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A SIMPLE MAN**



PAGE 11

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Osamor sets out party's plans for international development – no dodgy arms deals and no PFI

LABOUR VOWS TO TAKE ON GLOBAL ELITE

by **Lamiat Sabin**
Parliamentary Reporter

LABOUR will reveal today its new plan to straighten out the Tories' "incoherent" international development policy that currently pushes privatisation overseas.

In Parliament, shadow international development secretary Kate Osamor will announce that Labour in power will put an end to the Tories' promotion of privatisation of public services abroad so that foreign aid "explicitly reduces poverty for the first time."

This would be through ending schemes such as private finance initiatives (PFI) for healthcare and fee-paying schools such as the controversial Bridge International Academies, whose schools have been forced to shut down in Kenya.

Ms Osamor (pictured) had previously said that the promotion of PFI abroad was hypocritical when Cabinet ministers – including Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson – had openly criticised such deals in Britain.

"The Conservatives must end the double standards immediately, stop promoting public-private partnerships overseas if they can't defend them at home and put people before profit," she is due to say.

Labour's paper, titled A World for the Many Not the Few, will include plans to triple funding for grassroots women's groups.

In the foreword, leader Jeremy Corbyn writes: "The Conservatives reduce aid to a matter of charity, rather than one of power and social justice. Worse, they seem ever too ready to abandon our development commitments to the world's poorest. "International development

budgets can do more than just reduce the worst symptoms of an unfair world.

"We don't have to accept the world that global elites are building for us.

"Let's help people around the world be more powerful and make their societies fairer – and in the process make our planet more safe, more just and more sustainable."

Ms Osamor will today slam the obscene state of the government's aid policy, such as selling arms to Saudi Arabia for use against Yemen's people, while giving almost £200 million of aid to Yemen.

Labour will also end aid funding to the government's opaque Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and replace it with a transparent, human rights-based Peace Fund, she will add.

Turn to page 4



INTERVIEW Change in Russia can only come from below

COMMUNIST Party political adviser **DR VYACHESLAV TETEKIN** speaks to the Star about Vladimir Putin, CP candidate Pavel Grudinin and the youth's support for communism.

▶ Turn to page 8



FORMULA ONE Vettel 'a bit lucky to win Down Under'

PIT stop costs Hamilton from taking pole.

▶ Turn to page 16



■ YORKSHIRE & HUMBER TUC: CONSTRUCTION

CARILLION COLLAPSE 'AN ABSOLUTE DISGRACE'

JOB IN JEOPARDY: Unions tell of difficulty dealing with prospect of mass layoffs at firm

by Peter Lazenby

THE treatment of workers who lost their jobs amid the collapse of outsourcing giant Carillion was an "absolute disgrace," the TUC's Yorkshire and the Humber regional conference heard at the weekend.

A catalogue of ill-treatment of redundant employees was revealed at the annual gathering in Harrogate on Saturday.

Yorkshire and North Derbyshire GMB regional secretary **Neil Derrick** said Carillion's collapse had left the jobs of 20,000 workers in jeopardy.

Among them were staff employed by Carillion on cleaning and catering contracts at seven schools in Leeds who learned of the company's collapse from a news bulletin, Mr Derrick told the conference.

They were told to keep working and three weeks later were informed that another contractor, Mitie, had taken over.

"They were told to report for duty as normal on February 19," he said.

"Mitie went round the schools taking down Caril-



FIGHT ON THEIR HANDS: UCU delegates show solidarity with workers at Hull College Group and Bradford College, who are facing hundreds of job losses and bullying over contracts

lion noticeboards and leaving boxes full of new employment contracts and staff handbooks.

"But Mitie don't do catering, so Chartwells turned up in schools as Mitie have subcontracted the catering contract to Chartwells.

"So Chartwells also deliver new contracts for our members which they find waiting for them when they return to work on February 19.

"Both Mitie and Chartwells ask our members to sign the

new contracts or go home. They are given no time to consider and no copy to take away."

Mr Derrick said staff were told that regulations protecting workers whose jobs are transferred from one employer to another did not apply, and that they had lost continuity of service – despite some staff having worked in their jobs for 20 years.

The workers were put on three months' "probation," told that holiday entitlement was changing, that they would be

paid every four weeks, instead of every two, and that they had to prove to their new bosses that they had the right to work in Britain.

He said the workforce had been left "dazed and confused."

GMB won unanimous backing for a call to Labour councils in the region to cease awarding public contracts to privateers and to take existing contracts back in-house.

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■ PENSIONS DISPUTE: BATH

Students end 19 day occupation

by Our News Desk

STUDENTS at the University of Bath have "cautiously" ended their long-running occupation after partially winning their demands.

The students had occupied the site for 19 days, finishing last Friday.

The protest was one of 23 occupations nationwide in support of lecturers and staff on strike to defend their pensions.

Uni bosses have not responded to students' call for meaningful negotiations on their demand that Bath reject Universities UK's proposed changes to its pension plan that could leave staff

£10,000 a year worse off in retirement.

Students ended their occupation after the vice-chancellor and the student union released a statement agreeing to "work together to ensure that money not paid to striking staff will be allocated for student welfare, including mental health support."

But the "vague use of wording" and the propos-

al's failure to include staff means that the students remain cautious.

Uill Barrow-Retallack, who is studying politics and international relations, said: "This is a revolting move to divide students and staff in light of the growing solidarity between the two groups, especially given that staff suffer a great deal of mental health problems with dwindling support from the university."

The students vowed to continue to press the university to support of fair staff pensions.

The reputation of the top bosses has been severely hurt by their dismissive responses, said Bath Students Against Fees and Cuts.

Psychology student **Jessica Bain** revealed: "Despite requesting meetings with senior management, we were not invited to partake in discussion and still have not been granted a meeting with the vice-chancellor.

"This demonstrates yet again the disregard senior management show for us students."

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■ YORKSHIRE & HUMBER TUC: TECHNOLOGY

Automation 'not a neutral concept'

WORKERS are being threatened by a new wave of automation and digitalisation across all industries, the annual meeting of Yorkshire and Humber region of the TUC heard on Saturday.

Tas Sangha of Unite said automation amounted to a new industrial revolution – and would happen soon.

"The fundamental question is: 'on whose terms?'" he said.

"All technology is neutral. But who owns it? Who controls it? And how is it to be used?"

Mr Sangha said that without regulation hundreds of thousands of jobs will be at risk. "But it is not inevitable," he said.

"We need strong, legally binding safeguards for workers."

The meeting backed a motion calling on the TUC and unions to launch negotiations in union-organised workplaces, and to lobby Labour to have workers' protection "at the heart of its next manifesto."

Labour leader **Jeremy Corbyn** pledged last year that his party in power would offer free tuition for all further education.

■ YORKSHIRE & HUMBER TUC: YOUTH ACTIVISM

Labour boost not translating to members

YOUNG trade unionists have broken new ground by staging their first "fringe" conference alongside the annual Trade Union Congress meeting of Yorkshire and the Humber region.

The event included workshops, discussion on last year's successful McStrike action by young employees at McDonald's, and a talk by York Labour MP and shadow transport minister **Rachel Maskell**.

They reported back on their progress to the main conference – being held in Harrogate over the weekend – yesterday morning.

Ben Mayor told the conference that young people had flocked to Labour in response to the election of leader **Jeremy Corbyn** and a growing mood of anti-austerity.

"But they are not reflecting themselves in our trade unions and structures," he said.

Darcy Shepherd, an 18-year-old member of Unite Community, said: "Young people do care about politics, but I feel that young membership is lacking.



NEW GENERATION: Yorkshire & Humber TUC Young Trade Unionist of the Year **Daragh I'Neill** receives his award from secretary **Bill Adams** (top) and (above from left to right) **Ben Mayor**, regional chair **Joanne Thomas** and **Darcy Shepherd**

"We need to revolutionise the way our unions approach young people. They feel downtrodden and feel they are lucky to be in a workplace.

"I hope everybody in this room will be part of changing that perspective. It is about creating a welcoming environment."

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DEVON: Save Our Health Service (SOHS) Devon supporters mount a demonstration at County Hall, Exeter, where the health scrutiny committee deferred the decision for Devon to be plunged into an integrated care system (ICS).

The deferment was achieved after a mass public campaign, which deluged councillors with emails spelling out concerns and opposition against the system being imposed in “shadow form” without public consultation.

SOHS Devon campaigners travelled in from across the county to make their presence felt at both the meeting of the local clinical commissioning groups and the later Devon health scrutiny committee.

The health scrutiny committee had no choice but to vote to defer the imposition of the ICS.

SCOTLAND

Leonard: It's time to ditch our toxic right-wing alliances

by Conrad Landin
Scotland Editor

SCOTTISH LABOUR should ditch alliances with rightwingers and “look for coalitions on the left,” party leader Richard Leonard said at the weekend.

Speaking at the People's Assembly Scotland conference, Mr Leonard put meat on the bones of his plans for a wealth tax and slammed the SNP government for its “complete denial” regarding the plight of precarious workers.

Signalling his rejection of Labour's alliance with the Conservatives during the 2014 independence referendum campaign, he said: “There have been times when Labour has looked for comfort ... and coalitions on the right.

“It's about time we looked for coalitions on the left.”

Mr Leonard has used two of his recent appearances at First

Minister's questions in Holyrood to press Nicola Sturgeon over the use of exploitative umbrella companies to employ construction workers on a key roads project around Aberdeen.

Speaking in Glasgow on Saturday, Mr Leonard said Ms Sturgeon's argument that workers were offered a “choice” of employment status showed a “complete denial of the real world for working people.”

He went on to argue that “Keynesian social democracy is insufficient to the challenges that we face” and argued that Labour must seek to reduce wealth inequalities as well as income differences.

Asked by the Morning Star to elaborate on his plans for tackling wealth inequality, he said it would be a “dereliction of duty” not to do so.

“I don't see why taxation on unearned income should be levied at a lower rate” than income tax, he said.

“The time is absolutely right to consider a wealth tax.”

He stressed that Scotland would have to learn from the examples of other countries, where wealth taxes have been met with canny new avoidance tactics.

SNP MP Chris Stephens, who also addressed the conference, argued that there would have to be a tough framework to prevent Scots from moving their wealth south.

“It is a fact that people register in England and Wales to avoid tax in Scotland,” he said. “There's only one phrase for that, and that's tax avoidance.”

The conference also saw the launch of the Scottish group's version of the In Place of Austerity manifesto, which calls for “rebuilding public services” through a clampdown of tax avoidance and evasion and an increase in taxation on the wealthy and big business.

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CARILLION

MPs shocked by 'greed' of privateer bosses

THE actions of Carillion bosses trying to protect their pay packets were branded as “greed on stilts” by Frank Fields yesterday in a parliamentary report.

A probe has been launched by the work and pensions committee and the business committee into the governance and management of the collapsed construction giant.

The report concerns a series of papers showing correspondence from the Carillion remuneration committee.

SCOTLAND

SNP council cut to union time slammed

by Conrad Landin

SCOTTISH nationalists have been “led down the garden path” by anti-union council bosses, trade unions said this weekend.

The SNP-controlled council in West Dunbartonshire has slashed facility time for trade union reps from a full-time equivalent of 3.4 employees to just two.

At the People's Assembly Scotland conference on Saturday, Unite West Dunbarton-

shire convener Charlie McDonald said: “If they wanted to create a spark and start a fire they've done it.”

The council claims that the decision to cut facility time was “supported by 64 per cent of employees” who completed a survey.

But Mr McDonald said the survey had been “discredited completely” and was only filled in by 385 of the council's 5,000 employees.

He told Saturday's event that the workforce was up in arms over the changes, adding: “Sen-

ior officers at the council have had the fright of their lives.”

He argued the decision was particularly galling because the SNP council leader had purported to be “anti-austerity” and had spoken in support of the role of trade unions.

SNP councillors had given “no indication of cuts,” he added. But the budget they subsequently delivered included slashing grass-cutting at parks by 70 per cent across the authority.

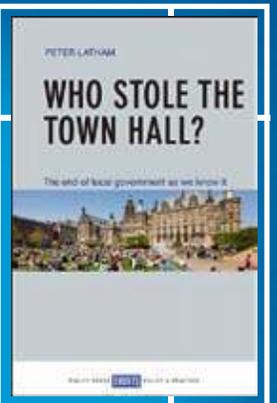
Unison convener Val Jennings added: “This decision at

West Dunbartonshire is trying to take power away from the trade unions, trying to silence us. It's not going to work.”

The council said the move would put West Dunbartonshire “in line with other Scottish councils” in terms of facility time levels.

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■ EU WITHDRAWAL

Starmer aims to bolster Bill to prevent a no-deal Brexit

KEIR STARMER is due to say today that Labour will try to amend the EU withdrawal Bill this week to strengthen the terms of Parliament's meaningful vote to remove the possibility of a "No vote leading to a no deal [exit]."

The shadow Brexit secretary is due to say in a speech in Birmingham that MPs should be given power to instruct the government what to do if a deal is voted down by Parliament.

He will dismiss claims by Brexit Minister Lord Callanan that a Commons defeat will open the way to Britain crash-

ing out of the EU without an agreement.

In his speech to mark one year until Britain leaves the EU, Mr Starmer is expected to say: "Labour has adopted a considered approach to Brexit based on the national interest and rooted in our values of internationalism, solidarity and equality, [along with] a belief that we achieve more together than we do alone..."

"We completely reject the notion that Brexit should make Britain a more insular country or cut ourselves off from our allies."

■ FRONT PAGE

LABOUR VOWS TO TAKE ON THE GLOBAL ELITE

FROM PI: Its other commitments include helping countries in receipt of aid to halve the income gap between the top-earning 10 per cent and the poorest 40 per cent by 2030, and eliminate it entirely by 2040.

Also, the party pledges to take "bold action on the global economy rigged in favour of elites" by promoting alternative economic models and reforming rules of taxation, trade and debt.

And Labour will shift the Department for International Development investment from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, Ms Osamor will announce.

Following on from the scandal of Oxfam's overseas workers purchasing prostituted

women in Haiti, Labour says it will commit to transfer power away from the aid industry and into the hands of people and communities.

Ms Osamor will say: "The appalling incidences of sexual exploitation that have come to light show the terrible ways in which those made powerful by aid practices can abuse their positions."

"But they are also a sign of an aid system that has been incentivised by successive governments over many years to prioritise technocratic service delivery over the core mission of redistributing power, over challenging its abuse and over standing on the side of communities. We all have to change that."

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■ TUC YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

Labour's youth rep defends role of unions in the party

by Sam Tobin
at Congress House

TRADE unions are more important to the success of the Labour Party than ever before, the party's youth representative has said.

Lara McNeill, a medical student who was recently elected to Labour's national executive committee (NEC) as youth rep, said that "unions are for life, not just for elections."

She made the comments in response to NEC member and Momentum director Christine Shawcroft's suggestion earlier this month that it was "time to support disaffiliation of the unions from the Labour Party," a remark which met

with widespread condemnation.

Concerning the election to choose Labour's new general secretary, Ms Shawcroft wrote on Facebook that "nothing would induce me to support a candidate from a major trade union," adding that the party belongs to the members.

The post was later deleted and Momentum distanced itself from the comments.

Speaking at the TUC Young Workers Conference in London, Ms McNeill voiced disagreement with Ms Shawcroft's position, insisting that "uniting the industrial and the political sections of our movement has never been more important."

She said she was "a strong believer in trade unions being at the forefront of form-

ing our policy in the Labour Party," arguing that people in the party "can't really ignore what trade unions are saying on policy."

Ms McNeill also rubbished criticism from the right-wing media, noting that any Labour members who support the unions are "denounced as puppets of their general secretaries."

"We can't allow the narrative from anyone in the Labour Party that the union link is not important," she said.

Championing policies such as a £10 minimum wage would see Labour continue to increase its vote share at the next general election, which could happen "any time soon," Ms McNeill added.

She also called on

young trade unionists to put pressure on local councils enacting policies that they do not agree with, giving the example of Labour-controlled Haringey, whose Haringey Development Vehicle would hand £2 billion of council assets to Australian company Lendlease.

Lendlease and its predecessor Bovis were also involved in the blacklisting of union members.

Ms McNeill said that, externally, unions should be lobbying Labour councils not to do these things, suggesting that young trade unionists should also "stand as candidates."

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■ TUC YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

Public-sector pay 'has very far to go'

by Sam Tobin
at Congress House

PAY deals for public-sector employees will not be enough to win back workers' trust after years of wage suppression, TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said yesterday.

She told the TUC's Young Workers Conference in London, days after Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt announced a 6.5 per cent pay rise for NHS workers, that public-sector workers have suffered years of effective real-terms pay cuts under the 1 per cent cap.

Ms O'Grady said: "Even where they offer real pay increases, we are never going to forget that we have had seven long years in the public sector of real pay cuts."

"Whatever is on the table now ... is not going to get us back to where workers were before the financial crash and we've got a long way to go to make up that money."

She demanded that all public-sector workers get fully funded real pay

increases as well as private-sector employees getting wage rises.

But she warned that "only one in 20 young workers holds a union card" and said unions have "got to crack that nut."

Ms O'Grady told delegates that it was a "great time" to be meeting ahead of the TUC's 150th anniversary, while Labour has seen its vote share increase and the "Tories at each other's throats."

She suggested that this was partly down to the Tories being rattled by the youth vote that is in favour of Labour under Jeremy Corbyn.

Ms O'Grady also dismissed Transport Secretary Chris Grayling's warning in the Daily Telegraph on Saturday about "how gloomy life would be under socialism."

She said: "I hate to break it to Chris Grayling, but life is pretty gloomy as it is, so good luck with that one."

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WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN: The McStrikers in the Old Palace Yard in London last year



■ TUC YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

Galvanising youth 'was key to McDonald's strike victory'

by Sam Tobin
 at Congress House

MCDONALD'S workers who won significant concessions through the first British strikes in the company's history have attributed their success to galvanising young workers to realise the benefits of collective action.

Following strikes last September – the first since McDonald's opened in Britain in 1974 – staff received the biggest pay rise at the company in more than a decade.

Seniz Batmaz of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union

(BEAWU) helped organise industrial action at the McDonald's branch in Crayford.

She told delegates at the TUC's Young Workers Conference in London: "We started organising not by what the union does for you, but by what you can do in your workplace to change it."

Prior to the strike, Ms Batmaz said people who "stood up for themselves were getting their hours cut."

She said that it came to a point where staff thought "we can either run away and change jobs, go to another shit job or stand together in that store and fight together."

Ms Batmaz said that her comrades did not follow the way of "the traditional trade union movement" because most young people "don't even have unions on their radar."

She added that the success of their campaign was down to telling workers: "This is your workplace, you are the person who is going to change this."

Ms Batmaz also referred to the media backlash of criticism for demanding £10 an hour "for flipping burgers."

She said: "It's not as if it's an unskilled job, there is no such thing as an unskilled job."

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■ TUC YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER CONFERENCE

Young workers in first fringe gathering

YOUNG trade unionists have broken new ground by staging their first "fringe" conference alongside the annual Trade Union Congress meeting of Yorkshire and the Humber region, writes Peter Lazenby.

The event included workshops, discussion on last year's successful McStrike action by young employees at McDonald's, and a talk by York Labour MP and shadow transport minister Rachel Maskell.

They reported back on their progress to the main confer-

ence – being held in Harrogate over the weekend – yesterday morning.

Ben Mayor told the conference that young people had flocked to Labour in response to the election of leader Jeremy Corbyn and a growing mood of anti-austerity.

"But they are not reflecting themselves in our trade unions and structures," he said.

Darcy Shepherd, an 18-year-old member of Unite Community, said: "Young people do care about politics, but I feel

that young membership is lacking.

"We need to revolutionise the way our unions approach young people. They feel downtrodden and feel they are lucky to be in a workplace.

"I hope everybody in this room will be part of changing that perspective. It is about creating a welcoming environment.

"Young workers do not have a voice, and they need to feel they can do something to help – not just for themselves."

■ HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE

BIG RISE IN SLAVERY FEARS ABOUT BRITS

NEW RECORD: Other nationalities outnumbered in referrals for first time

by Lamiat Sabin

RECORD numbers of British nationals are being flagged up as potential victims of slavery, a new report reveals today.

Last year, British children and adults made up for the first time the highest volume of cases passed to a scheme set up to identify who is at the mercy of slave drivers and traffickers.

A total of 819 people with British nationality were flagged up to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), more than double the 326 in 2016.

The development was partly driven by a jump in referrals relating to children exploited by drug gangs using the "county lines" distribution model, National Crime Agency (NCA) investigators said.

This typically involves gangs from cities deploying children and teenagers to county or

coastal towns to sell heroin and crack and move cash around.

There was a 66 per cent rise in minors being referred to the NRM as suspected victims of labour or sexual exploitation.

In total 5,145 names of potential victims of slavery or trafficking were submitted to the NRM last year, up 35 per cent on the previous year when there were 3,804 referrals.

NCA director Will Kerr said: "It is our assessment that the increase we are seeing here is driven by an increased awareness and greater reporting of modern slavery and that is to be welcomed.

"However, it also adds further evidence to our view that the figures almost certainly represent an underestimate of the true scale of slavery and trafficking in the UK."

He warned that authorities are dealing with an "evolving threat" as criminals move into

"online spaces" to enable their offending.

The NRM is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, such as those subjected to sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude.

Possible cases are referred by first response agencies to specialist units at the NCA or Home Office.

Not all the referred individuals are ultimately assessed to be modern slavery victims.

The analysis found 116 different nationalities represented among last year's referrals, with Albanian and Vietnamese nationals the next most commonly reported potential victims after the British.

Suspected labour exploitation was the most frequently cited category, accounting for 2,352 cases – nearly half of all referrals.

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ITALY

Far right and Five Star agree to split parliament jobs

by Our Foreign Desk

ITALIAN Five Star Movement chief Luigi Di Maio praised far-right League leader Matteo Salvini yesterday after they cobbled together a deal to split important parliamentary posts.

Mr Di Maio told the Corriere della Sera newspaper that Mr Salvini "has proved he keeps his word" and said he wouldn't rule out coalition talks with parliament's right-wing bloc, of which the League is the largest party.

The rightwingers also include convicted fraudster Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia. It is the second-largest of the group and provided the candidate for president of the Senate, Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati, the first woman to hold that position.

But Communist paper Il Manifesto saw through her feminist posturing in her acceptance speech, noting she had been a loyal servant to misogynist Mr Berlusconi for 25 years.



MOVING BACKWARDS: The Five Star Movement's Roberto Fico (centre) on his way to meet the Italian President Sergio Mattarella

Meanwhile Five Star MP Roberto Fico was voted in as president of the Chamber of Deputies. Both roles are more powerful than the speaker positions in Britain's parliament.

Neither Five Star nor the right-wing bloc has enough seats to form a government alone.

Mr Salvini has previously rejected constructing a "weird coalition" with Five Star, though the latter has proven itself ideologically flexible and so may bend enough to make a deal palatable.

Five Star's mishmash of

policies include opposition to refugees and the introduction of a universal basic income in a bid to increase consumption.

Mr Salvini's League is more straightforwardly right-wing, and he has pledged to deport 500,000 foreigners if made PM.

In its editorial yesterday, Il Manifesto said that such a deal would likely be unacceptable for the parties' supporters, while a Five Star coalition with what remains of the much-reduced Democratic Party would cause the latter to crumble further.

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SPAIN

German police detain fugitive Puigdemont

CARLES PUIGDEMONT, the fugitive ex-leader of Catalonia, was arrested yesterday by German police on an international warrant as he tried to enter the country from Denmark.

His arrest follows the charging on Friday of 25 people by Spain's Supreme Court over October's abortive Catalan independence referendum.

German traffic police picked up Mr Puigdemont near the A7 motorway that runs from the border with Denmark.

He was trying to return to Belgium from a trip to Finland, from where he had to flee after hearing that Finnish police were preparing to arrest and extradite him to Spain.

A Spanish Supreme Court judge reactivated an



ARRESTED: Carlos Puigdemont

international arrest warrant for Mr Puigdemont on Friday. Arrest warrants have also been issued for five other fugitive Catalan separatists.

Spain had originally asked for Mr Puigdemont's extradition from Belgium after he moved to Brussels, but later with-

drew the request until the judge concluded his investigation.

In the meantime, Mr Puigdemont was free to make trips to Denmark, Switzerland and Finland, as part of his effort to gain international support for the independence movement.



■ UNITED STATES

STUDENTS MARCH FOR THEIR LIVES IN GUN PROTESTS

RALLIES: ML King's granddaughter calls for controls on weapons

by Our Foreign Desk

HUNDREDS of thousands of schoolchildren and supporters rallied across the United States at the weekend to demand tougher gun laws.

The "March for Our Lives" events on Saturday drew massive crowds in cities across the country, marking the largest youth-led protests since the Vietnam war era.

In Washington DC, New York, Denver, Los Angeles and elsewhere, demonstrators heard from student survivors of last month's school shooting in Parkland, Florida.

"If you listen real close, you can hear the people in power shaking," Parkland survivor David Hogg said to roars from protesters packing Pennsylvania Avenue from a stage near the Capitol to a spot many blocks away towards the White House.

"We're going to take this to every election, to every state and every city ... Because this," he said, point-

ing behind him to the Capitol dome, "is not cutting it."

The message at the different rallies was consistent, with demonstrators vowing to vote out members of Congress who refuse to support gun controls.

Many rallies had tables where volunteers helped people register to vote while speakers detailed the policies they wanted and the effect gun violence has had on their lives.

The fire alarm at Trenton High School is scary, said 17-year-old Gabrielle James at a march in suburban Detroit.

"We don't know if it's an actual drill or if someone's actually inside the school, going to take your life," Ms James said at a march in Detroit.

She said government has

"extremely failed" to protect students from gun violence and she wants restrictions on automatic weapons.

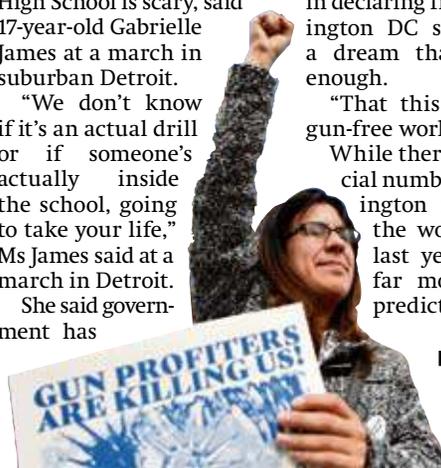
"I work extremely hard at my studies. Sometimes I just sit in my car before going to school, wondering if I'm going to be home to see my mother after school," Ms James said.

Yolanda Renee King, Martin Luther King Jr's nine-year-old granddaughter, drew from the civil rights leader's most famous words in declaring from the Washington DC stage: "I have a dream that enough is enough."

"That this should be a gun-free world. Period."

While there were no official numbers, the Washington rally rivalled the women's march last year that drew far more than the predicted 300,000.

international@peoples-press.com
Star
comment:
p8



 in brief

New law limits aid to Palestinians

ISRAEL: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the United States yesterday for passing the Taylor Force Act, named for a US citizen killed in Tel Aviv, which suspends some financial aid to the families of Palestinians killed or jailed during clashes with Israel.

The Palestinians say the families are victims of violence. Palestinian official Nabil Abu Rdeneh condemned the law, saying it doesn't "allow for the creation of an atmosphere conducive to peace."

Israel built 2,783 illegal houses in '17

WEST BANK: Illegal settlement-building by the occupying Israelis increased last year, with construction starting on 2,783 houses.

The total for 2017 was about 17 per cent higher than the annual average since Benjamin Netanyahu became prime minister in 2009.

Israeli group Peace Now said it was the result of Donald Trump support, as he abandoned even the transparent criticism of past presidents.

UN calls on Saudi to stop aid block

YEMEN: The UN children's agency has demanded that warring factions – primarily the Saudi-led coalition, stop blocking aid deliveries.

Unicef director Geert Cappelaere said the lack of aid access was fuelling dire malnutrition among children and hampered efforts to halt a massive cholera outbreak.

Saudi Arabia, conducting the war with British and US weapons and under their supervision, tightened its blockade late last year.

Iran slams Bolton's role as 'shameful'

IRAN: The government has branded John Bolton's appointment as US national security adviser as shameful.

Parliamentary security committee spokesman Hossein Naghavi Hosseini said Mr Bolton's appointment, as well as that of former CIA chief Mike Pompeo as secretary of state, "proves that the final US purpose is overthrowing the Islamic Republic."

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The socialist news hub

■ SYRIA

Insurgents move out of besieged eastern Ghouta

HUNDREDS of Syrian insurgents and civilians were bussed out of a second pocket of the besieged eastern Ghouta suburbs of Damascus yesterday after rebels agreed to leave several towns and villages following weeks of shelling.

Roughly 900 people were evacuated from the southernmost of three pockets, following some 1,000 jihadists, family members and other civilians who departed late on Saturday.

Fighters dressed in fatigues slumped in their bus seats, hid-

ing their faces from the news cameras on the road and children peered out the windows.

Insurgents began evacuating another pocket of eastern Ghouta on Thursday. At least 7,000 people left the town of Harasta, bound for the Islamist-held Idlib province in northern Syria.

Syria's government has offered the fighters and male residents a choice between disarmament and military conscription, or being backed off to other areas still held by rebels.



RUSSIA: At least three children, a woman and a man have died in a fire that broke out yesterday in a multistorey shopping centre in the Siberian city of Kemerovo. Russia's Sputnik news site reported that the fire broke out on the fourth floor of the Winter Cherry building – a part of the centre which has a cinema, raising concerns that more children were trapped. Around 26 people were taken to hospital for treatment, while at least 17 are missing.

★ Star comment

A comprehensive ban on automatic weapons is the only solution

TENS of thousands demonstrated across the US over the weekend calling for stronger gun control – described as the biggest demonstrations since the Vietnam war.

The great majority were young. Many were school children and many were black. Martin Luther King's granddaughter was among the speakers.

This reflects a key dimension of the gun control issue in the United States.

Guns killed 38,000 in the US last year; 85,000 were injured. If you are black, you are eight times more likely to be killed. If you are black and aged below 21 you are 10 times more likely.

You are also far more likely to be shot dead by police if you are black. Last year police in the US shot 427 whites and 223 blacks – yet black people make up only 13 per cent of the population.

Just three days before this weekend's demonstrations an unarmed black youth was shot dead by police in his grandmother's garden in Sacramento.

Trump's immediate reaction to the most recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida, was to call for the arming of teachers. Three states, Florida, Oklahoma and Dakota, are already amending their legislation.

The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, the historic campaigning body for black US citizens, warns of the dangers and calls instead for the comprehensive banning of lethal weapons.

It does so because this is the only workable solution – already proven to be so in Australia. But it also opposes guns in schools because of the endemic, continuing racism in US society – a racism which extends into all areas of life including schools.

Where does Donald Trump stand? Previously he has been very closely associated with the National Rifle Association (NRA).



Like Ronald Reagan before him, Trump's presidential bid was supported and very heavily funded by the NRA.

During the week, in face of growing demands for a ban, he caused consternation by suggesting not a ban but stronger background checks on buyers, possibly even a tighter age test.

Trump is the consummate populist and all the more dangerous for it. He will protect guns but understands the political limits.

Equally last summer he backed away from supporting white supremacists in Carolina but defended the historic significance of Confederate statues. The symbolism remains.

This underlines the deep dangers that exist within US politics. Ahead of this autumn's mid-term elections, Trump's approval ratings are improving and the Republicans are closing the gap on the Democrats.

Trump's policies are designed to advance the interests of the very rich. Goldman Sachs estimate that the effect of his tax cuts will be to increase the payouts to shareholders in the top 500 US companies by 12 per cent. However, they also estimate a 6 per cent increase in wage incomes.

Admittedly the same tax cuts will decimate the federal services on which workers depend. But 6 per cent is 6 per cent. And Trump will insist that his "America First" policies have created 2.4 million new jobs and cut unemployment to 4.6 per cent.

Trump's threat of trade war with China over steel and aluminium seeks to further consolidate this populist base.

These are trademark policies of the extreme right and parallel the rise of populist right-wing parties in the economically devastated industrial areas of the EU.

They are also signs of a capitalist system in deep trouble, now only able to resolve the inherent crisis of capital accumulation either at the expense of workers or externally at the expense of others.

Trump may (slightly) restrict access to handguns. US expenditure on weapons of mass destruction has already been increased by 12 per cent.

FOR those watching abroad, Russia's presidential election last weekend was unexciting.

Vladimir Putin, who has ruled the country for 18 years, won easily just as he was predicted to.

His 76 per cent vote share – up 13 per cent on 2012's – is evidence of either his enduring popularity as the leader of a resurgent Russia or the crooked nature of the election itself, depending on who you talk to.

I talked to Dr Vyacheslav Tetekin. The chief political adviser to Communist Party of the Russian Federation leader Gennady Zyuganov, who met me on election morning, is a veteran of multiple elections and played a key role in the party's campaign this time around.

We spoke before voting was over and were unaware of how the communist candidate, Pavel Grudinin, would do (he came second, with 11.77 per cent or 8.7 million votes).

Such a result will please him: it's less than Zyuganov managed in 2012, but Tetekin is well aware that the system is stacked against them.

"The Russian electoral system is based on fraud basically," he says. "There is strong manipulation. First by the electoral commission."

Tetekin lists a number of the ways local authority figures act to influence the vote: poorly paid public servants being offered 10,000 rouble sums for the trouble of sitting on the electoral commissions, sums they know they won't see again if they notice anything untoward; social services being deployed to visit patients and offer to help them to "come and vote for our dear president;" management in private firms telling their employees to take photos of their ballot papers and bring them in the next morning to prove they voted the right way.

A media establishment in Putin's pocket adds to the obstacles anyone running against the president faces. This is why Tetekin states frankly that he is "not very interested in the results," a seemingly odd comment from a top adviser to the leader of the opposition on election day.

He even suspects that a desire to demonstrate the communists are in decline will lead to the books being cooked so they come in third, behind Liberal Democrat leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, whose ferocious nationalist rhetoric has never stopped him voting quietly with the government "once the shouting has subsided," as the Oxford University Russianist Edmund Griffiths has observed.

In the event, the communist vote proved too strong for that, and Grudinin came home with more than double Zhirinovskiy's tally.

What interests Tetekin is more the story of the election campaign itself.

The party has been "surprised by the level of support



'Change in Russia below or be settled'

VYACHESLAV TETEKIN speaks with the Star system, Communist Party candidate Pavel Grudinin

by Ben Chacko

at the grassroots. The campaign spread like wildfire.

"People say it's only the older generation who support the communists – the nostalgic Soviet generation who are dying out.

"Actually it's the opposite. The elderly are the main bulwark of support for Putin."

By contrast, the younger people are, and the more active they are online, the likelier they seemed to back Grudinin; many online-only polls had him with a comfortable lead over Putin, often by as much as 45 per cent to 25 per cent.

"Living standards are in decline. People try to explain the length of Putin's dominance: he's so cunning, so shrewd. Rubbish.

"The only Marxist explanation for Putin is oil prices. When he took over from [Boris] Yeltsin on January 1 2000 it was \$18 a barrel.

"While he was in office it rose to \$120 a barrel. Much went into the pockets of his cronies, but some drops fell into the hands of ordinary people.

"When oil dropped to \$40 a barrel there was panic among

the ruling elite. Now it's risen again, but not enough. Real wages have been going down for four years. People feel the decline in their pockets. Education and medical care are getting more and more expensive. There's no end to it."

This may be why young people are more inclined to vote for change: "The country is tired of the reign of Putin."

This, too, influenced the Communist Party's choice of candidate. I ask why Zyuganov didn't stand again – he's still the party leader, after all.

"Comrade Zyuganov has been on the political scene for 25 years," says Tetekin. "I'm not saying he's tired. But for five, six presidential elections we've had the same faces: Putin, Zyuganov, Zhirinovskiy, [Grigory] Yavlinsky. The country needs change – it needs new faces.

"Grudinin is not a member of the Communist Party" (nor is Putin of his electoral vehicle, United Russia, incidentally). "But he is a committed socialist. He is younger. He has been very successful as the head of the collective farm the Lenin Sovkhoz."

Grudinin was Zyuganov's preference as the candidate of the party – from two options presented to the central com-

mittee, neither of whom was a party member.

This doesn't worry Tetekin: "Grudinin is a socialist, there is no question about that. Socialism is the first stage of communism." He talks of the need for the communists to reach out and build a broad alliance of progressives.

"One of the base areas of support for us is actually small business," he says. "Small businesses have been systematically destroyed in the interests of oligarchs. These are people who have learned the hard way that there is no such thing as the free market – because big monopoly capital destroys the free market."

Listening to the anger with which Tetekin describes the impact of the Putin regime on the poor, it seems ironic that much British coverage claims the Communist Party is a "fake opposition," broadly supportive of the government (often citing its support for some of Putin's foreign policy choices – an ironic criticism from a country with a long history of Labour-Tory consensus on allegiance to Washington and trigger-happy behaviour across the Middle East).

"Russia has played a positive role in Syria," Tetekin says when I raise this. "No question



a will come from ed in the streets'

ar about Vladimir Putin, the flawed electoral udin and the youth's support for communism

– we have helped save that country from the savagery of Islamic State. But something should have been done a long time ago.

"We shouldn't have allowed the destruction of Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya. Not socialist countries, but independent countries. It was only when it came round to Syria that Putin realised: 'They are depriving us of allies.' Only after a long list of foreign policy failures did Putin finally act.

"Then there's Crimea. But Crimea has always been part of Russia."

The current geographical Ukraine, he notes wryly, is actually a product of the Soviet Union.

Lenin took the decision to reinforce the base for Bolshevism in agrarian Ukraine by adding highly industrialised areas such as the Donbass, Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov, which speak Russian to this day.

In 1939 Stalin added the far western edge that had previously been part of the Austrian empire and then Poland and which has been the most receptive to fascist ideas; and Crimea was transferred from Russia to Ukraine by Khrushchev in the 1950s.

Tetekin says the communists are actually "more resolute" in

pressing for stronger support for the anti-fascist resistance in Ukraine and describes the Kremlin as "timid" on the matter.

He is unconvinced that Putin is behind the poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter either. "I'm a strong opponent of the current regime, but I'm convinced that Russia has nothing to do with it. Whose interests does it serve? Not Russia's. "After the doping scandal, the furore over interference in the US elections, with the World Cup coming up, this is the last thing Putin wants."

In contrast, the poisoning could be seen to serve the interests of the British Establishment, he feels: a renewed fear of Russia could foster greater solidarity among EU governments, easing Brexit negotiations, while the scandal has also allowed the British press to claim Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is in Moscow's pocket for asking subversive questions such as what the results of the police investigation are.

Double agents like Skripal, he reminds me, are always being watched by British as well as Russian intelligence.

As for the rest, he has no time for the government. When I mention that some on the British left regard Putin as

an improvement on Yeltsin, he is exasperated.

"It's the same thing as Yeltsin," he exclaims. "The Yeltsin team is still in power. The same ideology, the same approach, often enough the same people.

"Manufacturing has been destroyed. Putin talks of new missiles. But the electronics are foreign. The machine tools are foreign. The country needs reindustrialisation. It needs change," he repeats again.

How will that change come? The Corbyn phenomenon has not gone unnoticed in Russia; Tetekin says the communists hope to learn from Labour on energising young people. But if the Russian electoral system is as fixed as he has told me, will that help?

"People can feel there is something fundamentally wrong," he says. "Change will come from below. We hope it will come via the ballot box.

"But if the current downward economic trend continues, the question of power will be solved in the streets."

■ Ben Chacko is editor of the Morning Star.

A life dedicated to the labour movement

Peter Lazenby writes about leading trade unionist **ALEX McFADDEN**

TAKING place today is the funeral of Alex McFadden (pictured), a trade union activist who became the oldest member of his union.

McFadden, who was active in the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT) and its predecessor the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) died on February 27 at the age of 95.

Mr McFadden lived most of his life in north-east England, where he was a leading local and national figure in his union, representing it in negotiations with national government.

His uncle fought for the Spanish Republic against Franco's fascists in the 1930s.

Mr McFadden joined the Communist Party of Great Britain, but left in the 1950s and later joined the Labour Party. He subsequently quit in disgust as Labour presided over anti-working class cuts.

He joined the NUR in May 1940 when he began work as an engine cleaner in Gateshead at the age of 17. He later became a fireman and then an engine driver. His first union post was shed secretary.

Later he was elected secretary of the influential Gateshead No 1 NUR branch, with a thousand members, and 15 NUR members sitting on Gateshead Council.

He served two periods on the NUR national executive from 1965 to 1967 and again in 1971 to 1973.

He then became a full-time NUR officer in Scotland, but returned to England as North East regional secretary, a job he held until retirement in 1987.

His first period involved with national office was shortly after Harold Wilson's Labour government came to power in 1964.

In 1966 the union found itself in dispute and, as a member of the NUR negotiating committee, McFadden met Wilson and other government officials at 10 Downing Street over "beer and sandwiches" in an effort to find a resolution.

McFadden remembered fondly that, after settling a crucial deal on freight liner terminals in 1967, he was invited by government minister Barbara Castle to the Ministry of Transport to cel-



brate, along with others on the negotiating committee.

"It wasn't beer and sandwiches that time, but the hard stuff," he recalled.

He was active in the 1984-5 miners' strike against pit closures.

As a regional official in one of the mining heartlands he played an important role in organising practical solidarity – including provision of a turkey for every miner's family at Christmas.

The late Dave Hopper, general secretary the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) North East Area, said of him: "Alex was regional secretary of the NUR at the time of the strike and a very good supporter of the miners and the NUM.

"No members ever crossed a picket line and we had a lot of financial support from

branches and individuals for which we will always be grateful."

Alex was later invited to join the platform at the Durham Miners' Gala.

He remained active after he retired in 1987, and Bob Crow, the late general secretary of the RMT, was a visitor to his home.

He leaves sons Alec, Colin and Ian, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

His funeral takes place at noon today at Birtley Crematorium in Chester le Street, DH3 1PQ, followed by a celebration of his life at the Moulders Arms.

■ Peter Lazenby is the Morning Star's northern reporter.

Bolton's appointment is bad news for the Iranian people

JANE GREEN assesses the implications of the return of the rightwinger for Iran, its protesting workers, the nuclear deal and the Middle East

DURING the administration of George W Bush, the under secretary of state for arms control, one John Bolton, was an enthusiastic supporter of the invasion of Iraq.

In spite of the catastrophe which followed in human, political and military terms, Bolton remains an enthusiastic interventionist.

With recent titles such as *To Stop Iran's Bomb*, *Bomb Iran* under his belt, it does not take a great deal of digging to find that Bolton's position has not fundamentally changed in the intervening 15 years.

If anything, Bolton's position has hardened as he has openly argued for regime change in Iran in recent years.

Bolton's appointment follows hard on the heels of the recent sacking of secretary of state Rex Tillerson in favour of CIA director Mike Pompeo – another confirmed hardliner and outspoken opponent of the Iran 5+1 nuclear deal.

Taken together, these appointments shift the balance in the White House towards a shredding of the Iran nuclear deal, negotiated at great length with European partners, as well as Russia and China, under former US president Barack Obama.

The new balance signals the greater likelihood of a military option being considered in relation to Iran.

The US position will have been further reinforced by the visit last week of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Fresh from his state visit to Britain – from which he emerged bristling with weapons – the US will be looking to add to the \$54 billion spent by the Saudis with US arms suppliers in the past nine months.

As President Donald Trump made clear: "Saudi Arabia is a very wealthy nation, and they're going to give the United States some of that wealth, hopefully, in the form of jobs, in the form of the purchase of the finest military equipment anywhere in the world."

The Crown Prince added that last year's Saudi pledge of \$200bn in investments will rise to approximately \$400bn and that a 10-year window to implement the deal had already begun.

The Saudis also have a longer-term agenda, however, in their engagement with the United States, which is to fulfil their aspirations to become a nuclear power.

In spite of their massive oil

reserves, the Saudis have been in negotiations for some years with the US over diversification of their energy base and are keen to negotiate access to technology which would allow them to build a nuclear reactor.

The Iran nuclear deal was predicated upon the unfounded assertion that, in developing a civil nuclear programme, the Iranian regime would inevitably move towards the creation of nuclear weapons.

The inspection regime imposed by the agreement, however, prevents the Iranians from enriching uranium and reprocessing plutonium to weapons-grade levels.

In exchange, the 5+1 deal obliges the West to lift some of the sanctions imposed upon Iran and allows for greater capacity for Iran to trade in international markets.

In spite of these restrictions, and the crippling impact which sanctions have had upon the Iranian economy, the Saudis cannot countenance a Middle East in which Iran has even a limited civilian nuclear capability if they have none.

Saudi ambitions to develop nuclear energy are, on the one hand, about keeping pace with Iran and asserting dominance as the regional Islamic superpower.

In an interview with CBS News, Mohammed bin Salman openly stated that "Saudi Arabia does not want to acquire any nuclear bomb, but without a doubt if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible."

Not only has he referred to the Iranian nuclear deal as a "flawed agreement," he has made clear that any deal relating to the development of nuclear energy in Saudi Arabia will not be subject to the same limitations – in particular regarding the capacity to upgrade uranium and plutonium to weapons-grade levels.

While some in the US are understandably nervous about the prospect of a Middle East nuclear arms race, the danger of the Saudis going to the Russians or Chinese for nuclear technology rings even greater alarm bells.

The warnings to Iran were ramped up even further last week when Israel, strategically allied to both the US and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East, admitted to bombing a suspected Syrian nuclear reactor in 2007 and took the opportunity to warn Iran that it would not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons.

While the Syrian reactor was purely for civilian energy gen-

eration purposes, the Israelis nevertheless argued that this could lead to weapons capability and thus launched the pre-emptive strike, only now admitted due to the declassification of previously secret Israeli intelligence material.

Further instability in the region is fuelled by the recent revelations that a thousand Pakistani troops are to be sent to Saudi Arabia, as part of a long-standing bilateral agreement between the two countries, on a so called "train and advise" mission.

While it is claimed that the troops will not be used in the Saudi conflict with Yemen, the deployment coincides with the culmination of a week-long joint exercise between the Saudi and Pakistani navies in the Arabian Sea.

Retired Pakistani army chief Raheel Sharif was appointed last year as the first commander of the Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (Imaft) which is being described as the "Muslim Nato," an alliance of largely Sunni Muslim Islamic states led by Saudi Arabia. Unsurprisingly, Shi'ite Muslim Iran is not part of this alliance.

Given the international outrage the Saudi role in Yemen has raised, the appointment of

Sharif and the current troop deployment puts Pakistan in danger of being drawn into a wider Middle East conflict, with the Houthi rebels in Yemen being backed by Iran.

One observer has described Pakistan's position as "a balancing act that increasingly resembles a tightrope as conflicts and disputes in the Gulf mushroom."

For the people of Iran there is little good news in the current alignment of forces in the Middle East and in the White House.

Widespread protests inside Iran, expressing disillusionment with the regime's economic policy, political corruption and human rights record have met with arrests and violent suppression.

The limited lifting of sanctions which the 5+1 agreement was meant to facilitate has not been enough to alleviate the high levels of unemployment and rampant inflation in the Iranian economy.

Those in work are poorly paid and often on short-term contracts. Those out of work are sinking into poverty. While protests have rocked the government, it has not been dislodged.

The threat of military attack on Iran would be used by the

ruling theocracy to justify repression of dissent and as a means to demand total loyalty.

Iranian people need peace to be able to build their movement for a democratic and just future. That is the only viable route to stable democratic change.

The US support for hawkish regimes in Saudi Arabia and Israel, combined with an increasingly right-wing lineup of personnel in the White House, increases the possibility of external intervention in Iran.

While the West may have had its fingers burnt provoking civil war and outside intervention in Syria, that may not be enough to stop it taking its chances on another military adventure.

Both Saudi Arabia and Israel regard Iran as an existential threat. Their combined military capability would be a force to be reckoned with.

In military terms, Iran would be no pushover. However, for the people of Iran, any outside intervention would be a step backwards in terms of the fight for peace, social justice and democracy.

■ Jane Green is national organiser of the Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights.



JINGOIST: US national security adviser John Bolton
Pic: Gage Sidmore/Creative Commons

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

Away from northern Scotland, showers will ease overnight. A few fog patches will form once again. A cold night to come, especially in rural areas, with a frost for many.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Rain will clear eastwards through Tuesday, with hill snow across Scotland. Unsettled thereafter with rain or showers, and a risk of snow, mainly across northern hills. Turning colder. Often windy.

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Fighting Fund

YOU'VE RAISED: **£13,310** WE NEED: **£4,690**



WITH our abacus-wielding fund counters being absent over the weekend, today is the perfect opportunity to bring you a rare picture of Readers and Supporters Group volunteers in action.

Sent in by Joan Heath, this tableau of concentration features Star stalwarts Richard Herbert and Anne Lee staffing a stall at the annual meeting

of Yorkshire and the Humber TUC on Saturday and Sunday.

A stall, a raffle and a collection raised more than £200 for our paper, while 100 copies were given out free on the day thanks to the regional Unite branch.

That people set aside their time and energy to do this sort of thing week in, week out is a humbling and vital form of solidarity that keeps the daily miracle alive.

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DAILY SUDOKU

(intermediate)

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Solution tomorrow...

Previous solutions

Weekend crossword 1,231

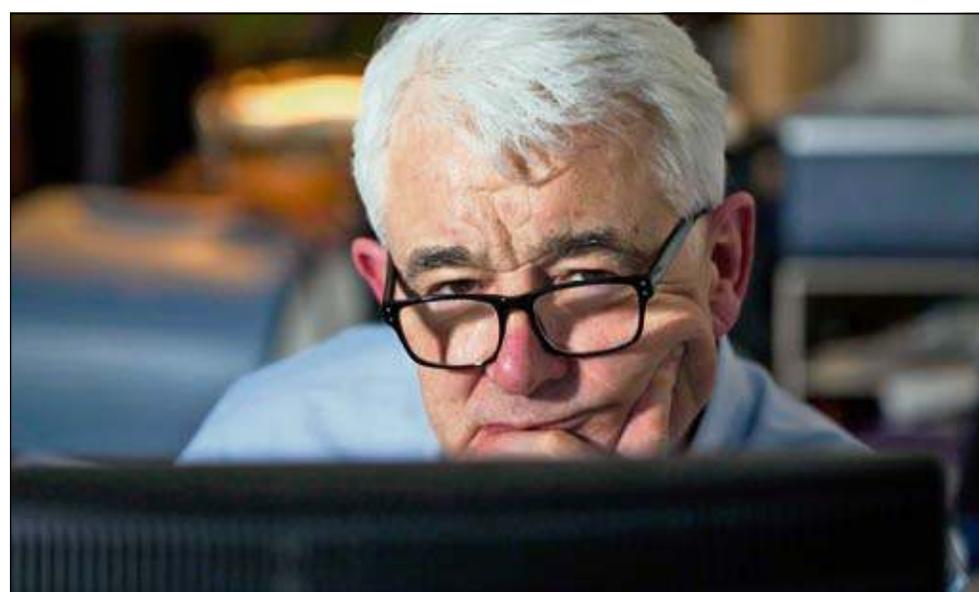
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Yesterday's sudoku

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

TV preview

with Ann Douglas



Who's speaking for British Muslims? Maybe you're asking the wrong thing

IT'S only taken decades, but the phenomenon of state institutions lavishing power on "Muslim community representatives" based seemingly on who's prepared to shout the loudest co-operate is under the TV microscope tonight.

Sadly **Who Speaks for British Muslims?** (8pm Channel 4) is focusing on the angle of terrorism, rather than taking the perspective that maybe sharp-elbowed local busybodies aren't always the right people to focus influence and resources on.

Still, the point is well made that if your relationship with Muslims is mainly one of seeing them as a semi-hostile alien species to be manipulated and neutralised through targeted relations with "co-operative" elements, you're going to pick up some dodgy partners.

Will the solution be presented that maybe Muslims should just be treated as normal people rather than potential fifth columnists to be constantly surveilled through programmes such as Prevent? Answers on a postcard.

Speaking of dodgy sharp-elbowed blowhards being given too much influence, today's pick of what to miss would have to be **The Kyle Files** (8pm ITV). Jeremy Kyle remains as self-satisfied and odious as ever, but is in the midst of trying to improve himself with documentary-making.

It doesn't work. If you want a decent documentary to watch though, **Hospital** (9pm BBC2) is definitely pick of the day.

Opening this new series of the award-winning show is a look at

the New Year rush at Nottingham University Hospitals.

The sheer weight of the last few years of cuts is on full display as the intitution struggles to deal with an influx of casualties into A&E, leaving dozens lying on trolleys waiting for admission while surgeries are put off.

If there is one show that really brings home the impact of Tory austerity on human life, it's **Hospital** – without any need to editorialise or exaggerate. It just shows what's happening.

To end on a happier note, **The Art of Spain** (9pm BBC4) is covering the classic works of Picasso, Miro and Dali tonight, and the two former artists in particular are a real treat for any anti-fascist to spend an hour or so watching.

QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

1. Which star is known, among other names, as Loki's Torch? **Sirius (pic above is of Loki from an 18th-century Icelandic manuscript)**

2. Who whistle blew at blacklist firm the Consulting Association? **Alan Wainwright**

3. In which episode of Blackadder II does Blackadder say to the Queen: "I was planning a jaunt around the Cape of Good Hope, myself. I'm leaving a week on Thursday"? **Potato**

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

1. **Chiliad** (pronounced 'Kiliad') is a rare term referring to how many objects?

2. Which river forms most of the boundary between Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion?

3. In both the 2014 and 2018 Winter Olympics, Lizzy Yarnold was the only Briton to win what?

FAITH DEBATE

Religion and Marxism share the goal of an equal society

I NOTE the interesting debate on the letters page regarding religion and Marxism.

In general, religion has a goal of building a society of the brotherhood of mankind for all to be treated equally. In particular, Marxism has a goal of building a socio-economic system, communism, where all are treated equally.

Religion, based on an idealist philosophy, can only believe that human nature has to be changed first to bring about the brotherhood of mankind. Marxism, based on a materialist philosophy, understands that the socio-economic system must be changed first in order to change human nature.

Marx sums up the fundamental difference between idealism and materialism by saying: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."

Provided individuals remain sincere – noting the biblical maxim "judge not, lest ye be judged" – in their common objectives, they can unite to achieve them.

PETER SMITH
Stanford-le-Hope

FIGHTING HATE

Muslims need our solidarity

ON April 3, the so-called Punish a Muslim Day, we should all declare our solidarity with our Muslim neighbours, friends and workmates.

The racists do not realise how many Muslims work in the NHS and other public services that keep this country going.

Come April 3, we are all Muslims.

PHIL BRAND
London SW17

STROUD RED SHED

Blatant power plays should have no place on the left

I WAS very disappointed, but not altogether surprised, to see the letter by Hugh Kirkbride (March 23) that was critical of the Stroud Red Shed. It seems to be lost on Hugh that the position he takes is precisely what Debbie Hicks spoke of in our interview (M Star March 21).

Hugh might remember that

I mentioned Max Weber in the interview. Weber showed with great clarity how human institutions invariably have problematic bureaucratic dynamics that routinely get in the way of healthy, effective functioning – and such human limitations of "the group" transcend political affiliation of left and right.

I also mentioned Freud – and I have to say, as a former psychotherapist, that I am often appalled and disheartened in equal measure by the lack of personal awareness found in activists on the left, and the unconscious "acting-out" of power issues and personal distress that get unconsciously

projected out on to the world, rather than owned and worked through at a personal level.

So I completely disagree with Hugh that Red Shed and other such initiatives should toe the institutional line or be sidelined and vilified. Such flagrant power plays have no place on the left that I'm committed to.

I welcome all the work that Hugh and the organisations he mentions do in Gloucestershire. I just wish he was able to show a similar welcome to creative initiatives that work with great effect outside of the established orthodox institutions of the left.

RICHARD HOUSE
Stroud



CALLOUS CUT: Up to a million pupils will be hit by the raising of the income threshold for free school meals

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

This vicious attack on poor children stinks of hypocrisy

THIS MONTH, 315 MPs voted to reduce the number of children who are entitled to free school meals. The Conservative members, including James Morris, MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis, and Margot James, MP for Stourbridge, voted with the government to impose this callous cut.

The income threshold for the children of families on universal credit to be eligible for free school meals will now be reduced to £7,400 a year.

Sam Royston of the Children's Society believes that as many as one million children could lose out, compared with the number entitled to free school meals under the previous system.

This new legislation is a disgrace as it will harm vulnerable children. Sometimes the free school meal is the only hot meal a child will eat all day.

We see poverty around us every day, with rising reliance on foodbanks and an increasing number of homeless people sleeping rough in town centres.

Note the double standard at work here: the 10 Democratic Unionist Party MPs voted with the Conservatives, but the Tories have exempted Northern Ireland. The threshold there will be £14,000, almost double the figure elsewhere.

Labour, in contrast, promises to fund free school meals for all primary school children once it gains power. Brilliant!

For now, though, this is a vicious attack on the most vulnerable. Once again, it shows how the Tories look after themselves and protect the privileged.

They believe it is acceptable to put an end to a hot meal for children living in poverty while MPs continue to benefit from subsidised meals and drinks.

Back in July last year, we learnt that the taxpayer was footing a £2.7 million bill to subsidise the bars and restaurants of the House of Commons after costs rose by £200,000. MPs could enjoy a three-course lunch for £10.30, followed by a small bottle of wine for £2.25.

C STOLL
Halesowen

WAR ON WELFARE

Typical Tory turns a deaf ear to the punishment of the disabled

FOR the second time, I contacted my local Tory MP about the vicious and inhumane treatment dished out to the disabled by this cruel government.

Given my very serious ail-

ments, which make it completely impossible for me to work in a regular job, I wanted him to know what it's like at the sharp end of Tory policy.

In the words of the old song,

see what a fool I've been.

He simply rattled off the party line like a good little puppy, trotting out the "achievements" of this administration, with no mention of the

deaths or the sanctions or the hunting people down like rats.

I'd get more compassion out of our budgie.

DAVID ANDREW DUKES
Kingsbury, Warwickshire

LABOUR PARTY

Williamson is right, MPs should face mandatory reselection

CONGRATULATIONS to John Haylett on an excellent article (M Star March 23) exposing the latest manoeuvres of the Labour Party's right wing and its pathetic attempts to rebrand itself as "centre left."

John is correct to highlight the call from Labour MP Chris Williamson for mandatory reselection.

Such a move would be both democratic and empowering for the membership. No longer would the party suffer from having a plethora of MPs who line their pockets and collude with the Tories on key issues.

Let's hope we get mandatory reselection soon.

JOHN SWINBURNE
Midlothian



GRAHAM STEVENSON
explores the Star archives



80 YEARS AGO TODAY...

'Mercy murder' mum faces noose

THE Daily Worker of March 26 1938 covered the story of Kathleen Mumford, a 40-year old Leeds mother accused of murdering her five-year old son. Opinion at the time was that post-traumatic stress disorder was limited to shell shock.

"Throughout the final dramatic moments of the Leeds 'mercy murder' drama yesterday, the only unmoved person in court seemed to be the woman who was sentenced to death for gassing her imbecile son."

The term "imbecile" was then used by medical science, but Derek Mumford had Little's disease, now known as spastic diplegia, and had to be treated like a baby.

His mother was told that nothing could be done but to put him in Meanwood imbecile colony. But she had been brought up in an orphanage where beatings and cruelty were the norm and was adamant that her son would not suffer such treatment.

Though she believed she would be hung for murder, she acted to save him from pain. Without

the slightest wavering, she testified: "In the eyes of the law, I am guilty. In the eyes of God, I am not guilty." She also said the medical profession should not be blamed for being unable to "save" her son.

The judge said there was only one possible verdict and sentenced her to death by hanging, but the jury had issued a very strong recommendation for mercy. An enormous public petition demanded Mumford's release and, two years after the furore, she was quietly set free.

Her story has recently inspired an award-winning short film entitled *An Unfortunate Woman*. Details of the DVD can be found on Facebook.



WOMEN'S TENNIS

Wozniacki's family threatened during Miami Open match

by Our Sports Desk

REIGNING Australian Open champion Caroline Wozniacki claimed she and her family were targets of verbal abuse and death threats from the crowd during her opening match at the Miami Open on Friday, which she lost to Monica Puig.

In a statement Saturday posted on Twitter Saturday evening, Wozniacki said the tournament did nothing to prevent the abuse.

Tournament director James Blake responded that, while the crowd was "loud and passionate," Miami Open staff, WTA Tour officials and courtside security were unaware during the match of any threats made.

Wozniacki lost 0-6 6-4 6-4. "I lost a tough match to a great opponent and friend Monica Puig," Wozniacki said. "I am fully aware that tennis is a game of wins and losses.

"However, during the match last night people in the crowd threatened my family, wished death threats on my mom and dad, called me names that I can't repeat here and told my fiancée's niece and nephew (who



are 10 years old) to sit down and shut the fuck up, meanwhile security and staff did nothing to prevent this and even accepted this to take place."

Puig is from Puerto Rico and especially popular in south Florida, while Wozniacki is from Denmark.

Wozniacki complained to the chair umpire during the match about crowd noise but Blake said the tournament was unaware of any threatening comments.

"We had tournament and WTA staff as well as tourna-

ment security courtside," Blake said. "They never witnessed nor were they notified of any specific threats made to the players or their families. If we had been notified, the situation would have been handled immediately."

Wozniacki became a first-time grand slam champion at the Australian Open in January. She said she hopes the Miami Open takes her complaints about the crowd behavior seriously.

"It's a horrible example to set for the next generation of tennis players and fans," she said.

MEN'S TENNIS

Federer to skip French Open to prolong glittering career

by Our Sports Desk

ROGER FEDERER will not compete in the French Open for the third year running after announcing yesterday that he will skip the entire clay-court season.

The 36-year-old made the announcement after he was knocked out of the Miami Open by Thanasi Kokkinakis, a qualifier ranked 175 in the world.

Federer, who won at Roland Garros in 2009, also pulled out of the tournament in 2016 and again last year, citing the need to avoid playing on clay in order to prolong his career.

When asked in his post-match press conference if he would discuss the clay-court season with his team following the loss, the Swiss said: "I've decided not to play."

Federer gave a curt response when asked to clarify whether he would also miss the French Open, adding: "Yes, that is what

I said. Clay is the French [Open] as well."

The 20-time grand slam winner appeared to be making his usual serene progress when he took a routine first set against 21-year-old Australian Kokkinakis.

But he was stunned as he dropped the second set and then lost a final-set tie-break, in the process losing his world No 1 ranking.

Kokkinakis had Federer wobbling in the second set when he broke in the fourth game, and had break points in the sixth, before going on to level the match.

A more animated Federer began exerting fierce pressure in the third but the Kokkinakis serve somehow held out to force a tie-break.

Kokkinakis then kept his nerve in a tense finale to seal a remarkable win, prevailing 3-6 6-3 7-6 (7/4) to reach the third round.

Rafael Nadal will reclaim the



No 1 spot when the rankings are published after the tournament.

INCREDIBLE: Danielle Wyatt puts on a batting clinic against India



MEN'S CRICKET

SMITH'S SHAME AS AUSSIE CAPTAIN ADMITS TO CHEATING

Skipper and vice-captain Warner caught ball-tampering against SA

by Our Sports Desk

DISGRACED Australia cricket captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner stepped down from their roles yesterday for the remainder of the third test against South Africa following the team's confession to ball tampering.

Smith and Warner would still play for the final two days of the test at Newlands, but they would have no leadership responsibilities, Cricket Australia said. Tim Paine would stand-in as captain of the team, Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland said in a statement.

The long-term futures of Smith and Warner are in the balance after the captain con-

fessed that he was part of a group of senior players who hatched a plan to cheat against South Africa on Day 3 of the test on Saturday by tampering with the ball.

It appears Warner was also part of the "leadership group" that came up with the plot, although Smith refused to name other names.

Young batsman Cameron Bancroft, who was charged with ball tampering by the International Cricket Council, was the man tasked with carrying out the cheating and also made a public confession alongside Smith late on Saturday.

"This test match needs to proceed and in the interim we will continue to investigate this matter with the urgency that it demands," Sutherland said in a

statement released just before play started on Day four in Cape Town. "As I said earlier today, Cricket Australia and Australian cricket fans expect certain standards of conduct from cricketers representing our country, and on this occasion these standards have not been met.

"All Australians, like us, want answers and we will keep you updated on our findings, as a matter of priority."

South Africa leads by more than 300 runs and looks set for a convincing win to move ahead 2-1 in the series with just one more game to play. The Australia team appeared completely dispirited at the start of play yesterday, shuffling down the stairs to the field with their heads down.



WOMEN'S CRICKET

Wyatt excels in record-breaking victory over India

by Our Sports Desk

OPENER Danielle Wyatt smashed a career-best 124 off just 64 balls yesterday as England claimed a record-breaking T20 Tri-Series victory over India in Mumbai.

The Sussex all-rounder struck 15 fours and five sixes as England chased down India's imposing 198 for four with seven wickets and eight balls to spare at Brabourne Stadium.

It was the highest successful run chase in Women's T20 history, smashing the 181 for six England made to beat Australia last November – when Wyatt scored 100 off 57 deliveries.

"I made a 50 and 100 in the Ashes to show the world what I can do. I had the belief that I could do the same again in this country," said Wyatt. "When it was in my area, I whacked it. I

was confident and positive the whole innings. It's amazing.

"Having the belief from the coaches really helps. I've faced the best bowlers in the world and hit them all over the park. I know I can do it, so hopefully there is more to come."

Tammy Beaumont added 35 and Bryony Smith 15 before Natalie Sciver and captain Heather Knight saw England home with room to spare as they built on

Friday's eight-wicket win over Australia in stunning fashion.

Smriti Mandhana top-scored with 76 for India and shared in a 129-run stand in 12.5 overs with opening partner Mithali Raj (53) but two wickets from Tash Farrant helped England keep their hosts under 200.

Next up for England is Wednesday's clash with Australia at the same venue.



MEN'S FOOTBALL

Dundee Utd boss Laszlo livid with Mohsni

DUNDEE United manager Csaba Laszlo claimed he wanted to "kill" Bilel Mohsni yesterday following the defender's debut against Dunfermline.

Laszlo was exasperated by Mohsni's failure to stop Kallum Higgins botham breaking forward before Nicky Clark's opener in a 1-1 Championship draw and told him to rediscover his "nasty" edge.

The former Rangers player backed off as Higgins botham broke from well inside his own half before releasing the overlapping Ryan Williamson on the edge of the United box seconds before Clark tapped home.

Laszlo was frustrated that Mohsni did not live up to his hard-man image, which was cemented when he punched then-Motherwell striker Lee Erwin after his final game for Rangers in May 2015.

Laszlo said: "With all respect to Mohsni, I want to kill him. Honestly, I want to kill him."

The team's reputation is in tatters after Smith and Bancroft confessed to the cheating in an attempt to get their team back into the match, which was slipping away. They decided to use a piece of yellow adhesive tape to try and pick up loose dirt on the pitch and use it to rough up the ball.

But Bancroft was caught by television cameras during his attempt to tamper with the ball and then trying to hide the evidence by shoving the piece of tape down the front of his trousers. The overwhelming video evidence forced Smith and Bancroft to come clean in a humiliating confession at the post-day news conference later on Saturday.

Cricket Australia had dispatched a team to investigate the incident. "The board fully

supports the process for an immediate investigation into what occurred in Cape Town," CA chair David Peever said.

"We regard this as a matter of the utmost seriousness and urgency. We will ensure we have all information available to make the right decisions for Australian cricket."

Smith has been suspended for one Test, stripped of his match fee and handed four demerit points, while Bancroft has been fined 75 per cent of his match fee and hit with three demerit points – a nod to his junior role within the side.

GUILTY: Australian batsman Cameron Bancroft fielding against South Africa

MEN'S CRICKET

Root devastated as victory in first Test looks unlikely

by Our Sports Desk

DEJECTED Joe Root needed time on his own to come to terms with his crushing late dismissal yesterday which dented England's hopes of saving the first Test.

Stuart Broad had no opportunity to speak to his captain before facing the press at close of play following a brilliant piece of bowling from Trent Boult – with what turned out to be the final ball of day four at Eden Park.

Root (51) tried to lead by example as England seek an improbable stalemate in a match which began with their embarrassing first-innings collapse to 58 all out.

After his duck, one of five from England first time round, he completed a 121-ball half-century only to receive a brutal blow to his right index finger just before stumps – and

then, after receiving lengthy treatment, gloved the next menacing short one down the leg-side to the wicketkeeper.

It left England 132 for three, 237 runs short of making the Kiwis bat again, and up against it to bat out 98 more overs to salvage a stalemate.

Asked how Root had taken the late setback, Broad said: "I've not seen him – I think he's still sat in the toilet."

"We were watching from the viewing area [and] he came straight in and put his bat down and went straight into the back room."

Root shared a second-wicket stand of 88 with Mark Stoneman (55) as England overcame the early loss of Alastair Cook, after Henry Nicholls (145no) top-scored in the hosts' 427 for eight declared.

Broad added: "Trent Boult has got a bouncer bang on ... I think it was a really good short ball, at the left shoulder.

"Maybe I'm in the bowler's union but you've got to credit him sometimes – good bouncer to rap a batter on the finger and then a good follow-up – well bowled."

Broad, who was part of a thrilling rearguard on England's last Test visit to Auckland five years ago, insists a draw is still possible.

"It was a real shame to lose Joe to the last ball of the day," he said. "We all felt it, after he'd played so brilliantly as well."

"But it proves there are runs to be had out there. We've got to play our natural games for the start of the day – and then if you get yourself in a position where it is completely 'shut up shop,' you can adjust to that."

England still believe they can avoid defeat.

"It's certainly do-able," said Broad.

"If you'd said at 20 for seven, or 27 for nine [on day one], there was a chance of drawing

the game, we'd have bitten your hand off.

"It's not a minefield. If we show the discipline that our batsmen did today, and get a bit more luck, then we've got a great chance."

"We'll need a hero tomorrow. "Five years ago, Matt Prior was the hero with a hundred and someone's got that chance tomorrow."

Nicholls understandably sees things slightly differently and senses the pitch will increasingly favour the bowlers.

"It seemed a bit more up and down, variation in bounce when the ball is a bit harder," he said.

"It's going to be a good test to take seven wickets on day five to win a Test match."

HAVE YOUR SAY

Write (up to 300 words) to letters@peoples-press.com or 52 Beachy Rd, London E3 2NS

FORMULA ONE

VETTEL 'A BIT LUCKY' IN WIN DOWN UNDER

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX: Pit stop costs Hamilton from taking pole

by Our Sports Desk

BELIEVING his Ferrari still lacks the race pace to fully challenge Mercedes in Formula One, Sebastian Vettel will take a little luck when he can get it.

Yesterday, at the season-opening Australian Grand Prix, his Ferrari team benefited not only from a smart pit-stop strategy but also the fortuitous emergence of a safety car midway through the race that helped Vettel take the lead from rival Lewis Hamilton and hold on for victory.

"We got a bit lucky but we'll take it," Vettel said. "We're not yet there where we want to be. But I think it gives us a good start, a good wind and fresh motivation for the coming weeks."

It was the 48th race win of Vettel's career and his 100th podium finish, coming in his 200th F1 race.

The German becomes the fourth driver to claim 100 podium finishes, joining Hamilton, Michael Schumacher and Alain Prost.

Vettel finished the race a full five seconds ahead of Hamilton, who started from pole and had made several late attempts to catch the Ferrari but couldn't manage to pass on the narrow Albert Park circuit.

Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen finished third, denying Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo a chance to become the first Australian driver to secure a podium place at the Australian GP.

A resurgent Fernando Alonso of McLaren made a bold run to finish in fifth place, holding off a spirited challenge by Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who recovered after losing control of his car and doing a 360-degree spin early in the race to take sixth.

Hamilton looked comfortable up front for the first 20 laps before deciding to pit, giving up the lead to Vettel. The race then took a dramatic turn when Haas drivers Kevin Magnussen and Romain Grosjean suffered calamitous back-to-back pit stops midway through the race. Both drivers had been running strongly in fourth and fifth places, respectively, but were forced to stop immediately after coming out of pit lane with loose wheels.

The virtual safety car emerged as race marshals removed Grosjean's car from the circuit and Vettel took advantage of the slowdown to pit and change tyres.

He came out of the pit lane just ahead of a confused Hamilton, who got on the radio to ask his team what had just happened.



STREETS AHEAD: Sebastian Vettel keeps Lewis Hamilton in his rear view mirror on his way to victory

"Why did you not tell me Vettel was in the pits?" Hamilton asked.

"We thought we were safe but there's obviously something wrong," his team responded.

When racing resumed, Hamilton stayed close to Vettel's Ferrari, trailing by less than a second for more than 10 laps, but was unable to find space on the tight circuit to pass the German. With victory looking increasingly out of reach, Hamilton then eased up toward the end to conserve his engine for future races.

Hamilton said after the race that he still wasn't clear exactly what happened.

"I think just disbelief was really from that moment until the end. Just disbelief," he said. "I had extra tools and could have been further ahead by the first pit stop. There were so many good things we could have done."

Vettel's victory comes a day after Hamilton set a blistering track record to capture pole position nearly 0.7 of a second ahead of the rest of the field, a massive margin that raised

concerns among some teams that Mercedes had the speed to dominate yet another Formula One season.

But Vettel said he believed Ferrari would fare better in race conditions – and he was right.

"I think we didn't have the true race pace to match them but we weren't that far off," he said. "Even though we were probably lucky with the virtual safety car, we still had enough pace to stay ahead and make it very difficult for him to be close and try and do something."

WEEKEND RESULTS

Intl Friendlies

Armenia 0.....0	Estonia
Canada 1.....0	New Zealand
Curacao 1.....1	Bolivia
Georgia 4.....0	Lithuania
Israel 1.....2	Romania
Kenya 2.....2	Comoros
Kosovo 1.....0	Madagascar
Mexico 3.....0	Iceland
N Ireland 2.....1	Korea Republic
Peru 2.....0	Croatia
Qatar 2.....2	Syria
South Africa 2.....0	Zambia
Sweden 1.....2	Chile
Togo 2.....2	Ivory Coast

Under-21 Intl

England 2.....1	Romania
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League One

Bradford 1.....0	Gillingham
Bury 0.....2	Wigan
Charlton 2.....0	Plymouth
Fleetwood 2.....0	Northampton
MK Dons 0.....0	Blackpool
Peterborough 1.....1	Bristol Rovers
Scunthorpe 1.....1	Rochdale
Shrewsbury 1.....0	Wimbledon
Southend 2.....0	Rotherham

League Two

Carlisle 1.....1	Cambridge United
Coventry 4.....0	Grimsby
Crawley 3.....5	Cheltenham
Exeter 3.....1	Swindon
Forest Green Rovers 2.....0	Mansfield
Luton 2.....0	Barnet
Morecambe 0.....0	Lincoln City
Newport County 1.....2	Crewe
Stevenage 0.....1	Colchester
Wycombe 0.....0	Port Vale
Chesterfield 3.....1	Notts County

FA Trophy

Gateshead 1.....1	Bromley
Wealdstone 0.....2	Brackley Town

Women's FA Cup

Durham 1.....6	Everton
Arsenal 5.....0	Charlton
Sunderland 2.....4	Man City (AET)

WSL

Birmingham 4.....0	Liverpool
Chelsea 2.....2	Reading

WSL Two

Oxford United 2.....4	Millwall
Sheffield United 1.....4	Brighton
Donny Belles 3.....0	Tottenham
Watford 0.....1	Aston Villa

Scottish Champ

Dundee United 1.....1	Dunfermline
Morton 2.....0	Brechin City
Queen Of The South 3.3	Livingston

Scottish League One

Airdrieonians 1.....2	Raith Rovers
Albion Rovers 1.....3	Alloa Athletic
Arbroath 2.....3	Stranraer
Ayr United 4.....0	Queen's Park
Forfar Athletic 2.....0	East Fife

Scottish League Two

Berwick Rangers 1.1	Edinburgh City
Clyde 3.....0	Montrose
Peterhead 1.....0	Annan Athletic
Stenhousemuir 0.....2	Elgin City
Stirling Albion 2.....2	Cowdenbeath

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Liverpool unable to contain rampant Birmingham



TREMENDOUS: Ellen White

Birmingham 4-0 Liverpool
by Kadeem Simmonds

FORTUNE was on Birmingham's side yesterday as they ran out comfortable 4-0 winners against Liverpool.

It seemed every shot at goal found the back of the net with an ounce of luck, be it a deflection or just poor goalkeeping.

Birmingham dominated the opening period of the match, as Liverpool struggled to get out of their own half.

Rachel Williams had a glorious chance to put the home side ahead after being played through by Ellen White but her left-footed shot was dragged wide.

However, Williams atoned for her earlier miss and found the back of the net to put the

Blues ahead inside 13 minutes.

Her left-footed strike from outside the box gave Liverpool goalkeeper Siobhan Chamberlain no chance as the ball nestled into the top corner.

Birmingham doubled their lead with the first of their lucky goals minutes later. Paige Williams's cross-shot was deflected off a Liverpool defender and past Chamberlain, looping in off the post.

There was no let off from the Blues as they continued their tsunami of attacks, the Liverpool defence struggling to not concede another.

It was a nightmare opening 20 minutes for the Reds who were without manager Scott Rodgers, who missed the game as he was away for the birth of his first child.

The bad luck continued for Liverpool when Jess Carter's left-footed shot from the edge of the box somehow beat Chamberlain at her near post.

Carter's shot barely had any power behind it but the England No 1 failed to get across quick enough to keep it out and prevent Birmingham from taking a 3-0 lead in the first-half.

Liverpool's Beth England nearly gave her side a chance to get back into the match 10 minutes into the second-half.

Jess Clarke broke away down the right-hand side and her cross was too much for England, who failed to divert the ball towards goal.

The response was better from the away side as they finally got a foothold in the match.

Though the pressure failed to materialise into a goal, it gave the Reds hope that the match was still salvageable.

All hope was extinguished with 10 minutes remaining when White turned inside the Liverpool box and slotted the ball into the bottom right-hand corner.

The result keeps Birmingham fifth, behind Liverpool, but the gap closing to two points.

TODAY'S TIPS

Farringdon's Doubles

IT'S OBVIOUS
Taunton 4:30 (nap)

BRIDGE OF CALLY
Taunton 2:50

Houseman's Choice

ESKENDASH
Huntingdon 3:35

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