

# Labour Affairs

Incorporating the Labour and Trade Union Review

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## Can Reeves' Budget Save Labour?

The problem that Reeves had to deal with in her November 2025 budget was how to reverse the increasing likelihood of Reform becoming the largest party in the 2029 general election. On this measure the budget will most likely be a failure.

While we can all feel a sense of relief that she has, under pressure from her alarmed backbenchers, abandoned her previous drift towards renewed austerity, this budget ultimately relies on the private sector to achieve the increase in the standard of living which would allow Labour to win the next general election. We doubt that reliance on the private sector is justified.

With her continued advocacy of moribund fiscal rules, Reeves has become a millstone round the neck of the Labour party. Labour's fiscal rules, if it chooses to have some, should be that the government will spend when such spending improves the lives of UK citizens, the government will tax when such taxation improves the lives of UK citizens and the government will issue bonds when doing so improves the lives of UK citizens.

These spending and taxing decisions will lead to changes in various statistics like the amount of national debt and the ratio of debt to GDP. But these statistics should be seen as the outcome of good fiscal decisions and not the fiscal target. Little attention should be paid to them. Instead, for Reeves, the statistics have become the objective of fiscal policy. Good fiscal decisions that will improve the lives of UK citizens are not allowed if they endanger the statistics that Reeves has set out to achieve.

A good example of this is the policy of cutting the 2 child benefit cap. Clearly getting rid of that cap would have given poorer families more much needed money. They would have spent it largely on food and clothing. Thus generating demand in the British economy which would have helped reduce the growing level of unemployment. But in 2024 Reeves would not allow the cap to be ended because it would have interfered with her fiscal targets. In

2025 she ended the cap under strong pressure from her anxious back benchers.

Sensible fiscal policy in the UK requires understanding three basic facts.

First, the UK is a currency-creating state. It issues the currency it spends. While this does not mean the government *should* spend without limit, it *can* always finance what Parliament chooses to undertake. The real constraint is inflation: the government should avoid spending that competes with the private sector for scarce resources and drives up prices.

Secondly, because the state cannot run out of its own currency, the purpose of taxation is not to raise money but to free up real resources. The right question about any tax is not how much revenue it will generate but how it will reduce private-sector demand for resources the government needs. If resources are idle, the government can simply create the money to buy them. If they are already in use, the government could technically outbid the private sector—but doing so would be inflationary, so taxation should be a tool to free up those resources.

Consider the tax on private schools introduced in 2024. The main purpose of the tax was to improve education in state schools, although 'fairness' arguments were also put. It was expected that some private sector teachers would be made redundant and available for hire by the state sector. There was a certain logic in that argument. However, in practice, the tax has had a minimal effect on moving teachers from the private sector to the state sector.

Consider the increase in employers' National Insurance. There is evidence that it has led to an increase in unemployment particularly in the hospitality sector. Is the private sector keen to hire these newly unemployed? It seems not. Has Reeves any plan to retrain them to do work that she considers will better meet society's needs like building social housing? It seems not. She is focussed only on reducing the deficit. She is prepared to see unemployment rise so that she can hit her financial

targets. Compare that with Keynes' view that it was better to print money and pay people to dig holes and fill them in again than leave them unemployed.

Thirdly, the state should issue bonds when it wishes to provide the private sector with a risk-free interest-bearing asset. The practice of auctioning bonds was introduced in 1985 as a political device to suggest that the state was dependent on the private sector if it wanted to spend more than it raised in revenues. Bonds should be issued on tap as they were before 1985. If the private sector chooses not to buy them, the debt should be left with the BoE.

All this was widely understood from 1940 to 1975, when Keynesian economics dominated policy. In 1943, Keynes most competent disciple, Abba Lerner, wrote: "The central idea is that government fiscal policy, its spending and taxing, its borrowing and repayment of loans, its issue of new money and its withdrawal of money, shall be undertaken with an eye only to the *results* of these actions on the economy and not to any established traditional doctrine about what is sound or unsound."

There is no sign that Reeves understands these principles. She repeatedly claims her economic instincts were formed helping her

mother manage the household budget at the kitchen table. Yet her mother was a *currency user*, while the UK government is a *currency creator*. The Tories are delighted that she is so economically illiterate. They will constantly remind her of her demons.

With Reeves as chancellor, this Labour government is unlikely to have a significant impact on the economy. Backbench unrest will continue to grow. It is difficult to imagine that there will not be attempts to replace her. But Reeves and Starmer present themselves as a pair, and it is likely they will fall together.

Who might replace them is far from clear. Andy Burnham and Wes Streeting are often mentioned, and both possess a certain amount of charisma. But neither has challenged Reeves' fundamental mistake of treating fiscal statistics—such as the debt-to-GDP ratio—as the goal of policy rather than the by-product of good decisions. Labour needs a chancellor willing to say: I will spend when it benefits UK citizens and tax when it benefits UK citizens, and I will not allow arbitrary fiscal statistics to stand in the way.

It is not evident that there is any such person in the Labour ranks.

# Labour Affairs

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## Labour Affairs

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## Corruption in Ukraine in 2021

“The past is a different country” ? Not in the case of Ukraine. This is a story from the *Guardian*, from only 4 years’ ago, which reported: “EU auditors warned last month that “grand corruption and state capture” remained widespread in Ukraine.” And went on to describe the scope of the corruption involving Zelensky and his immediate circle. This was based on the *Panama Papers* disclosures. Extracts from this 2021 article are carried below. Compare and contrast with what the *Guardian*, et al., are saying, or, rather, not saying, today. And what the EU is saying as it gears up to the proposed introduction of a punitive, multi-billion excess tax on member states to fund the continuation of the war.

*Guardian*: Luke Harding, Elena Loginova and Aubrey Belford

Sun 3 Oct 2021

For four years, the actor and comedian Volodymyr Zelenskiy entertained TV audiences in Ukraine with his starring role in the sitcom *Servant of the People*. Zelenskiy played a teacher who, outraged by his country’s chronic corruption, successfully runs for president. In 2019, Zelenskiy made fiction real when he contested Ukraine’s actual presidential election and won.

On the campaign trail, Zelenskiy pledged to clean up Ukraine’s oligarch-dominated ruling system. And he railed against politicians such as the wealthy incumbent Petro Poroshenko who hid their assets offshore. The message worked. Zelenskiy won 73% of the vote and now sits in a cavernous office in the capital, Kyiv, decorated with gilded stucco ceilings. Last month, he held talks with Joe Biden in the Oval Office.

The Pandora papers, leaked to the *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)* and shared with the *Guardian* as part of a global investigation however, suggest Zelenskiy is rather similar to his predecessors.

The leaked documents suggest he had – or has – a previously undisclosed stake in an offshore company, which he appears to have secretly transferred to a friend weeks before winning the presidential vote.

Zelenskiy has not commented on the claim despite extensive attempts by the *Guardian* and its media partners to reach him. His spokesperson Sergiy Nikiforov messaged: “Won’t be an answer.”

The files reveal Zelenskiy participated in a sprawling network of offshore companies, co-owned with his longtime friends and TV business partners. They

include Serhiy Shefir, who produced Zelenskiy’s hit shows, and Shefir’s older brother, Borys, who wrote the scripts. Another member of the consortium is Ivan Bakanov, a childhood friend. Bakanov was general director of Zelenskiy’s production studio, Kvartal 95.

All are associated with Zelenskiy’s home town in southern Ukraine, Kryvyi Rih. After winning power, Zelenskiy brought these close allies into government. Bakanov became head of Ukraine’s SBU security agency. Zelenskiy made Serhiy Shefir his first assistant, an unpaid role that involves handling the president’s daily schedule. A fourth member of this close-knit group, Andriy Yakovlev, is a film director and Kvartal 95 producer.

Zelenskiy has said these appointments were about personal trust rather than financial cronyism. “I have a few people who work with me who have been my friends for a long time ... They have no relation to business, or to the budget,” he told the *Guardian* in 2020.

### A secret transfer

Before becoming president, Zelenskiy declared some of his private assets. They included cars, property and three of the co-owned offshore companies. One, Film Heritage, which he held jointly with his wife, Olena, a former Kvartal 95 writer, is registered in Belize.

But the Pandora papers show further offshore assets that Zelenskiy appears not to have revealed. Film Heritage had a 25% stake in Davegra, a Cyprus holding company. Davegra in turn owns Maltex Multicapital Corp, a previously unknown entity registered in the tax haven of the British Virgin Islands (BVI). Zelenskiy, the Shefir brothers, and Yakovlev each held a 25% stake in Maltex.

On 13 March 2019, two weeks before the first round of voting in Ukraine’s election, Zelenskiy gave his quarter stake in Maltex to Serhiy Shefir, documents show. It is unclear if Shefir paid Zelenskiy. Bakanov witnessed this secret transfer and signed the offshore papers.

Roughly six weeks later, after Zelenskiy’s landslide victory, a lawyer acting for the Kvartal 95 group signed another document. It stipulated that Maltex would continue to pay dividends to Zelenskiy’s Film Heritage, even though it no longer owned any stake in the company. Its main revenue comes from activity in Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, according to a Maltex client

profile.

The Pandora papers do not indicate whether any dividends were ever paid or their size. Nor do they reveal how many payments might have been made. Zelenskiy’s wife, Olena, is now the declared beneficial owner of Film Heritage, meaning any payments since 2019 would have flowed to her.

The key document – dated 24 April 2019 – says Maltex holds shares in companies that produce and distribute TV films. One reason for setting up Maltex was “tax-efficient accumulation of business profits”; another, it states, was “legal protection”. Borys Shefir said Bakanov had mostly set up these offshore “financial schemes” in order to protect the company from “authorities and bandits”.

“Speaking honestly, I’m not ready to respond to you. It could be that I’m an owner [of Maltex],” Shefir told the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), one of the Pandora papers’ media partners. He said he was trying to divest himself of his offshore interests, but said this was a slow and difficult process. Serhiy Shefir, Bakanov and Yakovlev declined to comment, as did their lawyer.

Since entering politics Zelenskiy has been dogged by claims he is under the influence of Igor Kolomoisky, a billionaire whose TV channel screened Zelenskiy’s show. During the campaign Zelenskiy’s opponents alleged \$41m from Kolomoisky entities found its way between 2012 and 2016 into offshore firms belonging to Zelenskiy and his circle, including Film Heritage.

The Pandora papers show that at least some of the details in the scheme alleged by Poroshenko’s party correspond to reality. They show that part of the Kvartal 95 network was managed with help from Fidelity Corporate Services, an offshore consultancy and one of 14 firms whose documents make up the leak. The files show that Zelenskiy and his business partners used companies based in the BVI, Belize and Cyprus.

The assets held via these offshore companies are wide-ranging. They include real estate in London. Shefir owns two top-end properties – a three-bedroom apartment in an Edwardian mansion block in Regent’s Park bought in 2016 for £1.575m, and another three-bedroom flat in nearby Baker Street, opposite the Sherlock Holmes Museum, and purchased for £2.2m, according to Land Registry records.

Continued On Page 4



# Inversion Of Reality: The BBC: A ‘Leftist Propaganda Machine’?

By Media Lens 12 November

Media Lens is a UK-based media watchdog. Run by writers David Cromwell and David Edwards, it is our response to the increasingly centralised, corporate, state-subservient nature of the mislabelled ‘mainstream’ media system.

*This follows on from a previous piece on the supposed partiality of the BBC in September ([BBC on Gaza-Israel: One Story, Double Standards](#))*

The resignations of Tim Davie, BBC director general, and Deborah Turness, BBC head of news, after an intense, right-wing campaign led by the Daily Telegraph reveals much about the state of British ‘mainstream’ media.

Before we discuss the latest scandal, consider first some relevant facts about BBC coverage of the Middle East. In June 2025, a devastating indictment of BBC ‘impartiality’ was published by the Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM) in the form of a detailed report into the BBC’s coverage of Israel and Gaza. The stated aim of CfMM is to ‘promote fair, accurate and responsible journalism about Muslims and Islam through verifiable evidence and constructive engagement.’

The report examined BBC content from 7 October 2023 to 7 October 2024. A total of 3,873 BBC articles and 32,092 segments broadcast on BBC television and radio were analysed. CfMM’s key findings were:

**Palestinian deaths treated as less newsworthy:** Despite Gaza suffering 34 times more casualties than Israel, BBC gave Israeli deaths 33 times more coverage per fatality and ran almost equal numbers of humanising victim profiles (279 Palestinians vs 201 Israelis).

**Systematic language bias favouring Israelis:** BBC used emotive terms four times more for Israeli victims, applied ‘massacre’ 18 times more to Israeli casualties, and used ‘murder’ 220 times for Israelis versus once for Palestinians.

**Suppression of genocide allegations:**

Continued From Page 3

Meanwhile, Yakovlev’s BVI company Candlewood Investments owns a luxury flat in a Victorian mansion block in Artillery Row, Westminster. The properties were acquired around the time Zelenskiy’s show was turned into a feature film and recommissioned for a second series. It is unclear if the three flats are let out or used on an occasional basis.

BBC presenters shut down genocide claims in over 100 documented instances whilst making zero mention of Israeli leaders’ genocidal statements, including Netanyahu’s biblical Amalek reference (see below).

**Muffling Palestinian voices:** The BBC interviewed significantly fewer Palestinians than Israelis (1,085 v 2,350) on television and radio, while BBC presenters shared the Israeli perspective 11 times more frequently than the Palestinian perspective (2,340 v 217).

These findings suggest that the BBC values the lives of Israelis considerably more than the lives of Palestinians. This appalling revelation was apparently not a resigning matter for senior BBC figures.

At the parliamentary launch of the CfMM report, Richard Burgess, the BBC director of news content, was challenged by Peter Osborne, the former chief political commentator of the Daily Telegraph. The exchange was filmed by a participant at the meeting. Osborne robustly confronted Burgess with as many as six ways in which BBC News has misled its audiences:

1. The BBC has never mentioned the Hannibal directive, implemented by Israel on 7 October 2023, that permitted the Israeli killing of Israeli civilians to prevent them being taken captive by Hamas. See our media alert from February 2025.

2. The BBC has never mentioned Israel’s Dahiya doctrine which underlies Israel’s murderous ‘mowing the lawn’ Gaza strategy over the past two decades: repeated devastating assaults on the Palestinians to weaken their resistance to the brutal and illegal Israeli occupation, and to make it easier to ethnically cleanse them.

3. The BBC has not reported the many dozens of genocidal statements from Israeli officials. In particular, the BBC buried Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s biblically-inspired comparison of the Palestinians to ‘Amalek’; a people the Jews were instructed by God to wipe from the face of the earth.

4. By contrast, on more than 100 occasions when guests tried to refer to what is happening in Gaza as genocide, BBC staff immediately shut them down on air.

5. The BBC has largely ignored Israel’s campaign of murdering Palestinian journalists in Gaza.

6. Finally, Osborne observed that

the distinguished Israeli historian Avi Shlaim, who lives in the UK and teaches at Oxford University, has never been invited to appear by the BBC.

Burgess gave a feeble, bureaucratic response excusing himself, saying that, ‘My role is to direct the journalists and I’m not a Middle East expert’. When Hamza Yusuf of Declassified UK challenged Burgess to explain why the BBC was not reporting British spy planes operating over Gaza from RAF base Akrotiri on Cyprus, the BBC editor gave this bizarre and misleading answer:

‘I don’t think we should overplay the UK’s contribution to what’s happening in Israel.’

Why did Burgess say ‘in Israel’? Why did he erase Palestine? Was he actually unaware that Gaza is an occupied Palestinian territory? Nobody was asking the BBC to ‘overplay’ what the UK is doing; but simply to report its role, rather than bury it to the point of invisibility. Whitewashing genocide as ‘what’s happening in Israel’ is wretched BBC newspeak.

But there was no national scandal, no media outrage and denunciations. As far as we could tell, the exchanges with Richard Burgess were not reported anywhere in the UK national press. Only the National newspaper in Scotland reported it. No BBC heads rolled.

## The BBC Is A ‘Leftist Propaganda Machine’?

This time it is different. The hard-right Daily Telegraph, famously antagonistic towards the supposed lefty-liberal-biased BBC, was leaked an internal BBC memo written by Michael Prescott, a former external adviser to the BBC’s editorial guidelines and standards committee. Prescott had previously been a journalist, including a decade at the Rupert Murdoch-owned Sunday Times, where he was the chief political correspondent and later the political editor.

Prescott’s 8,000-word report said that a BBC Panorama documentary, broadcast in October 2024, edited a Donald Trump speech so that he appeared to explicitly encourage the Capitol Hill riots of January 2021.

In his speech in Washington DC on 6 January 2021, Trump had said:

‘We’re going to walk down to the Capitol, and we’re going to cheer on our brave senators and congressmen and women.’

However, in the Panorama edit he was shown saying:

‘We’re going to walk down to the

Capitol... and I'll be there with you. And we fight. We fight like hell.'

The two sections of the speech that were edited together were more than 50 minutes apart. The 'fight like hell' comment was taken from a section where Trump alleged how 'corrupt' US elections are.

More widely, Prescott accused the corporation of 'serious and systemic' bias in its editorial coverage, including BBC Arabic's reporting of 'the Israel-Gaza war' which was supposedly anti-Israel and pro-Hamas. All of this was catnip to the right-wing media and commentators who immediately used it as a weapon to attack the BBC.

The Telegraph led with a front-page story headlined:

'BBC's Trump bias exposed in memo leak'

The following day, the Telegraph headlined on its front page Tory leader Kemi Badenoch's call that:

'Heads "should roll over BBC bias".'

The Telegraph also published a comment piece from Danny Cohen, former director of BBC television, under the headline:

'Now we have the evidence. The BBC knowingly helped spread Hamas lies and hate'

The sub-headline was:

'The rot has spread far beyond the infamous Arabic service'

Cohen claimed:

'An internal report reveals that the BBC has knowingly spread Hamas propaganda and anti-Semitic hate.'

A few days after the leaked memo was reported by the Telegraph, Trump's press secretary Karoline Leavitt described the BBC as '100% fake news'. She added that British taxpayers were being 'forced to foot the bill for a leftist propaganda machine'. The notion that the BBC is a 'leftist propaganda machine' is an exotic, bizarre reversal of reality.

A report in the Guardian quoted an anonymous BBC insider saying that the BBC board member that 'led the charge' over Prescott's claims was Robbie Gibb, Theresa May's former communications chief who also helped to found the right-wing news channel GB News. Gibb is a controversial figure even among BBC journalists, where he has been accused of interfering in stories where he perceives the editorial line to be left-leaning or 'woke'. Reportedly, Gibb, a friend of Prescott's, was the driving force behind then prime minister Boris Johnson's appointment of Prescott to the BBC's editorial committee.

In 2020, Gibb led a consortium to buy the right-wing Jewish Chronicle, an

ardent supporter of the state of Israel, whose journalism has been repeatedly discredited, even leading to several long-time columnists resigning. Alan Rusbridger, former Guardian editor, observed last year that the Jewish Chronicle's editor, Jake Wallis Simons, appointed by Gibb, is 'bitterly critical of the BBC's reporting of the war' for supposedly being anti-Israel. Again, a reversal of reality.

As Rusbridger noted:

'How can Gibb possibly back his own editor while sitting on the board of the BBC, which is said by the same man [Wallis Simons] to actively hate Israel?'

After Davie and Turness had resigned, Trump responded that they had left the BBC:

'because they were caught "doctoring" my very good (PERFECT!) speech of January 6th.'

He added:

'These are very dishonest people who tried to step on the scales of a Presidential Election. What a terrible thing for Democracy!'

Trump has now threatened a \$1 billion lawsuit against the BBC if they do not withdraw the offending Panorama documentary.

Political columnist Steve Richards, a regular presenter of BBC Radio 4's Week in Westminster, observed:

'It's ironic but predictable that the BBC duo - who tried so hard to please the right wing papers - are removed by the right wing papers.'

The poet, author and academic Michael Rosen noted wryly:

'Tim Davie was privately educated, went to Cambridge and was a Tory candidate and deputy chair of a local Conservative Party Association. Clear case of left-wing bias. If the left wing rot's gotta stop, then we need to start with private schools, Cambridge and the Tory Party.'

### Pro-Israel Impunity At The BBC

Richard Sanders, an award-winning producer who has made over fifty films in history, news and current affairs, including Al-Jazeera's 'October 7' and 'The Labour Files' documentaries, noted via X:

'BBC Panorama's Trump gaff was shockingly poor.'

'But the contrast between the furore it's caused and the silence over their far more egregious 2019 doc on Corbyn reveals the reaction to these scandals is all about the interests at stake - not the scale of the crime.'

Sanders is referring here to the notorious Panorama documentary, 'Is Labour Antisemitic?', by John Ware, who had previously made clear his antagonism towards Corbyn's politics. As we wrote in a media alert at the time, it quickly became clear that the programme makers

were not interested in a serious appraisal of the supposed evidence and that the question was merely rhetorical.

The entire thrust of the programme was that Labour under Jeremy Corbyn was antisemitic. The Panorama broadcast was immediately followed by BBC News at Ten which gave it extensive coverage, pumping up the propaganda value of the bogus 'investigation'.

At the time, Peter Osborne, mentioned above, said via Twitter:

'I proposed to the BBC a documentary on Tory Islamophobia three years ago [in 2016]. Zero interest.'

In a carefully researched and detailed series called 'The Labour Files', produced by the Al Jazeera Investigative Unit, Sanders exposed the multiple deceptions of the Panorama documentary. One of these concerned Ben Westerman, a Jewish member of Labour's disputes team. He claimed to Ware in the documentary that he had personally encountered antisemitism during a face-to-face disciplinary meeting with a Labour activist. He claimed that the person had asked him where he was from and, when Westerman refused to say, had asked him if he was from Israel.

As Al Jazeera revealed, Westerman had been interviewing Helen Marks, a Jewish Labour party activist who had been accused of antisemitism. She had been accompanied to the meeting by her friend, Rica Bird, also a Jewish woman. It was Bird who had asked Westerman where he was from. But she had actually asked him *which local branch of the Labour Party he was from*. She had never asked him if he was from Israel. The women had a tape recording to prove their version of events. As far as we are aware, Panorama has never issued an apology for this appalling misrepresentation.

As we observed in our media alert on 5 October 2022, there was a shocking, if entirely predictable, mass media blanket of silence in response to 'The Labour Files'.

Sanders added on the current scandal:

'Whatever you think of the BBC today is a bleak, bleak day for British broadcasting. The Trump gaffe was poor - but it happened a year ago, and no-one in Trump's team had noticed.'

'Equally worrying, Prescott clearly had an agenda where coverage of Gaza was concerned. His principal criticism of BBC Arabic was that it wasn't similar enough to BBC English - which, by any objective, purely journalistic criteria is a good thing.'

'Today's events lay bare the immense pressures operating behind the scenes and help explain why the BBC's coverage of Gaza has been so abject over the last 2 years. It'll now get worse.'

He continued:



'Ironically this should happen on same day this excruciating video emerges of Mossad fan boy Raffi Berg. Yes - this really is the person who has been BBC Online's Middle East News Editor throughout the assault on Gaza.'

Sanders then linked to a [clip](#) where Berg was interviewed about his book 'Red Sea Spies: The True Story of Mossad's Fake Diving Resort'. Berg said that, in writing the book, he had been 'accepted into a circle of trust among the people who belonged to, some of whom still work for, the Mossad'. He added: 'as a Jewish person and an admirer of the state of Israel', Mossad's 'fantastic operations' made him 'tremendously proud... talking about it still gives me goosebumps'. The public is to understand that Berg is an impartial BBC news editor on issues related to Israel and Palestine.

Berg has now launched [legal proceedings](#) against Owen Jones and Drop Site News. This is in response to a long and detailed [article](#), including interviews with anonymous former and current BBC journalists, that Jones published last December titled, 'The BBC's Civil War Over Gaza'.

When the BBC refused to show the powerful documentary, 'Gaza: Doctors Under Attack', it compounded its complicity in Israel's genocide. The Corporation's earlier withdrawal of 'Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone', had already epitomised how much the UK's national broadcaster is beholden to the Israel lobby (see our media alert [here](#)).

'Gaza: Doctors Under Attack' detailed how Israel has systematically targeted hospitals, health care centres, medics themselves and even their families. Doctors told the filmmakers of how they had been detained, beaten and tortured by the Israelis, confirmed by an anonymous Israeli whistleblower. The nonsensical reason given by the BBC for cancelling the film, which it had itself commissioned from Basement Films, was the risk that broadcasting it would create 'a perception of partiality'. Reporting the truth about Israel's crimes would be 'partial'? Such inversion of reality has become standard for the national broadcaster.

The film was instead [shown](#) by Channel 4 on 2 July. After watching it, Gary Lineker, who had essentially been pushed out of the BBC for his honesty on Gaza and other issues, [said](#) that, 'The BBC should hang its head in shame.'

Ben de Pear, the documentary's executive producer for Basement Films and a former Channel 4 News editor, accused the BBC of trying to gag him and others over its decision not to show

the documentary. In a [statement](#) that he posted to LinkedIn, de Pear said the film had passed through many 'BBC compliance hoops' and that the BBC were now attempting to stop him talking about the film's 'painful journey' to the screen:

'I rejected and refused to sign the double gagging clause the BBC bosses tried multiple times to get me to sign. Not only could we have been sued for saying the BBC refused to air the film (palpably and provably true) but also if any other company had said it, the BBC could sue us.'

'Not only could we not tell the truth that was already stated, but neither could others. Reader, I didn't sign it.'

At a conference in Sheffield, de Pear [criticised](#) Tim Davie, then still the BBC director-general, over the BBC's decision to drop the film:

'All the decisions about our film were not taken by journalists, they were taken by Tim Davie. He is just a PR person. Tim Davie is taking editorial decisions which, frankly, he is not capable of making.'

How ironic that quote sounds now.

Meanwhile, BBC News daily regurgitates Israeli propaganda bullet points with impunity. Last week, BBC newsreader Clive Myrie [announced](#) on News at Ten:

'Now, it's almost a month since the ceasefire in Gaza came into effect. And, despite claims of violations, the truce is still holding.'

As B'Tselem, the Israeli human rights organisation, has [pointed out](#), since the ceasefire agreement took effect on 10 October 2025, Israel has killed at least 241 Palestinians in Gaza, 117 of them children. More than 600 people have been injured. If 241 Israelis had been killed over the past month, the BBC would certainly not have reported that 'the truce is still holding'.

The latest events reveal that the BBC bends all too easily to sustained pressure from established power and the right-wing press.

<https://www.medialens.org/2025/inversion-of-reality/>

## Letter on Russophobia

Dear Editor,

Hoping to hear details of the budget from the Chancellor I switched on Parliamentary Questions on Wednesday the 26th of November. What I heard instead was an orgy of Russophobia, with MPs of all parties lambasting the 'aggression' of the Russian state, or as Edward Leigh MP called it, 'the Bear'. According to another MP the Russian Federation is led by 'the killer Putin'. Yet another lady MP, close to tears, enquired of the Prime Minister what he was going to do about the tens of thousands of children abducted from Ukraine by Vladimir Putin. The intellectual level of this session was roughly that of a junior school playground on a wet Friday afternoon. Dissent from the mob view was clearly out of the question.

In theory, Parliament is expected to provide intellectual and moral leadership for the UK on both domestic and foreign affairs. Political parties are, in theory, expected to provide distinct points of view, to challenge established narratives and to ensure that a proper debate occurs on matters of grave concern to the state. None of this happened. Instead the MPs present lashed themselves into a competitive state of fury about the very possibility that discussion might take place concerning the resolution of the conflict in Ukraine. No account was taken of the desirability for the British people of restoring good relations with the Russian Federation or of ensuring that all the people who currently inhabit the 2014 borders of Ukraine have their concerns taken seriously. The unanimity displayed was consistent with that of a mob consumed by a desire for war at any price.

Can a country that conducts its foreign policy in this manner properly be called a parliamentary democracy? The conduct of the current parliament makes that questionable.

Dave Gardner.

## Letter on the Covid lockdown

We saw with Covid lockdown how any sense of reality could be pushed out of the window with Police squads giving Granny a caution for one too many walks in the park. The Boys in Blue were only too ready to be the physical 'kill switch'. Likewise with 'Free Palestine'. With Digital ID we welcome in the 'electronic kill switch' linked to your bank account, your NHS entitlement... everything you have been encouraged to use. We've all been blocked on Facebook... welcome to 'being suspended for not following community guidelines' in real life.

Paul Moor, South West Workers Party

From Southfront November 28<sup>th</sup> 2025  
Operation Silence: Why Berlin Is Killing The Truth About War And Peace

Something is happening in Germany that rips up everything Western Europe claims to stand for. On live national TV, Welt's anchor killed the microphone of Sahra Wagenknecht—the only heavyweight opposition figure left who dares question Berlin's rush toward conflict. Her crime? Not lying, not slandering, but speaking an inconvenient truth: that the Ukraine war could have ended years ago if real diplomacy had prevailed. Call it what it is—this wasn't a "technical glitch." It's a diagnosis: Germany, once the role model of open society, is now marching under the banner of military censorship, muzzling dissent to prep for its next eastern war.

### The Broadcast Berlin Couldn't Allow

Wagenknecht, former leader of the BSW party and the last system rebel in the Bundestag, was discussing the root causes of the Ukrainian tragedy. She uttered the modern German taboo: "Istanbul 2022." In plain language, she told viewers that Kyiv could have kept its land and spared hundreds of thousands, had it opted for neutrality.

The reaction was instant. The host snapped, "We need to clarify the situation: Ms. Wagenknecht's statement does not correspond to reality," parroting the government's PR line about "Russian capitulation demands," and cut her feed. The image froze. A digital execution, streamed live from the heart of democracy—because in today's Germany, to speak for peace is to break the unspoken law of war.

### OPLAN DEU: The Logistics of the Apocalypse

You don't get this kind of coordinated hysteria without a playbook. Behind the snuffed-out microphones, Germany's defence ministry is rolling out OPLAN DEU [Operation Deutschland, also known as Operation Plan Germany, is a war plan created by the [German Armed Forces](#) in 2024 detailing how Germany would organize itself during a hypothetical large-scale war in Europe.]—a classified, sprawling logistics strategy described by insiders as the biggest military mobilization since the Cold War, clocking in at well over 1,200 pages.

The plan? Germany is no longer a player, it's a pawn—a "Drehscheibe" (turntable). Its job is to speed up the transit of 800,000 NATO troops and 200,000 pieces of heavy hardware

## Sahra Wagenknecht

from Western staging areas to the alliance's eastern flank. Ports, train lines, autobahns—all painted with bullseyes for Russian missiles. The government reassures the public: "The front line won't pass through Germany." That's a lie. In the next war, Germany is the supply line. And supply lines die first.

### The War Party: Cleansing Dissent

German politics is now total war—minus the uniforms. The ruling coalition has gone from "never again" to "you're either with us or an enemy." Even the historically pacifist SPD is now purging anyone who hints at compromise. Last summer, SPD dissidents authored a "Peace Manifesto"—the leadership's response? Pure rage. Defense Minister Boris Pistorius branded them reality-deniers. SPD chief Klingbeil said support for Ukraine was, and would stay, non-negotiable.

That's the new Germany: Pacifism is a thoughtcrime. Except for the far-right AfD and Wagenknecht's own BSW, every party is now part of a "War Cartel," writing new laws to pave the legal road for NATO's next great adventure—and discussing bans for any opposition that steps out of line.

### "No Civilians Left Behind"—Everyone Mobilized

The real nightmare isn't just the snap toward militarism: it's the way the OPLAN DEU blueprint erases the difference between troops and civilians.

"There are several different factors that could drag us into a war with Russia. But this rearmament is actually one of them. It doesn't protect us – it puts us at risk. And that's what a lot of people simply don't understand." — Sahra Wagenknecht

"Total Defence" isn't just rhetoric—it's a chilling echo of Ludendorff and Goebbels' "Der Totale Krieg" (Total War), where the whole nation is a combatant.

Business: Mandatory delivery of equipment, fuel, and infrastructure to the Bundeswehr and its allies.

Transport: Civilian trains stop cold to let tanks roll east.

Infrastructure: Bridges, depots, stations—all flip to military control in a heartbeat.

Privatized logistics, forced conscription of resources—everyone drafted, whether they know it or not, to support the American-led "fortress." Eighty years after Hitler, German

industry is once again run to serve a war in the East.

### The Kamikaze Economy: "Guns Before Butter" 2.0

Someone has to pay for all this—and Berlin's made its pick. While Volkswagen shutter plants and axes jobs, Rheinmetall clocks record profits, and the government shovels \$100 billion into "special" war funds for the Bundeswehr. Infrastructure for Germans? Bridges rot, hospitals crumble, trains crawl—money only flows where OPLAN DEU demands. When bridges get rebuilt, it's not for commuters but to bear the weight of Abrams tanks. "Guns before butter"? Try "missiles instead of wages." Germans are being made poorer to bankroll the gear-up for war.

### The Washington Angle and History's Sick Echo

Ask yourself—who wins? The answer isn't in Berlin. OPLAN DEU is the U.S. dream: fight the next battle on European soil, with American command and German bodies. Berlin has traded sovereignty for servitude, happy to play expendable battering ram, all while Washington issues the orders.

And the echoes? Pistorius' warnings about being "ready for war by 2029" are straight from the 1930s playbook. Berlin's eastbound trains rumble again. This time, the bogeyman is still Moscow—the same eternal foe Germany has demonized for generations, from the Eastern Front invasions to today's revanchist fever. But who exactly are they seeking revenge on now? The country that took down the Berlin Wall and fuelled their economic miracle with cheap gas for decades?

### Bottom Line: Operation "Silence" Means Prepare for War

The Wagenknecht incident was the canary in the coal mine. Her mic was killed not for lies, but because the truth threatened the system's logistics. The debate is over; war is on the rails. Ask now, or be a conscript in someone else's conflict.

Berlin's "Operation Silence" is a muzzle—the last act before the tanks roll and the hypersonic warheads fly. When the Autobahns become convoys and ruin, and the ashes settle, the time for questions will have long since passed.

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From the BSW: 'Labour Affairs' prints extracts (see below) from the recent bulletins of the BSW, in which

Sahra Wagenknecht continues to play a prominent role. The story that she is withdrawing from politics is a lie based on wishful thinking by her opponents. Instead, the BSW is on the road to broadening its leadership base.

### Germany pays for the Ukraine Fiasco.

While Ukraine sinks deeper and deeper into corruption and several members of the government and close confidants of President Zelensky are suspected of having illegally enriched themselves in the midst of war, EU Commission President von der Leyen wants to provide a further €135 billion in EU aid. This plan is an outrage to German and European taxpayers!

Ukraine has long since become a bottomless pit: since the start of the war, over €300 billion has flowed from the West to the Zelensky government, €76 billion of which came from Germany. Next year alone, Chancellor Merz wants to pump another €11.5 billion of German taxpayers' money into weapons for Ukraine, even though Kiev is running out of soldiers. Since September, almost 100,000 young Ukrainian men between the ages of 18 and 22 have left the country.

Instead of continuing the unwinnable war in Ukraine with billions upon billions, Merz, von der Leyen and

Co. should finally support peace negotiations! It is a disgrace that Europeans have manoeuvred themselves into such a diplomatic sideline that our Foreign Secretary and 'top diplomat' Wadephul was not even aware of the latest talks between the US and Russia on a 28-point peace plan for Ukraine. In order to regain influence over the talks, Europeans should offer to end sanctions and resume energy relations with Russia in exchange for a ceasefire. This would be in the best interests of citizens and businesses in Germany in particular.

For three and a half years, Europeans have taken no initiative whatsoever to end the war in Ukraine through diplomatic means. And now that Trump, after weeks of secret negotiations with the Russians, who were supposedly never willing to negotiate, has presented a 28-point peace plan for Ukraine, Merz, von der Leyen, Macron and Co. are outraged that they were not involved.

The prospect of a possible end to the war in Ukraine has caused the share prices of arms manufacturers such as Rheinmetall to plummet. Is the 'fear of peace' on the stock market the reason why European heads of state and government are once again trying everything they can to throw a spanner in the works of the negotiations with unrealistic demands?

Yes, there is much to criticise about Trump's peace plan. For example, that it only envisages Europe playing the role of a tributary vassal who has to pay for the reconstruction of Ukraine, while the United States reaps the financial rewards. But the peace plan is currently the most realistic approach to a compromise and the best chance of ending the war soon. Instead of blocking this negotiating initiative and sinking further billions in taxpayers' money into the swamp of corruption in Ukraine, Merz and Co. should support the plan and help shape it in the interests of Europe!

### Cancel Culture in Germany

Whether in migration policy, the coronavirus pandemic or the question of war and peace, in recent years it has become increasingly common to marginalise and defame those who think differently. Why cancel culture and speech bans destroy the culture of debate, why banning the AfD would be profoundly undemocratic, and why the BSW would most likely be represented in the Bundestag if the federal election were recounted – I discuss these and other questions with Julian Reichelt in the podcast 'Rohschnitt'.

Link to the full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZmtyl-FW4E>

## PALESTINE LINKS

[‘Home truths’ from Melanie Phillips convey one message: Israel will always be at war \(David Hearst, Middle East Eye, 25 November 2025\)](#)

[West Bank: Israeli forces execute two Palestinians at point-blank range \(Middle East Eye, 28 November 2025\)](#)

[Israeli settlers who breached Syria border returned by military \(Middle East Eye, 28 November 2025\)](#)

[AI-powered surveillance firms are gunning for a share of the Gaza spoils \(Sophia Goodfriend, +972, 28 November 2025\)](#)

[Betraying the underdog in Gaza: review of Peter Osborne’s book “Complicit” \(Tim Llewellyn, Electronic Intifada, 25 November 2025\)](#)

[UK regulator issues warning to charity accused of fundraising for Israeli army \(Areeb Ullah, Middle East Eye, 21 November 2025\)](#)

[Farage’s Reform UK party appoints director of ‘anti-Muslim’ think tank as senior advisor \(Imran Mulla, Middle East Eye, 20 November 2025\)](#)

[When Israel’s courts become ‘instruments of revenge’ against Palestinian citizens \(Vera Sajrawi, +972, 19 November 2025\)](#)

[At least five West Bank villages have been targeted as settlers lit Palestinian homes, cars, and a mosque ablaze, while the army delayed emergency vehicles \(Basel Adra, +972, 18 November 2025\)](#)

[New data reveals 98 Palestinian deaths in Israeli custody since October 7 \(Yuval Abraham, +972, 17 November 2025\)](#)

[Breaking free of media group-think is a scary, lonely journey. I know. I was forced to do it \(Jonathan Cook, 16 November 2025\)](#)

[Naftali Bennett wants to be Israel’s next PM. First stop: incite against Bedouins \(Samah Salaime, +972, 13 November 2025\)](#)

[In the shadow of Al-Aqsa, a Palestinian neighborhood faces mass evictions \(Dikla Taylor-Sheinman & Charlotte Ritz-Jack 11 November 2025\)](#)

[Israel is trying to divide Gaza in half along the ‘Yellow Line.’ What is it, and is it here to stay? \(Mondoweiss, 7 November 2025\)](#)

[No end to genocide \(Qasem Waleed El-Farra, Electronic Intifada, 6 November 2025\)](#)

[The human toll of the Gaza war: direct and indirect death from 7 October 2023 to 3 October 2025 \(Neta C Crawford, Brown University, 7 October 2025\)](#)



## Notes on the News

By Gwydion M. Williams

**An Economy Is Not A Home**

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**Sprout Imperialism and ‘My Beautiful Ukraine’**

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**Who Owns the Debts That Supposedly Threaten Us?**

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**An Economy Is Not A Home**

Thatcher sold us the idea that the state machine resembled a household. Debt was dangerous. If there was a gap, cut down on things you can do without.

Against this there is Modern Monetary Theory – a state that controls its own currency need not solicit a bunch of rich creditors before it dare spend anything. True enough.

But also Thatcher’s model was a consuming household. The wage-earner goes off to an office or factory, or often now circulates to do deliveries or repairs at other people’s household. And that was an odd view for the daughter of a successful shopkeeper. Shops and other small businesses are often integrated into the rest of the household. And it’s the norm with farms. So borrowing to boost efficiency is often a promising idea,

This links to the other Thatcherite fantasy – that real wealth is only generated by private profit-making. In the year 2000 I published a book called *Adam Smith: Wealth Without Nations*, which is still available ([http://www.atholbooks-sales.org/searches/authorsearch\\_begin.php](http://www.atholbooks-sales.org/searches/authorsearch_begin.php)). You can find the relevant portions on-line, showing that Smith simply invented the idea and did not try to offer reasons why it should be so. (<https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/m-articles-by-topic/48-economics/the-core-falsehood-of-capitalist-economics/>).

Use of Adam Smith by the elite is selective. The *Financial Times* is written for business people who need some hard unwelcome facts to be mixed with the usual propaganda. It recently reviewed a book called *Ruthless: A New History of Britain’s Rise to Wealth and Power, 1660-1800*:

“Smith’s book is littered with references to parliament’s economic interventionism. It was ruthlessly and often effectively protectionist. It promoted an accelerating number of new patents. It offered premiums for new inventions. It supplied an arena where landowners and merchants could lobby for new roads, bridges and canals.

“Yet, at the same time, Britain’s electorate remained small, with well under 10 per cent of adult males able to vote. This too aided industrial advance. Since the bulk of its inhabitants were unenfranchised, Britain’s governors rarely needed to worry about the thousands of mineworkers killed in the country’s unsafe pits, or the mutilating effects of the new piecework and unguarded machinery on the human body.

“Nor did they need to offer compensation for the effects of pollution or for land seizures to provide sites for new workshops. Not just Black slaves paid the price for rapid capitalist change. One of the fundamental and persistent questions raised by this book is just how far successful economic transformation can ever be combined with adequate protection for human rights.” (<https://www.>

[ft.com/content/67c1813b-87a4-42f1-9688-c355139b096f](https://labouraffairs.com/content/67c1813b-87a4-42f1-9688-c355139b096f) - pay site.)

But a majority of Labour MPs stick to privatisation, even though it has repeatedly failed. They are either unable to learn from anything that has happened in the world since they were 25 years old, or they see the general public as existing just to feed the sort of people who make money from privatised industry. Regardless, they are convinced they must be ‘fiscally responsible’. Feel obliged to ignore the welfare of 90% of us, to suit the interests of multi-millionaires who do a lot of financial speculation.

Had all of the Hedge Funds sunk without trace in 2008, and also speculative banks, most of us would have been better off. Banks owned by the state can do fine; but Labour was determined to re-privatise them as quickly as possible.

Austerity was more financial reassurance for the rich, with 90% of us paying the price. But just now, many suspect a stock-market bubble, and especially a bubble for companies that have made genuine advances with Artificial Intelligence.

The last few decades should have shown how dangerous it is to let the world economy become an adventure playground for the super-rich.

**Did Trump Trade Ukraine for Gaza?**

At the start of September, I speculated as follows:

“Gaza’s Yours, the Donbass is Ours?”

“It occurs to me that Trump and Putin may have made a secret deal in their ultra-private meeting in Alaska.

“Trump lets Putin win in Ukraine, so long as he settles for the whole Donbass and the halves of two Oblasts he needs mostly as a land corridor to Crimea. Before 2022 he wanted the Donbass to become just autonomous, but could not have let it be conquered.

“Putin for his part goes no further than expressing disapproval if Israel gradually clears all of the Palestinians out of Gaza. And keeps up its erosion of Palestinians in the West Bank.” (<https://labouraffairs.com/2025/09/01/notes-on-the-news-41/>.)

In the second half of November, we saw Russia and China abstaining when Trump’s outrageous carve-up of Gaza was approved by the UN Security Council.

I’ve not seen anyone else link this to the USA throwing its gigantic weight behind a settlement that gives Putin about what he asked for back in 2022. More than he would have settled for before 2022, when he just wanted the Donbass to be allowed to have autonomy within Ukraine if a regional majority voted for it.

A crooked deal. But my concern from 2014 was Ukraine’s Russian-speaking minority. Especially Crimea, which was part of Russia until Khrushchev moved it in 1954, and before independence in 1991 had serious doubts if it belonged at all.

After the government in Kiev turned violently hostile to any expressions of Russian culture, its elected regional government reacted by seceding. This was followed by it asking Russia to annex it, which Putin risked because he needed to keep the vital naval base at Sevastopol.

The two regional governments of the Donbass must have been told that Russia would not annex them. They demanded autonomy, and right-wing and heavily neo-Nazi militias violently attacked them. Both were split, and the government in Kiev let the militias join their regular army. The city of Donetsk was regularly shelled, with many civilian casualties, until the joint Russian and Separatist forces pushed back Kiev’s forces

in 2022.

Mariupol, presented in the West as a victim of Russian aggression, voted against the Orange Revolution all through the crisis. Gave a majority to the Party of the Regions, which Kiev banned despite them condemning Russia sending its army in.

And I will say Kiev and not Kyiv, because that was the name in English before 2014. I will switch only when Russian-speakers cease to be harassed in lands where they have lived for centuries. Rights within the rump of Ukraine, as well as normalisation for those parts of former Ukraine that chose to secede.

### **Sprout Imperialism and 'My Beautiful Ukraine'**

To most West Europeans, the pogroms that drove out so many Jews were part of Russian history. And Leonid Brezhnev was always spoken of as Russian. But by the definition of Inherent Nationality being upheld in the Ukraine War, both count as Ukrainian.

Brezhnev was part of the mixed-origin community in Eastern Ukraine. A mix of Russians and Ukrainians who settled lands that had been depopulated until Moscow's armies conquered the slave-raiding Tartars who were based in Crimea. Those lands were defined as the province of South Russia, separate from the Ukrainian heartland that Tsarism insultingly called Little Russia. But the Germans in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty united them as a Ukraine under German protection, including a chunk of what's now Belarus and include the city of Brest-Litovsk. This and a chunk of West Ukraine was lost to Poland. Lenin decided to keep the rest as Soviet Ukraine, conciliating those who felt strongly that they were something other than Russian.

Crimea itself was included in the Russian Soviet Republic, where it remained until Khrushchev moved it in 1954. And the Kievan Rus that you hear about had not included Eastern Ukraine. It was the Russian culture that emerged from the north of Kievan Rus that gave it its Russian-Ukrainian mix.

What's now Western Ukraine was taken by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It had a three-layer society there: Polish landlords on top, Jews doing middle-class jobs and a peasantry that spoke Ukrainian and were Orthodox Christians. And when the Ukrainians rebelled, they tended to do mass slaughters of Jews and Poles living among them.

The anti-Jewish attitudes remained

when the expanding Tsarist Empire took over:

"A substantial majority of the violent anti-Jewish pogroms and discriminatory policies commonly associated with 'Tsarist Russian anti-Semitism' (especially from the late 18th century onward) were concentrated in the Pale of Settlement, and within that region, the most intense and frequent outbreaks occurred in what is now western Ukraine." (Grok.)

"The heartland of the pogroms was the entire Pale of Settlement. While modern Western Ukraine was a hotspot, particularly during the 1903-1906 wave, it would be inaccurate to isolate it from the broader context of state-sanctioned antisemitism and social upheaval that affected the entire Jewish population of the Russian Empire." (DeepSeek)

The Banderist movement in World War Two was continuing a long-standing tradition. And as recently as 2016, there was a Polish film that gave an accurate picture of what had happened. (<https://mrgwydionmwilliams.quora.com/West-Ukraine-The-Bitter-Past.>)

But a foolish US scheme to expend Ukraine's future in an effort to weaken Russia pulled in most of the West's elite. It was taken up by both what I call Upper London and by a clique in Brussels dominating the European Union.

These European hegemonists should not be casually called Europe. Russia remains a largely European nation, with Siberia dominated by people who settled from European Russia. And most people in Western Europe had no wish to weaken Russia. Independent states in Middle-Europe opposed it. So to match my concept of Upper London, I'll try calling it **Sprout Imperialism**. Based in Brussels, though they come from all over the place.

### **Unreported Truths of the Ukrainian 28 Points**

Ukraine after the US move was all over the news, with Western media reports ignoring how much of the war was a civil war from 2014 to 2022. One 'reporter' even showed a map that omitted the successfully secessionist parts of the Donbass when they showed the position before Russia sent in its army.

Western media want their public to forget the public honouring of Banderists that played such a role in splitting Ukraine. Ignore that the 28 points include the following:

"Ukraine will adopt EU rules on religious tolerance and the protection of linguistic minorities.

"Both countries will agree to abolish all discriminatory measures and guarantee the rights of Ukrainian and Russian media and education.

"All Nazi ideology and activities must be rejected and prohibited." [https://www.](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/21/trumps-28-point-ukraine-plan-in-full-what-it-means-could-it-work/)

[aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/21/trumps-28-point-ukraine-plan-in-full-what-it-means-could-it-work\).](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/21/trumps-28-point-ukraine-plan-in-full-what-it-means-could-it-work/)

Kiev has been trying to suppress the largest of the Orthodox Christian churches in Ukraine, because it still recognises religious superiors in Moscow.

Russia is also making big concessions over funds that were frozen from 2022:

"The draft proposes that \$100bn of frozen Russian assets should be invested "in US-led efforts to rebuild and invest in Ukraine", with the US receiving 50% of the profits and Europe adding \$100bn in investment for reconstruction.

"This is reminiscent of the US minerals deal with Ukraine earlier this year, extracting an American price for involvement, and it also leaves the European Union with nothing but hefty bills.

"The sums it mentions may not be sufficient, either: earlier this year the total cost of reconstruction in Ukraine was put at \$524bn (€506bn).

"Some €200bn in Russian frozen assets are largely held by Euroclear in Belgium, and the European Union is currently working on a plan to use the money to fund Kyiv financially and militarily.

"The rest of those frozen assets would go to a 'US-Russian investment vehicle', under the draft, so Russia would see some of its money come back, but again there would be a financial benefit for the US." (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cde6yld78d6o.>)

As I write, things are very much in the balance. But there is a suspicion that the clause about an amnesty will appeal to corrupt elements in the government. This was claimed on X, formerly Twitter:

"Kyiv made changes to the peace plan proposed by the US to avoid auditing the received international aid and possible corruption accusations, reports The Wall Street Journal citing a US official. According to him, the original draft provided for a full audit of all international aid to Ukraine to identify potential corruption schemes. However, in the final version of the 28-point document, this section was changed: it now states 'full amnesty for all parties for actions taken during the conflict.'" ([https://x.com/Zlatti\\_71/status/1991744043391266867.](https://x.com/Zlatti_71/status/1991744043391266867.))

Europe's modified version left out the amnesty: a key change that most people missed. In the lively discussion on X (Twitter), I never saw this mentioned. Only saw one person note that the US version has a ban on Nazis, and the leaders of Europe removed it.

### **Artificial Intelligence – More Silly Than Sinister**

"When the UK charity Hundred Heroines had its Facebook group taken down it was accompanied by a message from the social media company that simply said the page "goes against our

community standards on drugs".

"Now, after more than a month of appealing, the photography charity is celebrating the reinstatement of its group after the tech company's AI tools mistook it for an organisation promoting the class-A opioid heroin.

"The Gloucestershire-based organisation, which celebrates female photographers, has had its Facebook group taken down twice in 2025 for apparent breaches of community guidelines related to the promotion of drugs.

"The latest takedown came in September. After a second appeal in 12 months, the Hundred Heroines: Women in Photography Today page was restored with no explanation or apology last week." (<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/nov/18/charity-facebook-page-hundred-heroines-reinstated-wrongly-flagged-drug-content>.)

Used sensibly and with humans checking its unreliable judgements, it is indeed very useful:

"Mathematicians say Google's AI tools are supercharging their research

"AlphaEvolve, an AI system created by Google DeepMind, is helping mathematicians do research at a scale that was previously impossible - even if it does occasionally "cheat" to find a solution...

"The system was consistently much faster than a single human mathematician would have been...

"One downside is that the system has a tendency to 'cheat', says Tao, by finding answers that appear to answer a problem, but only by using a loophole or technicality that doesn't truly solve it. 'It's like giving an exam to a bunch of students who are very bright, but very amoral, and willing to do whatever it takes to technically achieve a high score,' says Tao." (<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2504763-mathematicians-say-googles-ai-tools-are-supercharging-their-research/> - pay site.)

Listen to it, but never trust it. Never let it make independent decisions.

I was reminded of an old nursery rhyme:

"There was a little girl, /Who had a little curl, /Right in the middle of her forehead. /When she was good, /She was very, very good / But when she was bad, she was horrid.

But sadly, corporations who have been told they should look just to profit prefer to sack expensive human supervisors. Trust to AI to not get it wrong too often

## Snippets

### Who Owns the Debts That Supposedly Threaten Us?

We in the Ernest Bevin society recently had a private discussion on this.

To me, it is a mix of private individuals, corporations, foreign governments, and a

few transnational institutions.

In the case of China, it is mostly corporations and regional governments owing money to banks. Private individuals mostly have a lot of savings. Not entirely trusting the developing social security system.

In the USA, vast numbers of private individuals own the public debt. Either as bond holders or investors in hedge funds etc. that own such debt.

It's a matter of governments insisting on borrowing from the rich rather than taxing them. Possible only because the rich have got control of the political process.

It probably began in the 17th century with Britain's National Debt: a way round the successful blocking of taxation after 1688. Rich people could give their money for the government to use, but still own that money and expect a good return.

Note also that any debtor can try to evade repayment, or simply repudiate it. Imperial Spain did that - called a bankruptcy, but since no one could enforce the claim it did not damage the state. No one could repossess without some superior state.

Debts also can be written off, if the creditor decides so. After Hitler came to power, a lot of debts and Versailles penalties were written off. And Nazi Germany's own debt was ignored in the Cold War and then simply written off.

Debts are not an objective reality in the way the weather is. They are maintained by human society, which has infinite freedom to adjust. The payment or non-payment is a matter of power.

And as I said earlier, the rich were bailed out by governments that then squeezed ordinary people, when debt became a problem in 2008.

Hooding Robs - steal from the poor, give to the rich. But most elected representatives are among the rich, or else among the Next Nine who have not

been squeezed.

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## Criminal Power

"Deadly Rio police raid failed to loosen gang's iron grip, residents say....

"Residents of the Alemão and Penha have also told the BBC that it has done little to loosen the tight grip the CV has on their favelas.

"They said that their daily lives had barely changed since the mega-operation, describing seeing armed men roaming the community the very next day, even as the bodies of those killed were still being removed.

"Comando Vermelho (CV) and groups like it enforce strict rules in the areas they control.

"These criminal enterprises have moved beyond the sale of drugs and now hold the monopoly for the provision of gas, cable television, internet and transport.

"Residents report being charged over the odds for gas cylinders, often having to pay one third more than in zones not under gang control.

"Rules imposed by gang members affect everyday life.

"As CV has banned cars working for ride-hailing apps from entering the favelas, locals are restricted to using motorbike taxis and vans which have been authorised by the gangs to operate there." (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c62012e6g9lo>.)

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## Never mind the ethics: feel the money

"Norway suspends \$2.1tn oil fund's ethics rules to avoid selling Big Tech stakes.

"Jens Stoltenberg says move will avoid forced sale of shares in Amazon, Microsoft and Alphabet over their work for Israel". (<https://www.ft.com/content/12a5ce89-25d7-4de4-82cf-abb86ffa06a2> - pay site.)

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

Nixon seems to equate criticism with subversion and being hard on Republicans to being soft on communism.  
Adlai Stevenson on Richard Nixon

Ninety percent of the politicians give the other ten percent a bad name.  
Henry Kissinger

Neville has a retail mind in a wholesale business  
David Lloyd George On Neville Chamberlain

Nature goes on her way, and all that to us seems an exception is really according to order.  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



## The speeches of Nathan Gill

*We were led to believe that Nathan Gill made 'pro-Moscow' speeches. It turns out that he made contributions to debates, around the closure of two independent Ukrainian TV stations that presented the case for good relations with Russia. In Britain we don't really have a concept of an independent TV station broadcasting against government policy, as it doesn't exist and indeed the very idea doesn't seem somehow 'quite right'.*

*Here is a selection of Gill's contributions in the European Parliament in 2018 and 2019, obviously before the war, and before the UK considered itself to be at war with Russia.*

### 9/10/19 Situation in Ukraine (debate)

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2019-10-09-INT-1-266-0000\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2019-10-09-INT-1-266-0000_EN.html)

Mr President, Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This includes the right to receive and impart information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers.

Every dictatorship and repressive regime immediately seeks to close down the freedom of the press and media, thinking foolishly that they can silence opposition. Ukraine's previous President, Petro Poroshenko, tried, using legal process, to silence media that did not act as his mouthpiece. This was condemned and it failed. Ukraine has a new President, Volodymyr Zelensky, who is following the same old tired pattern. Despite claiming to be different, he has used legal process to strip TV stations of their licences and is threatening those he does not like.

Ms Mogherini, are you content to remain silent and allow this repression of freedom? Or are you going to use your influence with President Zelensky to protect the freedom of the press?

### A warning about Ursula von der Leyen after her election 16/7/19

Nathan Gill (NI). – Mr President, by a margin of just nine votes, this

Parliament today has elected, on a ballot paper with just one candidate on it, Ursula von der Leyen, a Euro-fanatic basically given the job by backroom deals, who is adamant that no matter what the question, the answer is always 'more Europe'. She is open about her desire to build an EU army yet says that we will be committed to NATO. Well, which one is it? Because you cannot serve two masters.

The UK must never surrender its sovereignty, which includes its armed forces. Boris Johnson and the Tories, be warned. If you give up our armed forces to an EU army, the people's army of the British electorate will punish you at the ballot box.

### Gill's position on EU foreign policy:

12-12-2018

I voted against [this report], as I disagree that the EU should be harmonising foreign policy and security. I believe that Member States are best placed to secure their own borders and negotiate their own foreign policies.

### What kept peace in Europe:

**Nathan Gill, on behalf of the EFDD Group** [Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy, against further European integration]

. – Mr President, I know that those who fail to learn from our history are doomed to repeat it. I believe strongly in education, but know that education can be and is used to further propaganda. I am concerned that the EU will use this as a way to further propagandise its existence and further make patriotic citizens of nation-states into villains.

I know the often-used term populist. Let us not forget that the opposite of populist is un-populist. Why have you made speaking up for the populace somehow a bad thing, always when they say what you do not want to hear? I am also very concerned about the oft-repeated line that the EU has been the source of 75 years of peace in Europe. Communication, cooperation and learning off each other often have helped but do not write out the role of NATO, of the Americans, of the

UN, and yes, of nuclear weapons, the threat of which have made war impossible.

If you must dabble in education, please trust the Member States to decide what is best for their children. Trust in national education systems and keep political motivation out of education.

Comprehensive European education, research and remembrance of the totalitarian past (topical debate) 16/1/19

### Zelensky shutting down TV stations 11/12/18

### EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (debate)

*This is the speech allegedly paid for by described in court as being scripted and paid for by Oleg Voloshyn, a pro-Russian Ukrainian politician linked to Viktor Medvedchuk, a Ukrainian oligarch.]*

**Nathan Gill, on behalf of the EFDD Group.** – Mr President, there should be three things that all of us on all sides of this House can agree on. One, we all stand by Ukraine and we support its sovereignty and its territorial integrity. Two, Ukraine's citizens must enjoy freedom and be respected. And three, the freedom of the press must be respected. If there's anyone who doesn't support these values, they had no business supporting the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in the first place. But the words of that agreement must match reality: rhetoric is not government.

I have every sympathy with Ukraine when it comes to Crimea, when it comes to Russian aggression and interference. But as surely as you can't fight fire with fire, it is wrong to fight repression with repression. We've seen activists and journalists alike being violently attacked by radicals, with little if any reaction or protection from the Ukrainian Government. Yet no one in this Chamber would question that freedom of the press is one of our most cherished values.

The Ukrainian Government is in the process of banning the two biggest TV channels in the country, Channel 112 and NewsOne, and

proper democratic procedures are being ignored four months before an election. How can this be: that the President of Ukraine can potentially closed down independent media just before an election? This report rightly criticises the erosion of the freedom of the press in Ukraine, and it is time for the Ukrainian Government to take action, rather than pay mere lip service to it.

Support for freedom and democracy should be universal, whether back home in the UK, here in the EU or in Ukraine, or anywhere else in the world. The Government of Ukraine must ensure that these principles are sacrosanct, and that means allowing TV stations to broadcast whether you like the message or not.

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-8-2018-12-11-INT-2-696-0000\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-8-2018-12-11-INT-2-696-0000_EN.html)

### **A question on the same topic:**

#### **Freedom of speech in Ukraine**

23.10.2018

Answer in writing

Question for written answer P-005431-18 to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative) Rule 130  
Nathan Gill (EFDD)

The Ukrainian Parliament has voted in favour of sanctions against various news broadcasters, such as NewsOne TV and 112 Ukraine, which may now be forced to terminate their activities. Freedom of expression and freedom of the media are fundamental commitments of Ukraine under the terms of the Association Agreement signed with the EU.

How will the EU ensure that there is freedom of the press in Ukraine and that the terms of the Association Agreement are honoured?

Another question after the TV station suffered a grenade attack:

Question for written answer P-002310/2019/rev.1 to the Commission Rule 138 Nathan Gill (NI) Subject: Freedom of the press.

Will the Commission seek assurances from the Ukrainian Government that it will fully and promptly investigate the terrorist attack against TV channel 112 Ukraine, in which a grenade launcher

was fired at the TV station building on 13 July 2019 in Kyiv?

### **15 February 2017 – Strasbourg**

Another speech about the lack of freedom of expression in Ukraine, during a debate on Kazakhstan, that was again allegedly paid for :

14 March 2019 Human rights situation in Kazakhstan

*on behalf of the EFDD Group.* – “Mr President, this Parliament has a specific mandate and responsibility to its citizens and must be a beacon to Kazakhstan and our neighbours. The mechanism to allow these debates, bizarrely, is in the hands of unelected bureaucrats and although human rights of the people of Kazakhstan cannot be belittled, we have a much more pressing human rights issue right on our doorstep. With the presidential elections in Ukraine at the end of this month, the security and prosperity of the EU relies on EU standards being adhered to in countries that have an association agreement with the EU, countries that will potentially join the EU.

Reliable reports from human rights watchdogs warn of serious challenges to democracy when

the current government, before an election, is putting undue pressure on independent TV channels like News One and Channel 112. If you do not have a free press, you cannot have a free and fair election. I put forward a resolution on freedom of the press in Ukraine, which was signed by 43 MEPs from all groups in this Parliament. The European People's Party (EPP) bureaucracy blocked this. I hope they do not do this when it is represented next Strasbourg. We need to send an unequivocal message to Ukraine and the world on the need for freedom of the press”.

Gill was Board Member of the two TV stations that were closed down and officially “unremunerated” (See his declaration of interests at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/mepdif/124965\\_DFI\\_LEG9\\_rev0\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/mepdif/124965_DFI_LEG9_rev0_EN.pdf)). It turns out there was unofficial remuneration, which led to his prosecution and sentencing. Gill was member of Reform for three months in 2021. The government is hoping to discredit the Reform Party via court cases like that of Gill, rather than addressing the real reasons for the success of the Reform Party.

## **The Case of Nathan Gill**

**By Catherine Dunlop**

Nathan Gill (the former MEP accused of accepting bribes to ‘read out Russian scripted speeches’) is sentenced to 10 ½ years in prison.

Extracts from the Judge summing up.

Why did Gill plead guilty ?

There is a 25 % automatic reduction in sentencing if you plead guilty. His sentence was to be 14 years, but:

“The law compels a reduction proportionate to the stage at which you indicated your intent to plead guilty, reflecting your acceptance of responsibility and sparing the court and public the burden of a trial. You pleaded guilty at the Plea and Trial Preparation Hearing, having made no admissions in police interview and initially indicated not guilty pleas.”

So Gill gets 10 and a half years, half to be served before being released on licence.

The judge insisted that Gill was sentenced for accepting money, not for what he said:

“the charges concern your

agreement to accept money, rather than the content of parliamentary and other utterances per se”

Gill was told by the judge it was wrong of him to accept money, whether or not he personally believed what he said, even though it would not then be a bribe:

“It is incumbent upon them [MPs and MEPs] to speak with honesty and conviction, irrespective of whether their views are met with approval or dissent. When you say what someone has paid you to say, you are not speaking with sincerity. If it were your genuine opinion, you would not need to be paid for saying it. Whether or not you believed any of what you said at the behest of Voloshyn and Medvedchuk, allowing money to corrupt your moral compass constitutes a grave betrayal of the trust vested in you by the electorate.”

### **Comment from Labour**

#### **Heartlands:**

[Labour Affairs do not agree that Gill is a traitor. The policies he was advocating in his speeches were in

the interests of Britain, as it is in the interest of the British people to have good relations with Russia. We agree with Labour Heartlands however that double standards were applied. Gill was sentenced because he took money and said things that go against current UK government policy. Those who take money and say things that conform with government policy go unmolested.]

Labour Heartlands:

Gill wasn't just one corrupt man. He was a glimpse of a much bigger problem, one that strikes at the heart of sovereignty. British politics runs on foreign money. One in four MPs in the last parliament accepted funding from pro-Israel lobby groups or individuals, totalling over one million pounds. Declassified UK Half of Starmer's current cabinet has accepted donations from pro-Israel lobbyists, with the total value exceeding £300,000. Declassified UK Trevor Chinn, a prominent pro-Israel lobbyist, gave £50,000 to Starmer's leadership campaign and has funded eight members of his frontbench. Declassified UK The donations weren't disclosed until after Starmer had won.

Gulf states have donated £1.7 million to MPs since 2013 for travel and hospitality costs. Action on Armed Violence Saudi Arabia alone gave more than £500,000 to 54 MPs, while Qatar donated over £462,000. Byline Times These are regimes with appalling human rights records, yet MPs queue up for their hospitality and repay the generosity with praise in Parliament.

Then there's the City of London. Bankers and financial firms have handed Labour the equivalent of £2 million since Starmer launched his charm offensive on big business in 2022. Open Democracy The Conservatives took £11 million from the finance sector between 2019 and 2021, with hedge fund tycoons now responsible for almost 40% of all Tory donations. Open Democracy Labour's largest-ever donation, £4 million, came from Quadrature Capital, a Cayman Islands hedge fund with shares worth hundreds of millions in fossil fuels, private healthcare, and arms manufacturers. Open Democracy

The double standard is breathtaking. When Russia buys influence, it's "hybrid warfare" and traitors go to prison. When Israel, Saudi Arabia, or hedge funds registered in tax havens buy our politicians, it's called "engagement" or "consultancy" or simply "business as usual."

<https://labourheartlands.com/the-real-russian-stodge-former-reform-leader-jailed-for-kremlin-bribes/>

## Nathan Gill—Victim of Double Standards

By Dave Gardner

Recently, an ex MEP ex Reform member, Nathan Gill, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for the crime of taking a bribe and acting improperly on that basis. He pleaded guilty thus avoiding a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment. In this issue of 'Labour Affairs' we reprint two of the speeches that he made in the European Parliament allegedly under the influence of bribery by a Russian-oriented Ukrainian oligarch.

Readers will note the reasonableness of the views expressed in Gill's speech. There is no reason to suppose that he did not make these speeches, and others, in good faith. Neither is there any reason to suppose that he did not act impartially in considering the benefits of free speech. Certainly as an MEP he was acting in a manner consistent with his occupying a position of trust. Why would an MEP belonging to the '[Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy](#)' Group not make a speech defending freedom of speech? Obviously what he had to say was not palatable to the Russophobic and pro Ukrainian parliamentary majority in the European Parliament, but parliaments are meant to allow for the expression of diverse opinions. Gill had clearly committed a serious crime in offending European parliamentarians.

The Bribery Act of 2010 certainly merits some attention. Gill committed an offence outside the UK which means that he could be prosecuted within the UK. Furthermore, in considering whether or not he acted improperly the court has to take into account what a 'reasonable person' would expect of his actions. If such a 'reasonable person' were to consider that accepting money for making a speech were to constitute improper conduct then Gill would undoubtedly be

guilty. But apparently 'reasonable persons' avert their eyes to other flagrant breaches of the 2010 Act. Most glaringly, accepting lavish hospitality as a 'friend' of foreign powers does not appear to excite the concern of reasonable persons. The problem with this legislation is both that it is catch-all in its provisions and that it is selectively applied. If applied consistently many MPs and ex MPs would now be contributing to the overcrowding of Britain's gaols. But when the right kind of bribes from the right kind of people are involved, 'reasonable persons' can find nothing amiss. There are good reasons for thinking that Nathan Gill was prosecuted because he expressed unpopular opinions in an influential public forum and that he was sentenced to a lengthy prison term to strike fear into others who might wish to dissent from the current Russophobic war narrative.

It is a matter of regret that he is now routinely described as a 'traitor' even by people on the traditional left. They should know better. We are but a short step from calling anyone who dissents from current policy towards Russia a 'security risk' or even a 'traitor'. Nigel Farage has said that he felt 'let down' by Gill, when Gill was receiving his full support at the time of making his speeches. Instead he has suggested that Labour politicians be investigated for their links to the Communist Party of China, thus exacerbating the parliamentary hysteria. The Bribery Act, along with the Terrorism Act of 2000 is being used to suppress civil liberties and in particular freedom of speech. Apparently all the parties in Parliament are happy about this.



# **Your Party, Our Party, a Party for the Many**

**By Gwydion M. Williams**

## **A New Hope? The Road to the Liverpool Convention**

### **Incidentals in Liverpool**

### **What Sort of Party?’**

### **‘Not Invented Here’?**

### **Soft Leninism: an Argument of Trotskyists**

### **World-Changing Leninists, But Not Here**

### **Back to the Liverpool Convention**

### **Things I’d Have Liked To Say**

### **The Wider World**

#### **A New Hope?**

#### **The Road to the Liverpool Convention**

I must confess to having been entirely idle in the 2019 election, doing no more than cast my own postal vote. After Parliament had rejected every viable option, I assumed a win for the Abominable Boris. Brexit At Any Price

Labour could earlier have demanded a new referendum, on the grounds that the European Union was not going to let Britain quit and keep the benefits. They had worked out that many would follow, with Poland probably first. But Corbyn trusted Starmer to manage it, and we got a disaster for us. (But ‘Poxit’ seems unlikely.)

I assumed all three Coventry seats were safe, and was dead wrong. Both Zarah Sultana and Taiwo Owatemi got far fewer votes in 2019 than the white male MPs who had gone before.

What I did afterwards was do a detailed analysis. Labour mostly lost votes where there had been a strong showing for Brexit. Corbyn should have fought against being replaced, but was too nice about it.

By 2024, I had joined George Galloway’s *Workers Party*. Many good features, but standing against Zarah was absurd, even though by then her seat and Taiwo Owatemi’s were safe. Anyway I was doing long-term political analysis. I was not hugely surprised that most Labour MPs functioned as individuals seeking to rise into well-paid jobs. Be valued by the more progressive business interests as people who would look after business first, but be moderately radical on social matters.

Meantime we waited for Corbyn to split from a dismal Labour Party that had already rejected him. And waited. When Zarah Sultana took the initiative, I was with her regardless. But glad to see that Corbyn and some others followed her lead.

When I applied for the random selection for the Founding Convention, I hardly expected that I would get through. But since I did, I went there with hope.

Europeans and in particular Britons were recent upstarts from crudity and relative poverty. Western Europe escaped both the Mongols and Timur because it hadn’t that many riches compared to the advanced civilisations of West Asia, or of South Asia and East Asia beyond. So my ancestors were greedy enough to make vast sea voyages that usually killed more than half the crew. Brutal enough to have a slave system that kept slaves as permanent inferiors, after the genuine positive of entirely removing the categories of ‘slave’ and also often of ‘serf’ for those seen as ‘our people’. Racism can certainly be encouraged by elites, but don’t miss its real and dangerous roots in normal human thinking. It can often be a twisted version of wider altruism or fear of the other.

Rapidly rising from a low status, Western Europe was willing to accept sciences that produced unwelcome facts like a moving Earth and an Earth vastly older than the Hebrew Scripture allowed. A vision of humanity as recent and rising, in geological terms. Hindu and Buddhist visions supposed that humans had always been around and always living in cities with familiar technology, plus a few magic powers. Plato discarded insights from Hesiod of an historic change that included iron replacing bronze, also more-or-less recorded in Homer.

If modern industry had many negatives, it also made possible the better lives we’ve been developing in the 20th century. And a steady advance of radical ideas, with *ideas of the normal* moving in directions that were once seen as impossible. (See <https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/m-articles-by-topic/m99-topic-menus-from-long-revolution-website/998-from-labour-affairs/the-french-revolution-and-its-unstable-politics/against-globalisation/the-left-redefined-the-normal/>).

Western Europe was progressing nicely until Brezhnev made a hash of moving the Soviet Union upwards from Stalin’s crude but extraordinarily successful building of power. At least one path was possible: the road taken by Deng after Mao and never denying Mao’s merits. Sadly, Brezhnev chose to crush viable alternatives in 1968 with a group of mostly-Slovak reformers in controlling Czechoslovakia (<https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/very-old-issues-images/magazine-001-to-010/magazine-007-july-1988-2/the-1968-invasion-of-czechoslovakia-doomed-the-soviet-union/>). I’ve not forgiven the leftists who defended ‘*actually existing socialism*’, right up until it became actually non-

existent, at least as an example the West might cherish. A lot of it actually survived, but most leftists are also reluctant to accept China as suitable to take over the role the Soviet example once offered.

And I will also do it with a recognition that China is a highly authoritarian system. The night is safe for women because rapists are often executed. This may be news to you: you don't get people sounding off about the human rights of rapists, though lots of people should be if they were sincere about their stated principles. I have always rated all International Law as unrealistic: it would be excellent if it actually existed but the chance of it doing so has receded strongly since the 1970s, with the USA the main offender.

It would be nice if someone did a survey of British views on China hanging rapists. I'm sure we'd not want it here, but I also suspect more men than women would be in favour.

## Incidentals in Liverpool

With these thoughts I made my way to Liverpool, living through some train disruption. And arriving in foul weather - cold and rainy. Seeing homeless people out in it, but I'd got used to that from all over. Just remembering a lost time when only aging unhealthy drunks were actually homeless. When people in ordinary jobs could either rent decently or own their own homes. I'm working on possible electoral slogans: Long ago but not at all far away, most ordinary young adults could buy a home of their own without their parents helping. [] Ideas *Your Party* might also use.<sup>1</sup>

And stopping for snacks, I became aware of shops that just don't take cash. I soon saw the logic, of course. A cashless shop is safe from cash grabs, and also

employee theft of cash. Not likely to attract armed raiders unless they sell stuff like jewellery or fine garments.

I also got my first clear view of another US import: 'Black Friday' as a shopping day to replace Boxing Day, when shop staff often now prefer their own day of rest. Nothing I felt like buying.

Reflecting that I was one of very few members of the Workers Party – I met no others. I was also in the curious position of getting e-mails from the Labour Party offering prize draws and soliciting funds: almost I viewed these as 'soliciting for immoral purposes'. And I was also part-way through the process of being expelled – I was accurately accused of having promoted 'Your Party'. I was not going to just quit: I felt they had left me, and the chance of a partial recovery existed and still exists. Still, *Your Party* seemed the best prospect.

I walked through the rain with hope in my heart, as they say, though sadly I was mostly alone. I got to the river, and was duly impressed by the docks. Didn't bother with Beatles stuff: I liked it but was never exactly a fan.

## What Sort of Party?'

I got to the venue, and was impressed by how well everything was set up. And how it was New Politics: we the attendees were what counted. The 'platform' was mostly to serve the individual members speaking to motions, with a vast on-line audience beyond. But some important speakers as well.

First, of course, was Jeremy Corbyn. His opening speech explained he had found no manual on establishing a political party. My thought was he naturally had not looked at the Leninist example. This was very coherent: among other things the cosmopolitan agents of the

Comintern invented Chinese Communism, even though it needed Mao to properly adapt it. Somehow made it a force second only to the Kuomintang, which also got whatever effectiveness it ever had under Comintern guidance. Contrast this with the Republic of India, where I think there was negligible impact in many of the most significant regions in a very regionalised Hindu tradition. Three substantial regional parties that emerged, but the one in West Bengal has fallen greatly.

When talking about political struggle, we should note how often it achieves nothing. Which brings me neatly to my next topic.

## 'Not Invented Here'?

My life in paid employment was as a computer analyst. I did once work on and improve a useful hospital medicine stock-control system, but most was in financial services. From that world, I knew about 'not invented here' attitudes. Useful ideas are rejected because they are seen as intrusive. A mistrust of people who 'are not us'.

All of this away from strong political views. Found among people who'd seem same to outsiders. The Wiki sums up what I already knew:

"The reasons for not wanting to use the work of others are varied, but can include a desire to support a local economy instead of paying royalties to a foreign license-holder, fear of patent infringement, lack of understanding of the foreign work, an unwillingness to acknowledge or value the work of others, jealousy, belief perseverance, or forming part of a wider turf war. As a social phenomenon, this tendency can manifest itself as an unwillingness to adopt an idea or product because it originates from another culture, a form of tribalism and/or an

<sup>1</sup> <https://electoralslogansfortheworker-spartyincoventr.quora.com/>

inadequate effort in choosing the right approach for the business.” ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Not\\_invented\\_here](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Not_invented_here).)

In politics there can be better reasons. Harder to maintain an open mind, but I'll try,

### Soft Leninism: an Argument of Trotskyists

Liverpool city authorities seem to view street names as a wonderful secret that must not be spoken of too often. I kept having trouble figuring where on the map I was. But I finally knew I was on the right track when I saw the scattering of Trotskyist vendors selling remarkably similar skimpy tabloid newspapers. Much of a muchness to an outsider, yet at odds with each other. Lacking the viciousness of a Murder of Crows, but it would be fair to group them as an Argument of Trotskyists.

1925 could sensibly count as the moment when Trotskyists stopped being an alternative that the mainstream might be won over to. Became a rival organisation that denied the mainstream any right to impose its majority views upon them. Called them traitors and enemies.

Thinking about history, I note the contrast to Mao. Mao quietly stayed within private debate among leaders, when the Central Committee displaced him and bungled away the Liberated Area he had painfully created.

He waited and he won, which Trotsky was too vain to try. Lenin's testament had hoped that Stalin and Trotsky might work together, correctly calling them the two most talented among his followers. Sadly, it failed to happen.

Don't forget that Trotsky had denounced Lenin's authoritarian ideas of Party Building, until he realised in 1917 that it might become real authority on a global

scale. Empowered by Lenin, he told rival lifelong socialists to 'lie quietly in the dustbin of history', until he slumped there in turn.

Then came fascism. Rosa Luxemburg had said *socialism or barbarism*, but fascism tried having both, along with a racism that had accepted Jews as Superior Persons in the original Italian version. A formidable foe, unlike the malignant jokes that are modern fascism.

In fighting Nazism, the mainstream Communists were the main force. The meticulous figures kept by the Germans show that more than half of the crucial casualties of the formidable German Army were on the Eastern Front. (<https://www.quora.com/q/mrgwydionmwilliams/Nazi-Germany-Was-Defeated-in-Russia>.) But meantime Trotskyists fantasised about Revolutionary Defeatism at a time when it was senseless.

From this viewpoint, I keep an open mind about the exclusion from the Convention of some members of the Socialist Workers Party. I fear that their main idea was to have just a grander version of a variety of politics that has repeatedly failed.

### World-Changing Leninists, But Not Here

Mainstream Leninism created many of the things we value in the modern world. But ruthlessness and intolerance were absolutely part of it. Begun by Lenin, with much foreshadowing in Marx and Engels.

The dream of a single socialist World State is no longer realistic, and maybe wasn't such a great idea in any case. The Soviet Union exhausted itself trying to keep it alive, while also damaging it by being too much Russian Nationalist. But don't forget that Leonid Brezhnev counted as a Ukrainian by the definition that

the Western media have declared sacred, without attempting to be logical about it. Pogroms against Jews were also much more Ukrainian than Russian, and the current war began as a civil war when people content to be loosely Ukrainian would not accept anti-Russian feelings as a requirement for being allowed to live on the Sacred Soil of Ukraine. Never mind that what became the eastern half of Soviet Ukraine was wholly the product of Moscow's armies defeating the Ottoman Empire. Conquering those flourishing slave-raiders against Slavonic peoples, the Crimean Tartars.

The Ottomans also had a massive slave network exploiting Black Africans in East Africa. But did at least allow some slaves to rise very high.

In the modern world, the Soviet Union in its later decades failed, mostly by its own errors. China remains Leninist, but also knows that it has to work with a Global South full of many different viewpoints. Increasingly religious, with both Islam and Hinduism becoming less tolerant. With even Buddhism showing that it has variants that are both violent and intolerant.

Mainstream Leninism was able for a time to flourish in such a world. Trotskyism never did manage it. Checking my assumptions against whatever Grok might find, I was broadly confirmed. But I learned of some unexpectedly strong Trotskyists who had dominated the docks of Saigon in the 1930s. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trotskyism\\_in\\_Vietnam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trotskyism_in_Vietnam)). They were among a range of rival fighters for Vietnamese independence and dignity that were wiped out by Ho Chi Mihn's communists in a brief power-vacuum in 1945 after the Japanese surrendered.

If this surprises you, you have entirely failed to understand what Leninism is all about. Why we have a better world because of it,



but it is entirely irrelevant to us. And why it was central to the successful outcome of Vietnam's American War.

### Back to the Liverpool Convention

I liked the mix that emerged. Including a speaker from the Workers' Party of Belgium. And from the German *Die Linke*, though I rate the rival *Sahra Wagenknecht movement* as far better. The Socialist Party (Netherlands), who had a remarkable evolution from Maoism towards what they call democratic socialism, were not present.

To my mind, 'Democratic Socialism' rests entirely on the state machine and the ruling class being willing to allow socialists some real progress. Elsewhere, Leninism is the only real left-wing option, and can sometimes succeed. And if you imagine it was ever otherwise in China, I've done a detailed study to correct this. (<https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/why-chinas-blue-republic-achived-nothing/>.)

It was decided that the name remains *Your Party*. We are socialist, with the working class is at the heart of a wider social alliance. Leadership is collective, rather than a chosen leader or two sharing. Dual membership is allowed with approved parties: a list will be decided but Greens were mentioned. There will also be support for selected non-party candidates in the May 2026 local elections. Membership is confined to mainland Britain, but Wales and Scotland will have regional bodies to decide issues including electoral alliances.

You can see more details and percentage votes at <https://www.yourparty.uk/results/>. And watch the entire day-long sessions at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-755kRtHWdw> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb\\_iQQVTDiE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb_iQQVTDiE)."

### Things I'd Have Liked To Say

There was loose talk about helping free 'the Irish people', Actually there have always been two Irish nations, with Ulster Protestants not wanting to be swamped. My politics largely began in what was then the *British and Irish Communist Organisation*. We never run ourselves on Leninist lines, but did imagine that this would come later with a mature organisation. But evolved differently, somewhat as the Dutch ex-Maoists did, but with a sad failure of trying to become electoral in the Irish Republic. In Britain and Ireland, elections are the way: but only if you ignore the question of whether the Ulster Protestants have a right to go their own way. And to also treat their Roman Catholic minority as unwanted and powerless.

I never really got to know a remarkable activist called Dennis Dennehy. One of the things he wrote was meeting a lorry driver who accepted that there were two Irish nations, but felt that one of them had to go. And that has been the actual policy of what began as the Provisional IRA. In line with IRA traditions it had Sinn Fein as a dependency. It had strict paramilitary discipline, including executions, and had evolved independently from the Irish Republican Brotherhood, but in parallel with Leninism.

The methods that work when you are never going to be allowed to win through elections, in fact.

The IRA chose also to shut itself down a few years back, reckoning that the Ulster Protestant identity is collapsing. But also the militant Protestants are capable of a lot more violence. Sinn Fein moves slowly and shares power for now.

I'd have liked to downplay the danger of 'Reform'. It has one third of the voters, but among young people it has few. Mostly the hooligan dregs, who actually damage its real power. And I find it impossible to believe that MPs in the Labour and Tory parties are going to let their many and separate brilliant careers be cut short by the oddities of First Past the Post. Recent polls predict a massive majority for 'Reform' if traditions are maintained.

And being in Liverpool jogged an old memory. A banal song from 1969, made famous in 1972 by 'Little Jimmy Osmond', now a man in his 60s. My rather waspish version was:

**I'll be your loathsome liver in Liverpool,  
And I'll blight anything you try.**

I've got no more, but it would be nice if someone worked on it. Made it relevant to some regional struggle by attributing it to deserving foes.

### The Wider World

While all this was going on, yet another man close to Zelensky caught for corruption. I assume this is Trump using the US political machine to push the green goblin into conceding more or less the 28 points, including the vital amnesty. Which will also kill the blatant injustice of the warrant on Putin. (See <https://gwydionmadawc.com/my-blogs/ukraine-the-current-conflict/> for why I don't believe the story that billionaire media barons have got many leftists believing.)

My suspicion is there may be a wider agreement that Russian and Chinese inaction over Gaza is traded for liberation from Russia-hating Ukraine of those willing to fight and die to not be ruled by such. Plus Oblasts making a bridge that disliked the policy but had not tried fighting before 2022. There was incidentally an insider collaboration further west in Kherson, which maybe was not shared by enough of the people and the Russian army withdrew across the river. Probably also why Putin does not want to take over Russia-orientated but cosmopolitical Odessa. Maybe as ruled by Kiev, it will be able to rebuild links eastward.

More upsettingly, Trump looks to do a blockade of Venezuela, further squeezing its economy. Possibly borrowing from what Beijing is suspected of planning for Taiwan. Not an invasion, getting your foot-soldiers killed in a costly war that is probably unwinnable in Venezuela. Risk just the air and navy people, who come home to nice safe living quarters and for whom the danger is part of what makes the job interesting.

This is the dangerous world into which *Your Party* is emerging. I'd have preferred it to be called '*Labour Renewal*', but hopefully it will be that in practice.

# Digital I.D. it's all a matter of trust . . .

By Magnus Langton

For some time the British government have been talking about the Brit Card, a physical form of personal digital identification for the British people.

In September 2025 Sir Keir Starmer announced plans to launch a universal digital identification scheme in the UK.

The Gov.uk website tells us the digital ID will hold:

Your name

Your date of birth

Your nationality and residency status

Biometric data in the form of a photograph.

The **ongoing consultation** will consider what other types of additional information it would be **'helpful'** to include.

The stated purpose of digital ID is to:

Improve access to public services like education and social benefits - by making it easier for everyone to quickly and easily prove their identity when voting at elections etc.

Reduce identity fraud by minimising personal details you give out.

Toughen employment checks, including across the gig economy, curbing the prospect of work for illegal migrants.

**Streamline the verification processes across private sectors too** - by enabling digital checks and efficient verification when doing things like opening bank accounts or proving your age.

Your digital ID is proposed to be free, downloaded and held on your phone.

It will be designed to integrate with screen readers, voice commands and biometric authentication.

Regarding security, the government states it will only provide your information to **third parties** when it is permitted under UK data protection laws.

The take up of the UK digital ID will not be compulsory.

The British public will still require a physical passport when you want to travel abroad and a physical driving licence in this country.

The government led their campaign to justify the implementation of universal digital ID on the basis that the scheme would deter 'illegal' migration as the difficulties in obtaining work without digital ID would act as a disincentive to migrants planning on entering the country illegally.

On the face of it, this seems a weak

argument. The international people smuggling market is currently valued at an estimated at between \$150 - \$500 billion per annum in 2024. This is not a working-class crime. The execution of the transport of such large numbers of people can only be accomplished by large criminal entities. In many cases, with the support of institutional or government acquiescence around the globe either through corruption or ideology. Entities that make money in the face of official opposition by the state are, perhaps, the people least likely to be intimidated by the legal requirement to hold digital identification. The government of Britain already requires all employers to collect the national insurance number of all employees, as a condition of employment. The lack of a national insurance number has not acted as an effective bar to illegal immigration thus far. The idea that such systems and organisations that currently make so much money, because their activities are illegal, would stop their activities because of the introduction of a digital ID seems irrational.

If the reason for the digital ID is not 'to stop the boats' what is it likely to be?

The British digital ID is being built upon a current system: 'One Login'. This process was initially released in 2021 and has grown year on year since then. The current Labour government has seamlessly extended the 'One Login' roll out it inherited from the Conservatives. The system currently encompasses elements of the immigration service, The HMRC (Pay your Tax Bill service), Disclosure and Barring Service (2022/23 had over seven million applications). The government has not yet incorporated the Department of Work and Pensions and all its benefit services but has plans to. The government intends to subsume the primary portal for small businesses (The Government Gateway) into the One Login system. The Gateway system covers Business VAT, Corporation Tax PAYE employers and Self-Assessment currently and sundry other services.

The One Login system is proposed to allow individuals to sign in and prove their identity to access all central government services. The contract to provide 'One Login' was won by a consortium led by IBM, which subcontracts to smaller, specialist private companies. In this case, facial recognition technology is provided by iProov, and the data pooling platform is subcontracted to HooYu.

This follows the current system for government procurement whereby

huge government contracts are initially issued to major 'strategic partners' who oversee the integration of large systems. Under the UK digital transformation programmes, these partners are:

Accenture (Previously Arthur Andersen Consulting), Capgemini, Deloitte, IBM, Price Waterhouse Cooper and KPMG incorporating Ernst & Young.

There are many criticisms of this cosy relationship between these (extremely expensive) accountancy and consultancy partners and the public purse, not least the 'revolving door' between top civil servants and these companies situated closest to the government money tap.

The UK government's foundational cloud service providers are: Amazon web services, Microsoft, Google and Oracle, as well as a host of other companies contracted to perform specific contracts. Amazon Web services are providing the 'One Login' infrastructure, via UK based data centres. The government's in house web services (**Government Digital Services [GDS]**) are responsible for the code, security protocols and user experience. The UK governmental model allows for individual departments to buy data storage from a list of pre-vetted suppliers (corporate giants: AWS/Microsoft Azure/Google cloud/Oracle).

The government has published a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) (<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gov.uk-one-login-data-protection-impact-assessment>) designed to address concerns such as: what information is to be held, the purpose of the processing, data sharing- how much and to whom, the lawful basis for processing the information, identified risks, data accuracy and function creep- or the risk the system could evolve into being used for purposes beyond those it was originally intended, data security, data profiling and what measures were being undertaken to mitigate these matters and eliminate the risk?

In parliamentary debate on January 9th, 2024, Darren Jones (Labour, Northwest Bristol) described the one login system as, '... a single, federated sign-on solution for all central government. ... The vision is for cross-governmental identity system that works for public and private sector'.

These sentiments were echoed by Sir John Whittingdale (Conservative) who said, 'It will be a federated system, which means that it will work with a number



of different certified identity providers, from both the private and public sectors.'

The Government was thrown into some disarray when a senior cyber security expert working at GDS made allegations of poor security within the One Login system in July 2022. His concerns had not been allayed by April 2025. An investigation confirmed these concerns. GDS Chief Executive, Tom Read was also forced to admit he had not been made aware that some of the development work (as part of a contract run by [trusted partner] Deloitte) on the One Login system had already been off shored to Romania. Despite these internal warnings, GDS had not admitted to them when an MP had written to the cabinet Office enquiring about potential issues with the security of One Login. The whistleblower has now been informed by GDS that he will be facing disciplinary charges. Do these events make anyone feel the public's data will be held securely?

The mechanism by which the government has chosen to shape the execution of the digital ID future is a decentralized system which allows multiple ID systems to exist that multiple private contractors can participate in as long as they meet the standards set out in the **'Digital Trust Framework (DTF)'**. A company can thus become 'certified' to be a supplier of a certified digital identity. The purpose of the push for digital identity is perhaps here.

All digital government services must henceforth be accessible in accordance with the Digital Trust Framework protocol. This will ensure that all service delivery in the UK throughout modern life will be in a format that can be read and accessed in accordance with the DTF. The trap is here. The digital ID may not be technically compulsory but, increasingly, every aspect of modern life will require a digitally compliant component to access it. The ability to access education, benefits, receive money, access healthcare, leisure facilities, acquire any licence or qualification will all be held in DTF protocol compliant forms. The scope of the types of information and permissions that can or may be digitally recorded, and read, can already be seen across the world. In Britain new passports and driving licences have machine readable photographs designed to impart biometric data. Many countries of the world already require identification with a biometric element to participate in the election process.

Much information is already collected and collated in a digital form on individuals every day. The evolution,

through the Digital Trust Framework, is all the digital information held in many disparate repositories will all now instantly be centrally accessible.

The government has repeatedly said the data will not be available for sale.

The rate of digital technological advancement is beyond dispute. The multiple potential benefits are manifest. Satellite enabled internet access is designed to make the whole world connected forever. The benefits and convenience afforded by the power each one of us can hold in our hands is great indeed. Does this need to be provided at the expense of such egregious and potentially irrevocable losses to our personal liberties?

There is currently no mechanism for transparency. The public cannot know what crimes have been sanctioned, making democratic oversight impossible. The potential for abuse is obvious with such poor drafting of the legislation including the words, 'necessary' and 'proportionate' in the justification of such acts. There are always concerns regarding the potential for flexible future judicial interpretations to police and governmental overreach, beyond the spirit and intention of initial legislation, despite assurances from the government of the time.

An ever-present concern with data is the potential for hacks and data breaches. There are very capable hacking networks and criminals who could benefit personally from accessing this information repository. The security services of many nations spend a lot of time and money trying to protect their own data and to infiltrate or corrupt the data of others. Security can always be attended to but the risk will always remain. What recourse would citizens have should their data be accessed through this system?

Oracle is a company owned by Larry Ellison. Larry Ellison is, some say, the world's richest man. Larry Ellison is the largest funder to the Tony Blair Institute at £257,000,000 and the world's largest private donor to the Israeli Defence Fund as well as owning large portions of American media and is part of the consortium trying to buy American TikTok. Larry Ellison is on record saying he wants all the world's data to be centralised so all planning and decision making can be taken over by artificial intelligence. Larry Ellison is paying the money to the Tony Blair Foundation to express his wishes, in legislation and geo-politics. Oracle secured a £850 million contract to provide data storage for the Home Office, The foreign Office, the Department of Work and

Pensions, the Ministry of Justice and Defra. As part of this, Ellison's firm was handed a £330 million pound contract in 2024 to provide some digital services within the NHS. Controversially there was not a full tendering process before Oracle won the contract. This contract was awarded to Oracle but with a key sub-contractor: Palantir. Palantir's purpose is to 'integrate and analyze massive, complex datasets to help large institutions make better decisions and solve their critical problems'. Palantir, named after the 'all seeing' crystal balls used by Sauron in the Lord of the Rings, was founded by billionaire Peter Thiel and funded by In-Q-Tel. In-Q-Tel which is the non-profit investment arm of the Central Intelligence Agency. In-Q-Tel was founded in order to 'further the CIA's missions'. The CIA provided seed capital and a lucrative sole customer in Palantir's early days. Palantir first entered the NHS during the pandemic, due to the demand of the NHS to have sufficient data analysis to manage the pandemic. Palantir was allowed access for £1 and initially provided its services for free. Once it had achieved this 'foot-in-the door' it has proven impossible to dislodge. In 2021 there was an outcry because the medical records of every single user of the NHS was to be handed over to Palantir. Due to one million people opting out, despite little publicity, this scheme was delayed. Through this most recent contract, Palantir's 'Foundry' software is embedded with Oracle's 'Cerner' cloud infrastructure within the medical provision future of the UK. The NHS has also handed a £1.25 billion contract to Infosys, the technology company owned by ex PM Rishi Sunak's father-in-law.

There are concerns regarding the access big business and particularly big-tech have to the heart of British government. Anti-corruption organisation Spotlight on Corruption, have looked at ministers' diaries and calculated there is a 22:1 bias in favour of lobbyists for business rather than charities, NGOs and Trade Unions. Liz Kendall, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology has Kirsty Inness as her special advisor. Kirsty came from the Tony Blair Institute.

There are reasonable concerns that all these big-tech companies, none of whom have any national allegiance to Britain, with their bullying, corrupt and amoral histories might not be the best partners to hand all of the British populations data to.

A common concern is that the digital ID would provide the platform upon which a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) could



be enacted. There are plans to tokenise all the world into digital assets. Theoretically, these could be tracked (and taxed) as every single financial transaction was centrally recorded. This digital money could be programmable, allowing for only specific purposes or usable only at specific times. This could mean food could only be bought on certain days or in specific geographical areas. Digital money could be 'turned off' for purchasing travel or would 'expire' if unspent after a particular time period. As was seen by the Canadian truckers during covid, businesses were collapsed and people bankrupted following the Canadian government requesting private banks to seize bank accounts of the protesting truck drivers. Friends, families and acquaintances and supporters of the truckers were similarly cut off from the banking system, with no notice and no appeal, for the 'crime' of sending money to the destitute truckers. Such complete and arbitrary power would be gifted to those that had control or influence once a fully digitalised financial system was enacted.

The British government has led the way internationally in requiring age verification in order to access adult material on the internet. Sir Keir has publicly stated his desire to ban the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN), so there cannot be anonymity when accessing the web. The digital ID could very soon be the required tool in order to access the web and through which an accessible record of all internet searches and activities could be recorded.

The sheer scale and the intimacy of the information that is currently digitally recorded on the British citizenry is, by orders of magnitude, far, far, far in excess of anything any previous iteration of government could have dreamt of holding on its citizens.

This simple fact raises questions as to the legitimacy of any entity holding and controlling this much information.

To better explore the mindset of the government that is planning on having centralised access to this motherlode of information on its own citizens, it might benefit us to look at the ethical direction of travel of Westminster in recent years including the current government.

The current Labour government is continuing the policies of the former Conservative government in actively participating in an ongoing genocide.

Sir Keir Starmer was personally named as culpable and answerable for war crimes in The United Nations Special Rapporteur On The Occupied Palestinian Territories, Francesca Albanese's most recent report, Gaza Genocide: A Collective Crime.

**The Convention on the prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948 under Article III** specifically prohibits assisting in a genocide. The spy flights from RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus constitute a direct breach of this article.

**Article IV** establishes breach of any part of Article III shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers,

public officials or private individuals.

Under the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 124** defines criminal responsibility to include anyone who aids, abets or otherwise assists in the commission of a crime, including genocide. There is a manifest case for Keir Starmer and his cabinet to be arrested and made to answer for their actions under these statutes.

The direction of domestic legislation is no less concerning.

#### **The Covert Human Intelligent Sources (Criminal Conduct) Act (2021):**

Allows for acts committed by agents in the name of the state, that would otherwise be considered illegal, to not be illegal if commissioned during (an agent's) duty. The departments covered by the Act are MI5, MI6, GCHQ, The National Crime Agency, Police Forces, the Serious Fraud Office, HM Revenue and Customs, The Home Office, The Department of Health and Social Care, The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, The Financial Conduct Authority, The Environment Agency and various other regulatory and law enforcement bodies across the UK.

A state that acts above the law or fails to act against its agents that abuse the enormous responsibility the state is afforded must be held to a very high standard to maintain legitimacy.

#### **The Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Acts 2022:**

Allows sweeping powers for the police to limit the rights and manner of citizens to protest against the decisions and actions of the state.

#### **The Online Safety Act 2023:**

The government introduced a personal responsibility through the regulator Ofcom for managers to be responsible for the content produced or hosted on their platform. The Act introduced the new category of 'legal but harmful'.

Such legislation creates a climate of fear and self-censorship for both private individuals and service providers or hosts compelling providers and hosts of internet services to censor what content is accessible through their platforms.

#### **The Public Order Act 2023**

This act introduced the Court's power to impose restrictions upon individuals never convicted of an offence.

**The Crime and Policing Bill** seeks to further undermine the freedom and right to protest as well as introducing further elements of pre-emptive policing.

There are very serious questions as to whether a state so determinedly seeking to introduce legislation, that might be described as a blueprint for authoritarianism, should be given the power to collate and access such enormous amounts of intensely private and personal data, for all its citizens.

The tenet of transparency was always considered a founding principle for the modern democratic British state. Under

the spectre of the new proposals regarding Digital ID, what hope is there that this will be respected by a government with such an authoritarian direction of travel? In such times where levels of trust in the agents and institutions of the state are at historic lows, the political class are just not trusted by the people it is meant to govern in the interests of.

Permissionless blockchains could provide many of these services anonymously, if proof of address or of a qualification or of ID, could all be stored and accessed to provide specific information requests on demand but without being a key for all the other pieces of information to be linked to it. This would provide a foundation for many services to be performed or accessed but in a managed and privacy led fashion whilst privacy could be maintained.

Why is this permissionless blockchain model not being championed by the government in the UK and abroad?

It is thought by some that the government floated the idea of the 'Britcard', raising the spectre of a single card, holding all your information, as a chimera, to distract from the fact that a deep and broad infrastructure of standardised, centrally accessible information sources are being covertly embedded into society, for now and into the future.

Who is influencing the implementation and operation of the Digital ID scheme?

The accounting and consultancy firms that sit so closely to the British government are publicly owned and have the world's largest asset management companies (Blackrock, Vanguard and State Street) as their largest shareholders. The other investors are largely a motley crew of institutional investors, Venture Capital firms, investment management houses, pension funds, national wealth funds, hedge funds, insurance firms, mutual funds and high net worth individuals. These companies hold shareholder value as their guiding principle. International capital has a fainter and fainter association with even their nations of origin. The Big Tech companies that are routinely awarded the contracts to hold the digital details of the British public are owned by many of the world's richest people. The biggest enemy of capitalism has always been democracy because, Aristotle observed, a democracy will serve the interests of the people, and the people are the poor. Since 1979 Neo-liberalism has asserted itself and capitalism has tightened its grip upon the world remorselessly. Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan furiously imposed the Monetary policies of Milton Friedman, fuelled by the ideology of Friedrich Hayek. The current theoretical hegemony of the neo-classical school has not only failed to diagnose its most egregious failures but has failed even to acknowledge the manifest failure of the system as the wealth disparity yawns ever wider wherever it is inflicted. The entire economic project of the nineteenth century was to wrest capital from the hands of the aristocracy, who had presided over centuries

of extraction from the captured population and social stagnation. The nineteenth century economics projects resulted in post war Keynesianism, where the imperative of full employment led to a more equitable share of profits for the workers. In less than fifty years, the age of industrial capitalism has come to an end in the West as the economic priorities of the capitalist class have been to turn their backs on the productive activity of 'making things' in order to devote themselves to extraction and speculation. Rentier capitalism and speculative bubbles are what constitute the wealth of the few. The military industrial complex in America has a budget larger than the next ten biggest defence budgets from the rest of the world. This budget does not produce ten times as many weapons, but it does have far higher levels of profits drawn down by the select list of trusted contractors than its peer competitors. For years the stock markets have risen and risen, fuelled by low interest rates and deregulated lending regimes whilst the rentiers have subcontracted out their mega contracts again and again so the profit to be made by the firms delivering the work can only be made by crushing the wages of the people actually doing the work. Homelessness, debt, despair and insecurity rise in the population as the money flows upwards towards the corporations and the banks and is scuttled away offshore or in speculative asset bubbles. The banks, freed by Thatcher and Reagan from lending controls, have created more and more money to fuel the bubbles. The money created by banks behaves differently from money created by the government. The money created by the government passes through various governmental departments into the hands of the people where upon it is spent and saved in incalculable directions. This stimulates economic trade and creates a need for production of goods and services which produce real wealth through productivity. The banks do not lend out savers' money, the banks create the money they loan. The money created by the banks, due to the exorbitant privilege of the banking licence, is created for nothing and given to the loanee in return for a promise to repay. The loanee spends it, mostly, on a single item, commonly their home. The loanee gradually repays that money, to the banks, in full, with interest. This money goes to only one place, the banks. The banks then dispose of the money in accordance with their own priorities. It is estimated that 96% of the annual money supply created in Britain is created by the banks. Banks were freed from governmental guidance to provide loans for productive purposes, and they chose to provide money for speculation on assets instead. Banks don't prioritise productive wealth generation and neither do big businesses. Today directors prefer share buy backs to research and development and boardroom bonuses to shop floor wage rises.

Even stock market investors behaviour has changed. Investors care less for business fundamentals, preferring to chase meme stocks. Mercedes-Benz and Tesla had annual profits of between 14.5 and 15 billion dollars

in 2023, BMW about 13 billion. The stock valuation of Tesla was equal to eight times that of either Mercedes or BMW. The belief is Tesla shares have much greater potential but given the quality of Chinese EVs and the research and development capacity of the two German giants, such stock values can only be justified by the irrational 'fear of missing out' on behalf of investors. Exactly the same is true of the Artificial Intelligence bubble in the stock markets. A.I. is good but, the investment levels are fuelled by hope and speculation on as-of-yet unrealised results. The problems A.I. is going to solve have not even been identified yet. The crypto markets are even worse. A tiny percentage of cryptos have a potential use case and the rest are just Ponzi schemes, and yet the market is valued at four trillion dollars.

Digital ID is being introduced to the UK under highly spurious justification. The determination of the government to have a universal underlying protocol, without the safeguard of a permissionless system to minimise abuse of the data is reason enough for warning bells to ring for anyone who values privacy. The greater problem lies in what the system will look like in five to ten years' time. As computing power increases and as more and more tranches of information are laid upon the system, the potential for a staggeringly frightening level of data and potential intrusion into the lives of Britain's citizens cannot be understated. There are those in power that would seek to introduce A.I. guided predictive policing. Various trials have already been introduced in the West Midlands, Northumbria and London. Already Britain is one of the most heavily surveilled populations in the world. Cameras on bridges, on streets, ring doorbells, even phones and televisions have the capacity to watch and listen to the user. Smart phones offer voice activated digital assistants such as 'Siri' and 'Alexa'. The users' voice is recorded in such a fashion that a biometric voiceprint can be developed for the user. Bank apps and even logins for a phone offer fingerprint or eyeball recognition, this is all biometric data being collected. Every website you visit asks for permission to store cookies. These cookies allow your personal data to be harvested and sold by the many companies that are paying to have access to it.

Supermarkets constantly record the shopper throughout the visit and then home in for a close up should you pay at the automated checkout. This data can all be used to add to facial recognition and gait analysis. None of these things need to happen. There could easily be a bar to intrusive and surreptitious data harvesting, the Ring doorbell could not start to record until a visitor rang the bell, televisions could not have the capacity to record the watcher, as a default. None of these things need to happen but choices have been made by manufacturers and by governments to allow them.

In a society dedicated to the wellbeing of its citizens this information could be invaluable with respect to central planning,

facilitating wealth production and service provision for the nation. Instead it is being enacted by a government corrupt and in thrall to the richest and worst of humanity. Neo-liberal elites who are implacably opposed to a fair, equal and just society. When Keir Starmer was a first term MP he was the only MP to have been invited to join the Tri-lateral Commission. This is another billionaire boys club where the rich and powerful go to plan how to have their political agenda adopted around the world. Famously whilst he was attending another such junket, the World Economic Forum in Davos, Channel 4's Emily Maitland asked Sir Keir if he preferred Davos or Westminster, to which he replied "Davos". He may not be a very good politician, but he certainly is very well connected. Keir Starmer stated at the Labour Conference launch that 'by the end of this parliamentary term, it would not be possible to have a job without a digital ID'. Given his lack of personality or political vision, perhaps it is his ruthless ambition to crush all opposition and secure the future for the billionaires that first attracted him to the uber capitalist with whom he prefers to spend time.

At the time of writing the world is teetering on the edge of world war three, imperialism is in full flow once again in Africa as proxy forces are used to destabilize and pillage multiple countries for the benefit of America and its allies, the everything bubble in the stock markets is possibly bursting and our government's response to this in 2008/9 was to bailout the banks had that benefited most from the bubbles they created and impose forever austerity on the many. The states responses to protest have become increasingly authoritarian and in America's case full scale martial law in its inner cities. The prime minister has actively participated in a genocide, has done nothing but attack the working people his party is meant to support, and increasingly attack the middle classes, in order to maintain the profits at the levels the richest demand. Sir Keir Starmer has presided over the continued instigation of a legislative framework for fascism, arresting pensioners for holding placards and has accepted more 'free' gifts from wealthy admirers than even Boris Johnson. The man is morally incontinent.

As Aristotle wrote, if a group of wealthy control the state through the democratic process, by funding politicians, influencing rhetoric (the media and propaganda) and directing policy- the state is fundamentally an oligarchy- even if it has democratic institutions. Rule by the few in the interests of the wealthy.

With great power comes great responsibility. Does anyone trust the Starmers, Badenochs or Farages with that power?



## An Unknown Victory of Working Class Struggle

By John Clayden

My father Harry Clayden was born in 1905 his mother my grandmother was born in the poor house where her mother, who was a servant girl, was incarcerated. My grandmother later married dad's father who was a carter who died in a flu epidemic just before the first world war. At thirteen my father had to leave school to work in a grocers shop to support his widowed mother. He told me that at the end of the war the first political activity that he got involved in was a local campaign by returning demobbed soldiers to close down the local poor house in Leytonstone in the East End where

he lived. The campaign was directed by a returning army major. The strategy was to surround the poor house with enough well organised people to stop it functioning and to block the board of governors from attending their meetings in the building. He told me the whole thing was organised employing military tactics by the major. It was a successful campaign and the poor house was shut down. Regrettably I never got to know my grandmother as she along with my aunt and uncle and two siblings were all killed by a bomb in the second world war not long after I was born in 1939.

It hit the Anderson shelter where we were living at the time in Odessa Road Wandsworth. My mother and me were visiting my other granny in East Ham and fortunately for us missed it. My father worked as a grocery worker for the London Cooperative Society all his life and was on its management committee from 1937 to 1964 and was president from 1964 till 1971 after defeating the notorious John Stonehouse.

## Review of Alastair Crooke's "Resistance the Essence of the Islamist Revolution"

By John Clayden

As the late great Duke Ellington once said "It ain't what you do it's the way that you do it....that's what gets results" so what was it that made the Iranian Islamist Shia Revolution successful and how has Iran Hezbollah and Hamas and Yemen survived against all the odds. The explanation provided by Alastair Crooke is not what you might think. No it is not due to ruthless religious fanaticism, arresting women as inferior, stoning gays and adulterers and a fanatical belief in a mythical God.

Those Islamic Shia scholars who did the research and providing the theoretical framework for action surprisingly were inspired by and were in communication with a black West Indian anti colonial philosopher Franz Fanon who had written *The Wretched of the Earth* and other influential books along with his French admirer some may have heard of namely the existentialist philosopher J P Sartre who wrote the foreword of the former work and said were he to be religious he would be Shia. It was a powerful work. Incidentally in the seventies I gave my copy to Mr Agoukououkou a Biafran ex-soldier

who was on the same Plumbing course at Perivale Government Training Centre. When we parted, he said "I thank God the day you gave me that book." But I digress.

The central theme of Fanon's work was for an anti-colonial movement to be successful, the oppressed had to divest themselves of dependency of any remnant of the way their colonialists thought.

The writings of Fanon was an inspiration to Islamic thinkers who were trying to create a revolution against the Shah in Iran. They made contact with both Fanon and Sartre who had written the foreword to *Wretched of the Earth*. They were thus inspired to look deep into the original teaching of the Prophet.

In his book Crooke references p58

"The historian of Islam Karen Armstrong summarised the essence of the Prophet Mohammad's vision of the future to being the building of a just community in which all of its members even the most weak and vulnerable, were to be treated with absolute respect. The experience of building it, and living in it, would be a reminder of truths that everyone knew,

and would give its members an intimation of the divine - because they would be living in the way God intended for human beings."

Crooke also points out that Islam acknowledges that there will always be greedy ruthless people and society must keep in place measures to control such anti-social characters and hinder them.

I do not intend to follow the author into the disputes between Sunni and Shia or the differences with Christianity or the activities of the Young Turks. Suffice to say that by embedding themselves in the beliefs of their populations both in Palestine Lebanon Yemen and Iran the various resistance movements have established a remarkable determination and resilience in the population. This has been demonstrated by the failure of decapitation strikes in Iran and elsewhere. The lesson to be learned for the left is that any movement in the years ahead will have to be embedded in the beliefs and culture of the working population and not as so often is the case in the practice of virtue signalling.



# An ideological vacuum in Russia?

Busts of Lenin are still everywhere in Russia. On the other hand, the Yeltsin Centre in the Urals (Yeltsin's birthplace) has opened an annex in Moscow and has a popular programme of talks and films on the theme of what a bad thing communism was, attended by anti-Russian foreign guests. The Constitution meanwhile declares that Russia is a social state. The health service at least in large cities is efficient and free. Russia has relations of cooperation with various countries in Africa. But Russia does not have an ideological message to offer the world. This article is part of the current effort in Russia to find a voice for the country.

November 7th was an anniversary that passed quietly: it was the famed October revolution, or Red October—which actually happened on November 7th; the October date was using Russia's old style Julian calendar. Here's a powerful and thought-provoking reflection on the occasion from a Russian thinker named Gleb Kuznetsov:

November 7th is a date no longer celebrated in Russia, but one that cannot be forgotten either. The October Revolution created a country that still defines Russia's global positioning. The paradox is that modern Russia lives on the reputational capital of the USSR, but is unwilling to acknowledge this due to the unresolved trauma of the 1980s.

Russia's significant partners in the world—from Beijing to Caracas, from Pyongyang to Luanda—are a Soviet legacy. Ties were built over decades on the basis of anti-imperialist solidarity and genuine partnership in industrialization. Kim, Xi, Ortega, and Lula work with Moscow not because they are inspired by “traditional values,” but because they remember the Soviet alternative to American hegemony.

Today, official ideology speaks of “conservative values” and “spirituality,” which are exported to a very limited extent and, by

and large, have been appropriated by those who are not our friends. A modern secular state cannot become “holier than the Pope” or a Midwestern Protestant pastor.

Russia's real model is a functioning Soviet-style welfare state. Free healthcare and education, a pension system, maternity benefits—the entire social infrastructure is not just preserved, but is being developed. Life expectancy has increased from 65 to 73 years, infant mortality has fallen dramatically, and Moscow is building “the best free healthcare system in the world”—but it attributes this to “effective management” rather than the development of Soviet principles of universal access.

The elites prefer to talk about the “bankruptcy of the Soviet project” while simultaneously investing in Soviet social infrastructure. This is a dichotomy at the level of state ideology: within the country, the Soviet legacy is rebranded as “tradition,” while abroad, we eagerly embrace the Soviet “credit of trust.” To acknowledge the effectiveness of the Soviet model, even in some way, is to return to the traumatic state when it seemed the West had won decisively.

The result: a country with a functioning welfare state model, with a real alternative to the neoliberal dismantling of the welfare state, neither articulates nor “sells” this model.

The crisis of self-awareness manifests itself in the constant question at all levels: “Why are we doing this?” In the Soviet project, this question was impossible—the answer was embedded in the system of meanings, from school political information to the Politburo. Aid to Angola was a logical continuation of the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed, for global justice.

“Resistance to the West” is not an end, but a means. For the sake of a “more just world”? Okay, but where did this desire for justice come from? To be honest, it was 1917, the Bolsheviks, and 70 years of Soviet

history. It was the Soviet period that created the logic of global solidarity with the oppressed.

But acknowledging the Soviet origins of this meaning is impossible, so we have to talk about a “millennial tradition.” Thus, the essentially Soviet style received a new packaging that didn't entirely suit it. Explanations became phantom, like the pain of a missing tooth. A nagging “why?”

As a result, the external representation functions like an empty box with Soviet markings—there's no content, but the capital of recognition holds the entire structure together.

November 7th recalls the revolution that gave Russia global ideological subjectivity. The Empire was a superpower, but the real alternative history to other projects was still the USSR. Modern Russia can neither reject this legacy nor appropriate it. This is the price of trauma—the difficulty in understanding and, consequently, in packaging into a product what exactly works and why it matters to the world.

PS. The USSR created its own internal Orientalism: party leaders of the “national republics” were expected to adopt a distinctive style—exaggerated praise of Moscow, oaths of allegiance, emotional intensity, the artificial flourishes of Leonid Solovyov's books about Hodja Nasreddin, uncharacteristic of living languages.

Today's Central Asian leaders are reproducing the same model with Trump that their predecessors used with Brezhnev. Even the language remains the same—yesterday at the White House, most participants sang Trump's praises in Russian.

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