for the well-being of the organisations in which they worked, trade unions had nowhere

to go. Even at the time relatively well-disposed Labour Party could not help them and in fact discredited itself through association with a movement that did not seem to know what to do with itself. With the defeat of Labour in 1979 the party went through a period of disorientation and ceased to be an effective force throughout the 1980s and beyond.

In the end, the lesson that the Labour Party learned from this period was that it should distance itself from the trade unions and closely shadow the Tory Party if it wanted to gain power once again. In turn, the activist base and administrative structure of the party more closely came to resemble that of the Tories. Nowadays, and since the time of Blair, the trade union movement can expect little from the Labour Party, which as we have argued, has increasingly become a Tory Team B. However, in the absence of meaningful political representation, all that remains to the working class is local and national struggles for improvements in pay and conditions with varying degrees of success. The movement's decline has been accelerated through the successive introduction of highly restrictive legislation making it more and more difficult for them to effectively represent their members. Deindustrialisation has helped to restrict trade unions in the private sector and left them predominantly within the public and ex public sector, while large sections of the working class remain in precarious and poorly paid employment without any union representation. The attempt to use trade unions as an instrument to destabilise the State in the mid-1980s only speeded up their decline. We have now seen that the Labour Party is an organisation that, although it nominally supports working class interests, in effect disables them by posing as acting in their interests while in practice failing to do so.

#### Class Struggle and Socialism.

Class struggle is to a large extent the day-to-day conflict of interests within the workplace on company policy on wages and conditions. All of us experience conflict, not only in the workplace but in other areas of our lives. We learn to negotiate, compromise and co-operate even

when our interests are in many respects opposed. The interests of capital and labour are opposed, but they can be reconciled on a temporary basis as both have an interest in the viability of the enterprises which one group owns and the other depends on for its livelihood. Trade unionism is the practical expression of the truth that collective action in pursuit of a coherent objective by individually weak but numerous individuals is more effective than individual action. Collective action is the basis of socialism so in that sense trade unions are bound to have some kind of socialist orientation, even when their explicit orientation is liberal or Christian Democratic.

In Britain's case that collective action has usually been limited to achieving the individual goods of higher pay, better pensions and better safety and better job security. At the time when it was most powerful and effective the trade unions and the Labour Party were also able to achieve goods that had a collective as well as an individual value: better education, a national health service, better public transport and better housing. These goods can be enjoyed by all and contribute to general prosperity and well-being as well as benefitting individuals. It's important to note as well that political and union action at the municipal level can also bring about important local benefits such as recreational space, bus services and housing. Collective action in the pursuit of collective goods is, so to speak, the second tier of a socialist approach, even if it does not use that name. Currently in Britain, the trade union movement struggles to reach this second tier.

The Bullock report offered an opening to the third tier, effective participation in the control of enterprises both at board and plant level. This would have involved union representatives in the practical problems of management and strategic governance as they are in some other European countries such as Germany where these rights were fought for and achieved after the Second World War, with some help from British trade unionists, notably Ernest Bevin. Participation in governance and management would

ensure that businesses were run in the interests of their employees as well as their shareholders and the latter would not be able to have everything their own way. It's very important to note that having workers on the board does not mean that industrial action becomes obsolete as the German example illustrates. Workers retain the right to back up their demands at board level with industrial action where this is thought to be necessary to persuade the shareholder representatives of their point of view. The opportunity to participate in governance and management was turned down in Britain in 1977 with consequences that we have already noted, which make the achievement of even tier one objectives more difficult.

Since then there have been attempts by the then TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady to interest trade unionists in the issue but they have been met with indifference. Whatever the views of individual members, trade union general secretaries since the time of Jack Jones have shown no interest in or even hostility to the issue. Until this changes through the engagement of some of the large unions, as well as the TUC, we can see little sign of a change in attitude.

#### **The Fourth Tier of Engagement.**

Early trade unionists and politicians realised that trade unions, although socialist in orientation through collective action, would have limited effect if they did not have a political wing or some kind. Only a political party focused on state power could enact and see legislation on trade union rights enforced and the collective goods that trade union members prized secured. For a brief period from the Second World War until 1951, trade unions and the Labour Party worked in sufficient harmony so that working class demands relating to health, housing, transport, education and unemployment benefit were secured. This period was the nearest that we have come in Britain to progressing a socialist agenda through a politically oriented trade union movement.

But the working class's grasp on the State is always going to be insecure so long as it only controls parliament.

Even when it has a parliamentary majority and is in government, it cannot guarantee the co-operation of the Bank of England, the Treasury or the rest of the civil service, let alone the police and the armed forces. In Britain, where the Labour Party had already been compromised by its co-operation with imperialism and liberalism, the danger was acute. The trade union movement's abandonment of anything beyond a narrow vision of their role made the takeover of Labour by an elite which shared the values of the Tories even easier. The 'Uniparty's birth can be dated from the Blair period where this orientation was made explicit, but its roots lie in the failure of the trade union movement to consolidate its gains in the 1960s and 1970s.

Some on the left would argue as follows: workers will only become politically militant when they engage in economic struggles. As they fight with their bosses they will come to see that nothing much can be achieved without a political movement whose objective will be to seize State power. The problem with this approach is that there is no evidence that it will succeed. Even when trade unions have engaged in struggles whose partial aim was to bring down the government they have never succeeded nor have they succeeded in bringing all other significant unions into the struggle. Crucially, they have not succeeded in developing a revolutionary class consciousness.

Given the limitations inherent in working class domination of the government but not of the State, trade unions have to remain politically strong and aware of the need to support government action and to discourage attempts to weaken or overthrow a socialist government. Today we have a curious situation. The trade union movement provides funding and near unconditional loyalty to a Labour Party that has given up on representing working people's interests. It is little more than a Tory alternative to the Tory party. This attitude is pointless from the trade union point of view. You cannot get concessions by offering unconditional loyalty to someone

who does not have your interests at heart. At this time, the trade union movement needs to adopt a more transactional attitude to the dominant political parties and to only support them financially or otherwise when they can be relied on to advance the working class interest on some important matter such as legislation on the right to organise or on employment status. At the time of writing we are heading into a general election between parties whose outlook is much the same, controlled by elites who have more in common with each other than the sections of

society that they claim to represent. This is likely to continue until trade unions raise their sights towards a broader set of collective goods and develop the political capacity to campaign for these in the workplace and civil society.

Unless they do this, their so-called party political representatives will not have sufficient incentive to remain true to them. When the trade unions are ready for more substantial collective action then they will be ready to organise better political representation.

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Hub bank accounts so the Labour Party can no longer even pay rent on its own shop and is closing.

The NEC is able to deny a CLP access to its main mailing system, as explained in the Morning Star 28 August 2023:

"Party bosses removed Hackney North and Stoke Newington CLP's access to its Organise mailing system a day after banning discussions about Dame Meg Hillier's former agent Thomas Dewey's legal proceedings at a meeting in July.

Today local Labour members described it as "a very covert method of shutting down all local democracy without going as far as suspending a CLP" as well as a "convenient" way for the Labour leadership to avoid internal scrutiny over its ongoing suspension of their constituency MP Diane Abbott's whip.

The Morning Star understands the tactic has mostly been used to silence left-wing CLPs after Sir Keir Starmer became party leader in April 2020".

#### 4. Pressuring venues against showing a film and discussing a book

The film about Jeremy Corbyn (The big lie)

First it was a film – Oh Jeremy Corbyn, The Big Lie. Relentlessly hounded by the so-called Campaign Against Antisemitism and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, it has been unjustifiably labeled as antisemitic and conspiratorial, with venue after venue bludgeoned into refusing to screen it.

Discussion of a book cancelled by Unite the Union

Now it is a book – Asa Winstanley's Weaponising Anti-Semitism – which is ironic as the very processes Winstanley chronicles in it are now at work trying to get the book banned.

Well, not actually banned, but it is Unite the Union – which really should know better – refusing to allow its premises in Bristol to be used to host a discussion of the book.

Presumably historians in the future will document this remarkable effort to change the membership of a political party through administrative persecution. They will no doubt meet the same difficulties that the Forde enquiry experienced:

"Some [staff members] promised further documents, which were never supplied; some were accompanied by lawyers. It was concerningly difficult to gather vital minutes of meetings and to understand the rationale for decisions. Key documents were unavailable, others were not supplied and details of meetings were not recorded". "More surprisingly, and deeply worrying, there was no proper audit trail of emails. It became apparent that various WhatsApp groups were formed instead..."

(Foreword to the Report)



# Starmer's campaign of exclusion and harassment.

By Catherine Dunlop

This topic requires a report on the scale of the Forde report, which took two years to investigate complaints of all sorts regarding the behaviour of officers and members of the Labour Party. What follows is a selection of headings of topics that need to be investigated to explain how the current leadership of the Labour Party is purging it of its left wing, with the result that the Party is no longer a 'broad church'.

- 1) Persecution against individual members, against MPs and other elected persons
- 2) Banning organisations
- 3) Interference with CLPs (Constituency Labour Party branches) activities.
- 4) Censorship

## 1.a Individuals being expelled or suspended:

Thousands of individuals, often left wing Jews, suspended, expelled or "auto-expelled", meaning they have expressed support for a group later banned by LP; this supposed connection with a now banned organisation could be no more than 'liking' a tweet.

The website of the Jewish Voice for Labour has a long list of cases, not all Jewish. You can look up their name on the website to read their full story; they are invariably long standing stalwarts of the party, with a deep emotional attachment to it. JVL writes:

<https://www.jewishvoiceforlabour.org.uk/statement/the-ehrc-has-spoken-labour-is-no-place-for-left-wing-jews/>

"Since mid-2021, Jewish Voice for Labour (JVL) has repeatedly alerted the EHRC to the disproportionate targeting of Jewish members of the Labour Party for disciplinary action over allegations of antisemitism.

"Ironically, this targeting of Jews seems to be reinforcing the claim for the success of the action plan in the name of combating antisemitism.

"We received responses from the EHRC but no indication that our reports made any difference to Labour's implementation or EHRC monitoring of the Action Plan.

"Our most recent [letter of 8 February 2023](#) referred the EHRC to the [latest statistics](#) on Jews targeted under Labour's disciplinary procedures.

"JVL is currently aware of fully 60 Jewish Labour Party members targeted.

"The campaign against JVL has been relentless. Notably, in 2022, during the Jewish festival of Chanukah, three prominent Jewish members of JVL were expelled from the Party.

"These were Naomi Wimborne Idrissi, a JVL Executive Officer, who was thereby prevented from taking up her elected post as the only Jewish member on Labour's National Executive Committee. Stephen Marks, who had been a prominent voice on Labour's National Constitution Committee. And Heather Mendick, who worked in Labour's leadership office in 2019".

The case of Diane Pearson

She wrote a letter to Keir Starmer in which she said:

I recall that on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021 you [Keir Starmer] were on Radio 4 Today programme and you said, among other things, in reference to MPs' lobbying and second jobs, "Don't penalise people now for doing things in the past that were allowed at the time." Which is exactly what you are doing with regards to purging left members.

You can look up the cases of many more members on the Jewish Voice for Labour website, for example Neal Lawson, Graham Bash, Pamela Fitzpatrick, Leah Levane, Stephen Marks, Stephen Kapos, Moshe Machover, Gary Ostrolenk, Anne Pissaridou, Glyn Secker, Martin Mayer, Andrea Egan.,

Damian McCarthy, Ken Loach, Jackie Walker, Chris Williamson, Tony Greenstein.

1.b. Active members banned from standing for parliamentary, council or mayoral elections:

Mish Rashman, Dawn McGuinness; Jamie Driscoll.

1.c Labour MPs excluded from representing the Labour Party: Jeremy Corbyn, Diane Abbott, Claudia Webbe

## 2. Banning organisations of like-minded people within the Labour Party, such as Momentum, which is itself not banned.

The National Executive Committee proscribed Resist and [Labour Against the Witchhunt](#), which claims antisemitism allegations were politically motivated, and Labour in Exile Network, which expressly welcomes expelled or suspended members; also Socialist Appeal, a group that describes itself as a Marxist voice of Labour and youth, the Labour Left Alliance and the Socialist Labour Network and Alliance for Workers Liberty.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/20/labour-votes-to-ban-four-far-left-factions-that-supported-corbyns-leadership>

## 3. Moves against Constituency Labour Party branches (CLP)

CLP have been denied the right to choose their candidates for general elections, the best known being Islington North where the sitting MP, Corbyn, has been removed from the LP list of MPs and banned from standing. The list of CLPs this has affected is now long, and includes Broxtowe, Milton Keynes North, Kensington and Chelsea, Camberwell and Peckham, Stroud, Hastings, Sedgefield, Bolton North East and more.

The NEC has also interfered with CLP work by preventing certain speakers from being invited, removing officers and replacing them with others etc. This is less well documented, as members and elected reps are not always willing to talk, fearing reprisals. In Broxtowe in Nottinghamshire Starmer seized access to the Community

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