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WITH HIM**

PAGE 8

FOR PEACE AND SOCIALISM  
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# Police 'hoovering up' personal data from innocents' mobile phones

Privacy activists warn snooping will make police discrimination worse

by Sam Tobin



POLICE forces across Britain are secretly downloading smartphone data from innocent people without obtaining warrants or even notifying them, campaigners revealed yesterday.

Privacy International (PI) said police are using "highly intrusive technology" to extract data from people's phones "on a questionable legal basis" and called for an immediate independent review into the "widespread, intrusive [and] secretive practice."

The campaign group also said that Britain's "serious problems" with "discriminatory policing" could be exacerbated by use of the technology, which could "disproportionately and unfairly" affect ethnic minorities and political activists.

Technology enabling police to download the contents of a smartphone – which can be

used on suspects, victims and witnesses – has been extended nationally since it was first used by Metropolitan officers policing the 2012 Olympics.

PI submitted freedom of information requests to Britain's 47 forces asking whether they used smartphone extraction technology and, if so, which companies provided it.

Of the 42 forces that responded, 26 admitted that they are already using the technology while eight more have either tried it out or intend to.

Documents disclosed to

PI revealed "an absence of national guidance and paucity of local policy," "conflicting views" on the legal basis for searching, downloading and storing personal data and "no clear rules on deletion."

Companies contracted to do the dirty work include Celebrite, referred to as an "evil genius" by FBI forensic expert Stephen Flatley and whose technology has allegedly been used in the prosecution of Bahraini rights campaigner Abduljalil al-Singace.

While MSAB, which is used by British Transport Police, has claimed that "if you've got access to a sim card, you've got access to the whole of a person's life" and that its XRY software is supplied to "97 per cent of UK police forces."

The company also boasts that XRY Cloud allows recovery from "beyond the mobile device itself from connected cloud-based storage ... without

the need for users to re-enter their login details" and can be used to extract Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and other data.

PI found that a Met Police document said that extraction would involve obtaining "all data of a particular type [such as photos], rather than just the individual data that is relevant to a particular investigation."

PI expressed "serious concern" that those forces that did disclose their guidance on data extraction revealed "uncertainty" about the legal basis for it. The group is calling for the Home Office to publish guidance regarding people's rights.

Millie Graham Wood, a solicitor with PI, said that it was "disturbing that the police have such a highly draconian power, operating in secret, without any accountability to the public."

She said: "We need to urgently address how this new frontier of policing might be disproportionately and unfairly

impacting on minority ethnic groups, political demonstrators, environmental activists and many other groups that can find themselves in the crosshairs of the police."

Labour MP David Lammy, who last year conducted a review of the treatment of black, Asian and minority ethnic people by the criminal justice system, said: "The lack of transparency around new policing tools such as mobile-phone extraction is a serious cause for concern."

He added that "individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds still face bias in parts of our justice system" but that "it is only because we have transparency and data collection for everything from stop-and-search incidents to crown court sentencing decisions that these disparities are revealed and we are able to hold those in power to account."

samtobin@peoples-press.com



**RUSSIA  
GRAFT BLAMED FOR  
DEADLY SHOP BLAZE**

KEREMOVO residents rally for justice after fire guts shopping centre, killing 64 people.

▶ Turn to page 6



**BRAZIL  
WE WANT JUSTICE  
FOR MARIELLE**

A HUNDRED prominent British figures have signed an open letter calling for justice for the murdered Rio councillor.

▶ Turn to page 10



**THEATRE  
A BALANCED STORY  
ABOUT PALESTINE**

PLAYWRIGHT Ismael Khaleedi talks to Joe Gill about how his theatre adaptation of the famous Palestinian novella Returning to Haifa was axed in New York, then found a home in London.

▶ Turn to page 11

■ PENSIONS

## £10m fine and ban for boss of BHS debacle

FORMER BHS boss Dominic Chappell received a long-term ban from serving as a company director yesterday, following a government investigation into the high street chain's catastrophic demise.

Mr Chappell and three other former BHS directors were informed by the Insolvency Service that they would be disqualified from serving as directors, following proceedings.

The ban is a serious blow to Mr Chappell, who has also been fined £10 million by pensions watchdogs attempting to recover money owed to BHS workers through their retirement scheme.

However, Sir Philip Green, who sold BHS to Mr Chappell for just £1 in March 2015, has been told that he faces no further action.

The Insolvency Service has powers to ban individuals from directorships for up to 15 years. Inspector-general Sarah Albon has said that she wants the service's inquiry into the BHS collapse concluded by next year.

■ HEALTH

## Benefits system fails MS sufferers

by Ceren Sagir

NURSES slammed the government's "cumbersome and bureaucratic" disability benefits system yesterday following warnings that MS sufferers were missing out on vital support.

Specialist multiple sclerosis nurses say they are under increasing pressure to help patients with their benefit applications, as well as with anxiety and stress before assessments.

The MS Society found in a survey that 90 per cent of specialist nurses had provided patients with the supporting evidence required for benefit applications. Many said they would do so outside office hours.

Royal College of Nursing head of practice Wendy Preston said that as there are only a couple of hundred specialist nurses across the country, their time becomes extra precious.

"They gladly help their patients to get the full range of support they require – but a bureaucratic and cumbersome

benefits system helps nobody," she said.

"Ministers and policy-makers cannot ignore the experts who say it is leading to people missing out when they need help most."

Charing Cross Hospital specialist nurse Johnny Dela Cruz said he sees the effects of patients not being able to get benefits. One patient had to stop treatments as he could no longer get to the hospital.

Disabled People Against Cuts founder Linda Burnip said that it "came as no surprise" that those entitled were missing out.

She told the Star: "The current system fails all disabled people but especially those whose conditions fluctuate in any way – either physically or mentally.

"The systems of assessment for both ESA [employment support allowance] and PIP [personal independence payment] should be immediately scrapped and replaced by assessments by GPs, who are best placed to know whether their patients are unfit."

cerensagir@peoples-press.com



■ ECONOMY

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEMES ALMOST HALVED IN A YEAR

**RISING BILLS:** Heating measures were essential in reducing fuel poverty

by Ceren Sagir

FUEL-POVERTY campaigners have raised concerns after it was discovered that energy-efficiency measures under a government programme have almost halved in the last year.

The scheme requires larger energy companies to install insulation and heat-efficient measures to reduce energy use and bills, with the aim of helping people at risk of fuel poverty.

But in 2017 just over 202,000 measures ranging from loft and cavity-wall installation to new windows and boilers were put into place under the Eco scheme. That's 44 per cent lower than the 359,611 installed the year before.

Climate-change think tank E3G's associate director Ed Matthew said: "This crash in the delivery of energy-efficiency measures comes at the end of one of the coldest winters in living memory.

"Thousands have died from

living in freezing homes and the country has faced a gas-security crunch."

He noted that "energy efficiency is the most cost-effective way to lower energy bills, decarbonise our energy system and deliver energy security.

"We can easily cut energy demand in homes by 25 per cent, which would save households on average £270 every year on their energy bills."

Peter Smith of fuel poverty campaign National Energy Action said that Britain has the

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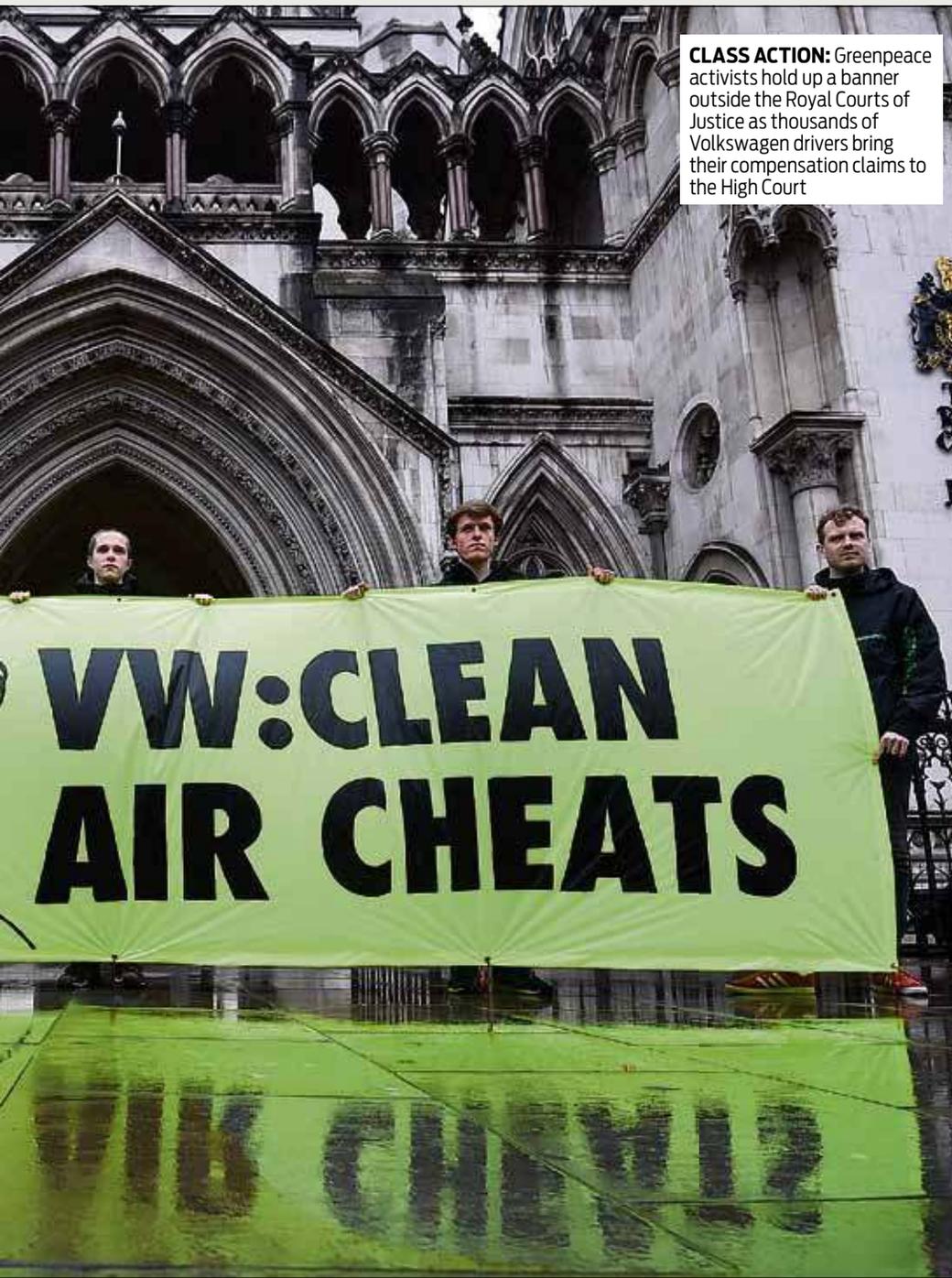
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CUT OUT AND MAIL TO US



**CLASS ACTION:** Greenpeace activists hold up a banner outside the Royal Courts of Justice as thousands of Volkswagen drivers bring their compensation claims to the High Court

## EMISSIONS

# Diesel cheat trial begins

THOUSANDS of Volkswagen drivers brought their claims for compensation over its cheating of diesel emissions tests to the High Court yesterday. Owners of VW, Audi, Seat and Skoda vehicles are bringing the claims in what lawyers have described as the biggest consumer class action in England and Wales in history.

At a three-day hearing, lawyers will apply for a group litigation order to progress the case and the law firm that will run the case will also be determined.

In September 2015 VW admitted that 482,000 of its diesel vehicles in the US were fitted with "defeat" devices to artificially limit emissions during regulators' tests, affecting 11 million vehicles worldwide, including almost 1.2m in Britain.

The company has reached settlements with US authorities and vehicle owners, but there have been no payouts to those affected in Britain.

Gareth Pope from solicitors Slater & Gordon said consumers had "waited in vain for Volkswagen to respond to their complaints fairly" and said it was "simply unacceptable" that they had been "exposed to dangerous situations."

The hearing continues.

## TRANSPORT

# Grayling fails to rule out Virgin re-bid for train line

by Marcus Barnett

CHRIS GRAYLING got a roasting yesterday for failing to rule out Virgin and Stagecoach rebidding for the East Coast rail franchise despite the early termination of their joint contract.

Discussing the future ownership of Britain's railways, the Transport Secretary said nothing of his intentions on the future of the East Coast Main Line or whether he would offer the contract to Virgin-Stagecoach.

However, he announced that he would be opening the West Coast Main Line franchise for tender, scheduled to run until 2031.

In the Commons, Labour's shadow railways minister Rachel Maskell said: "The statement sets out vague aspirations and possible options. Yet again, it is evidence that the government won't set out a strategic direction but instead delegate decisions to the private sector.

"More imperative than ever is Labour's plan to bring the railways into public ownership."

Virgin and Stagecoach had agreed to pay the government

£3.3 billion to run the East Coast service from 2015 to 2023. But it was announced in November that a new East Coast "partnership" will take on responsibility for inter-city trains and track operations on the route in 2020, and last month it was announced that the franchise would end this year as a result of Stagecoach failing to meet key financial obligations.

Labour's Paula Sherriff joked that it would be "Virgin on the ridiculous" if Virgin and Stagecoach were allowed to be involved in the key route in future.

Mr Grayling claimed the Dewsbury MP appeared to have "misunderstood" the government's plans for 2020 onwards, with a public-private partnership in development. He added that it is "not a question of who is and is not allowed to bid," as the process has yet to be decided.

The news comes days after the rail union RMT revealed that the Department for Transport has planned a £250 million bailout deal for Britain's failing railway franchises.

marcusbarnett@peoples-press.com

## BUSINESS

# GKN takeover bid built on 'false promises' to workforce

by Marcus Barnett

sixth-highest rate of excess winter deaths in Europe and cold homes kill an average of 9,700 people a year.

"UK homes are among the least energy-efficient in Europe and this is a key cause for these deaths. Crucially, this situation is entirely preventable," he said.

Mr Smith said that the government's failure to provide emergency support in the 2017 Autumn Budget will have had hugely damaging consequences this winter, particularly in the recent cold snap, and should be reviewed urgently alongside the Department of Health & Social Care.

And Greenpeace chief scientist Doug Parr said: "The challenge is that a government which has banned the cheapest electricity source – onshore wind – and is looking to plough billions of money from household energy bills into much more expensive nuclear power is unlikely to be persuaded by economic arguments."

cerensagir@peoples-press.com

THE Unite union accused the government yesterday of doing "too little, too late" on turnaround company Melrose's £8.1 billion bid for engineering giant GKN.

Business Secretary Greg Clark demanded "binding" commitments if Melrose's pursuit of GKN is successful, including pledges to maintain a headquarters and workforce in Britain and to pay tax here.

However, Unite has written to GKN shareholders urging them to reject the Melrose bid on the grounds that it risks undermining Britain's

security and manufacturing interests.

Unite assistant general secretary for aerospace Steve Turner said these assurances were unenforceable and wholly inadequate.

"It is doubtful that even these limited assurances are worth much more than the paper they're written on," he said.

"No deal should be struck on the basis of false promises.

"It can take between five and 15 years to develop, design and engineer a new product and get it to market. Any investor who understands the business and is in for the long haul will see through this.

"However, the government wishes to dress it up. Melrose, with its short-term, profit-first business model, is simply not a long-term investor."

Unite assistant general secretary for manufacturing Tony Burke added: "Melrose's assurances to Greg Clark are inadequate.

"If GKN falls to Melrose on Thursday, this will be a terrible blow to UK manufacturing and engineering. Any last vestige of a manufacturing strategy will be in tatters."

Mr Burke accused corporations of behaving as if they were in a casino, "gambling away jobs and communities."

marcusbarnett@peoples-press.com

## UNITE

# Coyne challenge to Unite election result starts

A LEGAL challenge to the re-election of Len McCluskey as general secretary of the Unite union began yesterday.

The one-day hearing was held to consider a complaint brought by Gerard Coyne, who lost to Mr McCluskey last April.

Jeffrey Burke QC, acting on behalf of the Certification Officer, heard evidence that Mr McCluskey had "acted improperly" by calling the election despite the general secretary's post not being vacant.

Mr Coyne's legal team argued

that Mr McCluskey had gained an unfair advantage in the election, which the incumbent won decisively. He did not complain about the calling of the election at the time.

If Mr Burke decides that rules were broken, a new contest will be called. A verdict is not expected until after Easter.

A spokesman for the union said: "Unite is confident that the judge will share the union's view that it acted correctly and reject the complaint when he makes his ruling in the coming weeks."



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■ COURTS

## Islamophobic hit-and-run driver locked up for life

A RACIST hit-and-run driver was jailed for life yesterday after deliberately running down a Muslim woman as “revenge” for terrorist attacks.

Paul Moore, 21, attempted to kill Zaynab Hussein in Leicester last September, narrowly missing a 12-year-old schoolgirl at the same time.

Ms Hussein, 47, was struck once and then driven over again moments later. Mr Moore was seen laughing.

Mr Moore, who told a relative he intended to target Muslims, then drove at the 12-year-old because he wanted to “do the country a favour.”

He was found guilty of attempted murder, attempted grievous bodily harm with intent and dangerous driving.

Sentencing Mr Moore to a minimum of 20 years’ imprisonment, Mr Justice Soole said: “The courage of your victims and the compassion and courage of all those who came to the aid of Mrs Hussein in different ways ... stand in stark contrast to your wickedness that morning.”

■ HIGHER EDUCATION

## Costs mean postgrad studies are growing ever more exclusive

by Conrad Landin

POSTGRADUATE study is at risk of becoming the preserve of the well-off, the National Union of Students conference heard yesterday.

Delegates backed a call for substantial schemes of bursaries and grants for postgraduate students from low-income backgrounds.

Currently, privately educated students are over-represented on postgraduate courses.

Cardiff University student Jake Smith told the hall: “Postgraduates from the poorest backgrounds are currently denied bursaries that are available to undergraduate students.”

“We risk postgraduate study becoming even more exclusive than it already is.” Lancaster University’s

Lucy Atkinson said that she had been forced to quit as a Labour councillor due to the toll exacted by having to work in the retail sector on top of her academic and political commitments.

But she said the motion missed the point, because the cost of living – and not academic costs – was the main issue affecting poor postgraduate students. “We think that a grant and loan system should apply to postgraduates as well,” she said.

Rachel Powell, of NUS-USI, which organises students in Northern Ireland, countered: “We should be arguing for free education for everyone, not for more loans and different types of loans.”

A motion in support of free higher education – which is NUS policy but remains contentious in the student movement – fell off the agenda yesterday as time ran out.

Delegates had previously complained that a debate on Brexit was taking up too much time, denying students the chance to discuss more important issues.

NUS executive member Amelia Horgan argued that Brexit “does have an impact on education” but that issues such as the higher education strike and resistance to Tory policies should be prioritised.

Portsmouth University delegate James Thompson said: “There’s more to education than Brexit, for crying out loud.” He stressed the importance of cuts to mental-health support and the ballooning pay of vice-chancellors.

Executive member Darren Clarke argued: “The next time we meet we will have left the EU. We need to hear the student voice now.”

conradlandin@peoples-press.com

■ ENVIRONMENT

## RSPB finds big increase in little birds

FAVOURABLE weather helped boost numbers of goldfinches and other small garden birds spotted in an annual survey, the RSPB said yesterday.

More than 420,000 people nationwide took part in the conservation charity’s Big Garden Birdwatch in the last weekend of January, recording 6.7 million birds visiting their gardens or local park.

Goldfinch sightings were up 11 per cent on the previous year, while the long-tailed tit was up 16 per cent, the coal tit (pictured) was up 15 per cent and the blue tit was up 5 per cent, after last summer’s good weather helped deliver a successful breeding season for the birds.

## James Connolly & The Re-Conquest of Ireland



Author John Callow provides the first critical reappraisal of Connolly’s last major work using a wealth of original documents and photographs.

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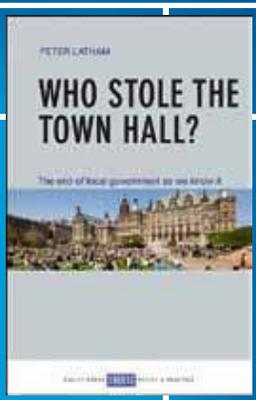
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■ HIGHER EDUCATION

## NUS leaders ‘fail to support strikes’

by Conrad Landin

STUDENT leaders were slammed yesterday for prioritising “going to gala dinners” over supporting striking lecturers.

Opening the National Union of Students (NUS) conference yesterday, the organisation’s president Shakira Martin vowed to “make student poverty history.”

But leftwingers said Ms Martin had failed to offer “meaningful support” to university staff on their strike over pension cuts.

They have pointed to the link between the precarious employment conditions of postgraduate students – many of whom work in junior teaching and research posts – and poverty.

The NUS issued a statement saying it supports the strikes following a motion passed at its executive council. But the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts has said the union’s national leadership “didn’t even bother to produce their own material to distribute to student unions: instead, they lazily uploaded UCU’s

[University and College Union] leaflets to NUS Connect and said goodbye.”

In a question-and-answer session yesterday, Ms Martin defended her description of students occupying university buildings in solidarity with the strike as “privileged.” She suggested occupations were not “accessible” to students from marginalised groups.

Hope Worsdale, a student activist at Warwick University, told the Star that students had “played an essential role in pushing [universities’ representative organisation] UUK to back down on their damaging pensions reforms” – but that this had been achieved “without a shred of meaningful support from our national union.”

She added: “That the NUS leadership has been so strikingly absent during this campaign is a damning indictment of the state of our union.”

“NUS should be working with radical grassroots campaigns on the ground, yet the leadership is more concerned with going to gala dinners with MPs than building a movement that can win.”

conradlandin@peoples-press.com



■ PARLIAMENT

## Johnson slapped down for sexist jibe at Thornberry

“SEXIST” Boris Johnson felt the wrath of Commons speaker John Bercow yesterday for calling his Labour counterpart, Emily Thornberry, by her husband’s name.

A blustering Mr Johnson had referred to Ms Thornberry as “the noble and learned Lady, the Baroness of – whatever it is, I can’t remember – Nugee!”

Ms Thornberry’s husband is High Court judge Sir Christopher Nugee.

Mr Bercow rose to dish out a dressing-down and said: “First of all, we don’t name-call in

this chamber and secondly – the honourable gentleman will listen, and benefit from listening – we do not address people by the titles of their spouses.

“The shadow foreign secretary has a name ... We know what her name is. It’s inappropriate and, frankly, sexist to speak in those terms. And I’m not having it in this chamber.

“That is the end of the matter. No matter how senior a member, that parlance is not legitimate, it will not be allowed, and it will be called out.”



■ COURTS

# Coroner's burial priority rule 'lacking religious sensitivity'

by Sam Tobin

A LONDON coroner's "cab rank rule" for burials ignores the "deeply held beliefs" of Jewish and Muslim communities, which require their dead be buried as soon as possible, the High Court heard yesterday.

Mary Hassell, the senior coroner for inner north London, established the policy that "no death will be prioritised in any way over any other because of the religion of the deceased or the family," meaning all deaths in her jurisdiction are dealt with in the order they are registered.

The policy covers the boroughs of Camden, Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets, which have between them "sizeable Muslim and Jewish populations."

Adath Yisroel Burial Society (AYBS) is challenging the policy, arguing that it breaches both the Human Rights Act and the

Equality Act. Sam Grodzinski QC said the AYBS was not saying that "Jewish, Muslim or other religious people must always come first."

But he emphasised that the law "requires religious beliefs to be conscientiously taken into account," adding that Ms Hassell's policy "precludes the proper application of the law."

Mr Grodzinski told the court there was evidence from Jewish and Muslim community leaders that the policy has caused "widespread distress."

He also noted that the chief coroner of England and Wales Mark Lucraft QC "regards [Ms Hassell's] policy to be unlawful."

He said Ms Hassell had previously said "she would reconsider her policy immediately" if Mr Lucraft considered the policy unlawful.

But, he added, she "has still not chosen to withdraw that policy."

The hearing continues.

samtobin@peoples-press.com

■ ELECTION CHEATING ALLEGATIONS

# TOP STRATEGIST OF DATA FIRM 'MURDERED IN KENYA'

**CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA:** Whistleblower says his predecessor was killed after 'a deal went sour'

by Lamiat Sabin

A WHISTLEBLOWER who worked for data firm Cambridge Analytica (CA) told MPs yesterday that his predecessor was thought to have been murdered in Kenya after a "deal went sour."

Political strategist Christopher Wylie was giving evidence to the digital, culture, media & sport committee in its investigation over CA's mining of Facebook users' data to influence elections, which the company denies.

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg has declined to give evidence. He is also under pressure to testify before the US Congress.

In a letter he said that he will send a senior Facebook executive to Parliament next month. But committee chairman Damian Collins said he must give evidence either in person or via video-link.

"I would certainly urge him to think again if he has any concern for the people who use his company's services," he added.

Mr Wylie told the panel that he had heard that Kenyan police were bribed not to enter his predecessor Dan Muresan's hotel room for 24 hours after his body was found there. Mr Muresan was working on President Uhuru Kenyatta's re-election campaign in 2012.

He added: "What I heard was

... when you work for senior politicians in a lot of these countries, you don't actually make money in the electoral work, you make money in the influence-brokering after the fact – and that a deal went sour."

His exposure of CA has triggered probes into Donald Trump's presidential campaign and Brexit campaign organisations Vote Leave and BeLeave.

Mr Wylie told the committee that AggregateIQ, employed by Vote Leave to provide targeted marketing during the EU referendum campaign, had been set up by SCL (formerly Strategic Communication Laboratories), CA's parent company.

He claimed that SCL had

been involved in the distribution of medical records and emails of Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari that were hacked by Israeli private intelligence firm Black Cube when he was running for office in 2015.

"Anti-Islamic" videos designed to intimidate Mr Buhari's supporters were also circulated showing dismembering and people being burned alive. In a statement after the hearing Black Cube said that it has always operated within the law.

lamiatsabin@peoples-press.com

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UNITED STATES

# Police told to change tactics after cops' garden killing

by Our Foreign Desk

THE grandmother of an unarmed black man shot dead by police in Sacramento, California, last week has called for change in the way police confront suspects.

Sequita Thompson (pictured, centre) gave a press conference on Monday night and recounted the events of March 18, when Stephon Clark was shot 20 times in the back garden of her house, where he lived.

"They didn't have to kill him like that, they didn't have to shoot him that many times," she said.

Police claim they were pursuing a suspect who had broken three car windows and a neighbour's door, and that, when challenged, Clark fled and refused to show his hands. Ms Thompson believes he was trying to return home when he was killed.



Recordings appear to show officers thought he was armed, although he turned out to be carrying only a mobile phone.

The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) said Sacramento police department should change its regulations to allow officers to wait for backup, send in police dogs when a suspect is cornered, maintain surveillance or use non-lethal force such as Tasers.

"We're always open to conversation on how we can do things differently or better and this case is no different," department spokesman Eddie Macaulay said.

NAACP California president Alice Huffman said the organisation has asked the US Justice Department to investigate Mr Clark's death and called on the state to appoint an inspector-general to investigate police-involved shootings. US police

officially shot and killed 987 people last year, a figure roughly in line with previous years.

Mr Clark's family have engaged lawyer Benjamin Crump, who described his death as the "execution" of a man who "chose non-violence."

Mr Crump previously represented the families of Trayvon Martin, the teenager followed and shot dead by neighbourhood watch volunteer George Zimmermann in 2012, and Michael Brown, the Ferguson, Missouri, resident killed with his hands up pleading "don't shoot" in 2014 – leading to mass protests against police violence using the slogan "hands up, don't shoot."

"No family should have to endure this suffering," he told the audience, meeting cries of "amen!" and "enough is enough."

international@peoples-press.com

RALLY FOR JUSTICE: People gather in Kemerovo following the fire



GREECE: Council contract workers demonstrate outside the Greek parliament in Athens demanding that their contracts be renewed.

The EU's bailout fund said yesterday that it had approved another €6.7 billion, to be used to pay off old debts previously owed to European banks and now held by EU governments.

European Stability Mechanism chief Klaus Regling praised the Syriza government's austerity measures, and said it would give Greece a deal on bailout repayments if it kept up its cuts.

## POISONING Australia & Ireland kick out Russian diplomats

IRELAND and Australia became the latest countries to expel Russian diplomats yesterday in response to the poisoning of a former double agent and his daughter in Salisbury.

Two envoys were asked to leave Australia and one in Ireland, bringing the total number of Russian diplomats expelled worldwide to over 130 following the United States kicking out 60 on Monday. As usual, the expelled diplomats were reportedly spies.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull echoed the US and EU in supporting the British government's contention that the non-lethal poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter was an attempted murder commissioned by the Russian state, a charge Moscow denies.

Former Belgian prime minister and senior MEP Guy Verhofstadt said expulsions were "not enough" but argued that the scandal could be used to press Russia to further open up its industries to EU investment.

"Why not establish a big economic space from Lisbon to Vladivostok?" he enthused.



ANGER: Igor Vostrikov (above) demands justice for the victims and (below) a protester holds up a placard that reads: '64 dead'



UNITED STATES

# Activists hail deceased civil rights icon Linda Brown

by Our Foreign Desk

RIGHTS campaigners paid tribute yesterday to Linda Brown, whose rejection from an all-white school in Topeka, Kansas, sparked the Brown v Board of Education case that struck down segregation in US schools in 1954.

Ms Brown died on Sunday aged 75, funeral officials in the town said.

Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer said: "Sixty-four years ago, a young girl from Topeka, Kansas, sparked a case that ended segregation in public schools in America. Linda Brown's life reminds us that by standing up

for our principles and serving our communities we can truly change the world."

Ms Brown's father Oliver was among a number of parents who applied for their children to attend white schools that were closer to their homes than the alternative establishments for black children. When they were turned away, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) brought a suit challenging segregation.

NAACP Legal Defence & Educational Fund president Sherrilyn Ifill said: "She stands as an example of how ordinary schoolchildren took centre

stage in transforming this country. It was not easy for her or her family, but her sacrifice broke barriers and changed the meaning of equality."

On May 17 1954 the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that separating black and white children was unconstitutional because it denied black children the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

"We are to be grateful for the family that stood up for what is right," said Democratic representative Annie Kuether of Topeka. "That made a difference to the rest of the world."

international@peoples-press.com





■ RUSSIA

# DEADLY FIRE IN SIBERIA SPARKS MASS PROTEST

**SHOPPING CENTRE BLAZE:** Relatives demand justice amid claims of corruption

by Ben Chacko

THOUSANDS rallied in the Russian city of Kemerovo yesterday to demand a full investigation into Sunday's shopping centre blaze that killed at least 64 people.

Crowds gathered outside the regional government building, accusing local officials of covering up the full scale of the tragedy.

"We're not calling for blood," said protester Igor Vostrikov. "The children are dead, you can't give them back. We want justice."

Mr Vostrikov maintains that, since the arcade's entire cinema burnt down, the number

of dead is probably far higher than the official tally.

Told by a deputy governor of the city that he was indulging in a "PR stunt," Mr Vostrikov revealed that his wife, sister and three daughters aged two, five and seven had perished in the flames.

Another deputy governor, Vladimir Chernov, told the crowd he was ready to resign if the people desired it, meeting cries of "resign, resign!"

Investigative Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin reported yesterday that the fire alarms in the Winter Cherry centre had not been operational for two weeks, and when a security guard was alerted to the blaze he switched off the public announcement system.

The guard has been detained, but investigators say they have not received a "reasonable" explanation for the bizarre move.

Kemerovo Governor Aman Tuleyev met Russian President Vladimir Putin, who visited to lay flowers. Mr Tuleyev said "the opposition" had fomented protests and claimed the families of victims were not demonstrating.

Mr Putin did not visit the rally but, after being accosted by protesters in the lobby of the morgue who demanded he fire Mr Tuleyev, he promised that "everyone" responsible would answer for the deaths, which he blamed on "criminal negligence, sloppiness."

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation backed victims' accusations that there was an attempt to "conceal the number of victims" and "white-wash officials."

"The reason for this catastrophe is the greed of the owners and corruption," said Communist MP Nikolai Kolomeitsev, who said the Winter Cherry complex was a converted factory which did not meet proper safety standards and that shoppers had previously reported leaks and sparks emanating from its ceilings.

The party would insist on a full parliamentary investigation to establish the truth, he said.

benchacko@peoples-press.com

■ KOSOVO

## Serb ministers in Kosovo walk after cops beat Djuric

by Our Foreign Desk

SERB ministers in Kosovo's administration walked out yesterday while supporters set up roadblocks in the north of the territory following the arrest of a visiting Serbian politician.

Kosovo police attacked Serb protesters with tear gas and stun grenades following the incident, in which Marko Djuric, the head of the Serbian government office for Kosovo affairs, was arrested and then released in the divided town of Mitrovica for entering Kosovo's territory without permission.

Kosovo was separated from Serbia when Nato forces launched a war in support of the pro-independence Kosovo Liberation Army in 1999, leading to hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Roma fleeing the

province. It declared independence in 2008, though this has never been recognised by Belgrade and Serb minorities within the territory remain hostile to the government.

Footage shows Mr Djuric being held down as he is dragged to a police station by officers wearing masks and carrying rifles. He claims he was beaten and humiliated by Kosovar officers.

"By dragging me on the ground like a dog, pulling me by my tie, they wanted to humiliate me, thinking they can humiliate the Serbian people," he declared once back in Belgrade at a press conference with Serbian President Alexander Vucic.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini has rushed to Belgrade to try to defuse the crisis, which could cause the Kosovar administration to fall. [international@peoples-press.com](mailto:international@peoples-press.com)

■ PERU

## Kuczynski dishes out oil deals before quitting

PERU'S ex-president Pedro Kuczynski used his last day in office to hand massive oil concessions to an Irish-Peruvian venture, local media has revealed.

Mr Kuczynski announced his resignation last Wednesday, after allies of his were filmed buying parliamentary votes to prevent his impeachment for reportedly lying about payments he had received from Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht.

On the same day, he signed five executive orders granting lots on the Latin American country's northern coast to

allow drilling by Tullow Oil and PeruPetro, which came to an agreement on joint exploitation of the region's oil last year.

Foreign firms pay just 5 per cent tax on their profits in Peru, and the country's extractive industries bring authorities into regular conflict with local communities. An ombudsman report last year identified 156 struggles between mining giants and indigenous groups.

Before entering Peruvian politics, Mr Kuczynski worked in the United States for the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

■ MIDDLE EAST

## Iraq orders troops to borders after Turks' threat to Kurds

IRAQI Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi ordered troops to take full control of the country's borders yesterday following Turkish threats to cross them.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has invaded northern Syria in a bid to crush Kurdish forces in Afrin canton, announced "operations" at the weekend in Iraq's Sinjar area to take on Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) fighters he says are based there.

If the PKK did not leave Iraq's Sinjar and Qadil

regions, he said, it was "inevitable" that Turkey would take steps to remove them.

The PKK, which has been at war with the Turkish government for decades over the latter's oppression of its large Kurdish minority, moved into Sinjar in 2015 to defend the Yazidi minority from genocide at the hands of advancing Isis forces.

Mr Abadi insisted his own army could prevent PKK raids on Turkish territory and would ensure no "violations" of Turkey's borders occurred.

★ Star comment

## Who benefits from the plethora of liberal conspiracy theories?

PUTIN, Salisbury, Trump, Cambridge Analytica, Facebook, Brexit, Farage, Trump, Facebook, Brexit, Corbyn, Salisbury, Putin ... the merry-go-round is spinning so fast that all the “liberal” conspiracy theories are merging into one.

Of course, just because there are conspiracy theories does not mean that there are no conspiracies. Nor does it mean that there are no connections between different sets of conspirators.

But the frenzy being whipped up by Tory ministers, Remain zealots, the Guardianista intelligentsia, the US Democratic Party establishment, EU leaders and Nato chiefs is now abandoning all rationality and perspective.

While there may well be connections between Russian state agencies and the callous, reckless Salisbury attack, these have yet to be established beyond reasonable doubt.

In fact, Britain’s authorities have failed or refused to release almost any information about the incident, other than to confirm the facts already available from any bystander or passing pedestrian.

The government’s delay before calling in the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) remains as unexplained as it is unquestioned.



Since then, rather than wait for any findings from OPCW experts, the West has pronounced Vladimir Putin’s regime guilty and begun to dispense the punishment.

From Britain and Europe to the US and Australia, more than 100 Russian diplomats are being expelled as other sanctions are prepared.

Merely to ask for evidence of Russian culpability for the Salisbury attack is to invite allegations of being a Putin stooge or puppet, a “Putinbot” lacking patriotism – somebody, indeed, who would leave our country defenceless rather than ratchet up our military spending in line with EU and Nato demands.

To suggest that the scale of the concerted Western response is not only premature but disproportionate, given the crimes committed by Britain, the US, France, Saudi Arabia and Israel, is to invite the sneering accusation of “whataboutery.”

It is, apparently, the deepest intellectual dishonesty to suggest that because no action has been taken against states responsible for war crimes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen, the excoriation of the Russian regime might be a tad hypocritical and disproportionate.

US President Donald Trump believes he has no option but to go along with the anti-Putin offensive, accused as he is of conspiring with Russia, Facebook and a company associated with Cambridge Analytica (CA) to rob Hillary Clinton of her rightful place in the White House.



This ties in neatly with the charge that CA, Facebook and the Putinbots conspired to defeat the British establishment in the EU referendum, abetted by Jeremy Corbyn’s failure to campaign enthusiastically for membership of the European single market – something for which, admittedly, he has never shown the slightest enthusiasm.

The classical question to be asked in the face of this whirlwind of state-backed propaganda is: “Cui bono?” Who benefits from this suspension of all the norms of evidence, proof, due process and equal treatment?

In Britain, it is the ruling capitalist class, determined as it is to sustain a Tory government (and so prevent a left-led Labour one), maintain alignment with EU big business rules and strengthen Nato and imperialism’s drive to reshape and dominate the Near and Middle East.

And the losers? Democracy and the working class, the latter attacked for being stupid and illiberal, ignoring the benevolent advice of its betters, taking its subliminal orders from Facebook, the Kremlin, Nigel Farage and the side of a Brexit bus ... and daring to vote accordingly.



# I stand by Corbyn, also the millions relying on

ONE by one they come to oust the leader. This week Labour Party members all around Britain have stood and watched the anti-semitism row unfold in Parliament.

Many of us, like me, have shaken our heads with disbelief and utter horror that Corbyn, of all people, with a more than 40-year record of tackling racism and abuse, has been accused of anti-semitism and not doing enough to discourage such prejudice within the party.

I have had to silently stand by and watch what certain MPs are doing disguised under Brexit and anti-semitism, until now, where my pen can do the talking.

Owen Smith spoke out on the holding of a second EU referendum and we all thought he was having his moment in the limelight, then would fade to obscurity.

But then the anti-semitism row ignited. I watched Labour MP for Barrow-in-Furness John Woodcock denounce Corbyn in the Commons as the Tories egged him on.

I watched him smirking as he mentioned Corbyn’s past columns in the Morning Star. Wrexham MP Ian Lucas then attacked Corbyn on his Facebook timeline over anti-semitism, while many members of his CLP immediately questioned him and held him to account.

A rally was held in London

on Monday and several Labour MPs spoke out against him, while supporting them in the crowd was Tory Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid.

These MPs call themselves centrists, moderates or progressives, but to me and other working-class people they simply cannot call themselves socialists.

Hell-bent on personal power, hell-bent on getting their own personal brand of the party back, hell-bent on ensuring Corbyn and Labour will never govern, they drip-feed the right-wing media daily and when they see even a chink of light, they begin their campaign to bring down the Labour leader.

These MPs completely miss the point and misrepresent the people who elected them.

I am going to be frank without demeaning the seriousness of anti-semitism and tell them this: when you are homeless and your bed is a piece of cardboard, rows about alleged anti-semitism are not on your list of priorities for the day and night ahead. Staying alive, being warm, having food is.

When your family are housed in a one-room bed and breakfast and your children have nowhere to play, nowhere to do homework, nowhere to bring friends back to, anti-semitism accusations don’t figure much in your daily list of getting by.

The Labour MPs smearing their leader know that working-class people want a Corbyn-led government to dra... our lives, writes **BERNADETTE**

When you are a carer on £64 per week, living a humdrum, relentless everyday routine of caring for a disabled person, attending to their needs and ignoring your own, a break and a holiday is more pressing than what people thought of a mural back in 2012.

The MPs denouncing Corbyn have lost sight of the enemy – which is Toryism.

When you earn over £74,000 per year, you have ample room for lofty middle-class intellectual chats and rows over socialism.

You can take time over a glass of House of Commons heavily discounted glass of claret to talk about centrists, the left, the Russians, anti-semitism, world hunger to your heart’s content.

But for me and millions of others we have more pressing issues in our lives due to the burden we carry due to Tory austerity.

For us – and it may be incidental to these MPs – the plain fact of the matter is we are relying on a Labour Corbyn-led gov-

ernment to drastically improve our lives.

Personally, I think that is enough of a burden to place on Corbyn.

Our hopes and expectations of the next Labour government are through the roof, honed by the horrors of eight years of rancid Toryism.

These are the priorities of the people who elected you: an end to zero-hours contracts, putting right the monster that is universal credit, decent pay increases, an end to the demonisation of disabled people and a better deal on personal independence payment, carer’s allowance and investment in social services, an education system that isn’t learning by rote and automaton exams but an enriched all-round curriculum where drama, music and nature are incorporated and valued, an NHS we can once again be proud of.

Labour MPs must remember that their voters’ priorities should be their priorities and not use their days plotting to bring down Corbyn to establish their



# ong with on him

leader should  
are counting on  
stically improve  
**HORTON**



own personal power and will. I have not previously been among those to call for deselection of MPs as I believe working together is the way forward and for Labour to be the broad church with broad views, but this week has altered my view entirely.

MPs do not have a job for life and I think many of them will see that the membership may decide to play a more active role than it has done in the past, making MPs more accountable and answerable for their public outpourings.

Members of the Labour Party have confided in me privately that they are now too frightened to talk about certain topics on social media, for fear of a witch-hunt.

We have many activists involved with issues in Palestine who are too fearful to speak out, in fear of being labelled.

We have members who have spoken out on Russian issues in the past, who are now afraid someone may report them to Labour HQ and a possible sus-

pension or expulsion could follow.

This isn't what people joined the Labour Party for. MPs should be very aware that we could lose many good activists and campaigners if these witch-hunts are allowed to continue.

Quite simply, I want all Labour MPs to fight Toryism and get our party into a position to govern, and stop undermining the leadership.

Millions of us, and many in dire circumstances, are relying on a future Corbyn-led Labour government to finally deliver us from Tory evil.

I hope Labour MPs keep their eyes on the prize of government and respect their members' and voters' wishes and priorities in life.

I stood side by side with Corbyn in 2015. I stand shoulder to shoulder with him in 2018, with a simple demand to Labour MPs: allow him to lead in order to govern.

The Labour membership have spoken twice already on this issue and our vote is sovereign. Please respect that.

# A look back 100 years to WWI

by John Ellison

IN EARLY March 1918 literary historian Lytton Strachey was close to publishing his soon to be famous book of essays *Eminent Victorians*, which treated his highly respectable subjects with a near scandalous degree of irreverence and wit.

He had recently attended the trial of anti-war philosopher Bertrand Russell, when the latter had been sentenced to six months in prison for inciting disaffection in a January article in the *No Conscription Fellowship's* weekly *Tribunal*.

His sympathies were entirely with Russell. He wrote in a letter to a Bloomsbury circle fellow member: "It was really infamous ... The spectacle of a louse like Sir John Dickinson rating Bertie for immorality and sending him to prison!"

Russell now belonged to the determined few sentenced to jail for peace agitation.

Another was Edmund Morel, serial exposé of Britain's imperialist motives in the war, lately released from Pentonville Prison.

He had been given a six-month sentence late the previous summer for sending a Union of Democratic Control pamphlet to a friend in Switzerland (technically contravening the *Defence of the Realm Act*). His freedom was celebrated at a public meeting in Leicester.

The treatment of "absolutist" conscientious objectors to the war – who had refused military (and, when prescribed, non-combatant service) – had been severe. For them repeated sentences with hard labour was the preferred punishment.

On March 7 Clarence Norman, imprisoned since summer 1916, and now charged with refusing to don a military uniform, defended himself on the basis that he should only be judged by a civil court. For him another hard labour sentence followed.

The playwright George Bernard Shaw in a letter printed in the *Manchester Guardian* on March 15 described Norman as

"a very obstreperous martyr ... Mr Clarence Norman ... may be depended on not to suffer in dignified and melancholy silence."

Another CO died in Hull Prison early in March following a hunger strike. It was later confirmed that his death was due to pneumonia accelerated by forcible feeding. Had a longer tube been inserted, a doctor stated, he would not have choked to death.

The Lloyd George-led government was not much bothered by the fate of war resisters. On March 1 war cabinet discussion was focused on a proposed landing of a small party of British soldiers at Murmansk in northern Russia's Kola Inlet, and then on what looked like the approach of the anticipated German offensive on the Western Front.

On March 6 a company of

British marines – 130 men – disembarked at Murmansk from a warship and marched into local barracks.

No fighting took place, but this was the moment of the first direct British military action against the Lenin government of Russia. It was not publicised.

But government support for a landing by Japanese forces in the far east of Russia, at Vladivostok, was quickly known.

In late February a secret message had gone to Washington inviting the US to approve a Japanese landing on the basis that a Japanese force would move westwards across Siberia as far as the railway centre of Chelyabinsk, just east of the Urals.

The notion was that credibility could thereby be lent to the argument that Japanese intervention would be as an ally against Germany more than as an ally against Bolshevism.

There was a fall-back inference that the Bolsheviks, having declined to continue to fight Germany, were more or less its agents anyway.

The independent-minded weekly *The Nation* on March 9 was critical of approval for a Japanese landing.

"The case publicly advanced for this intervention is that the Germans, after extorting from Russia her consent to a peace which she regards only as a truce, are now in a position to threaten Japan, 5,000 miles away at Vladivostok. This pretext ... is manifestly remote from any reason which could sway responsible statesmen."

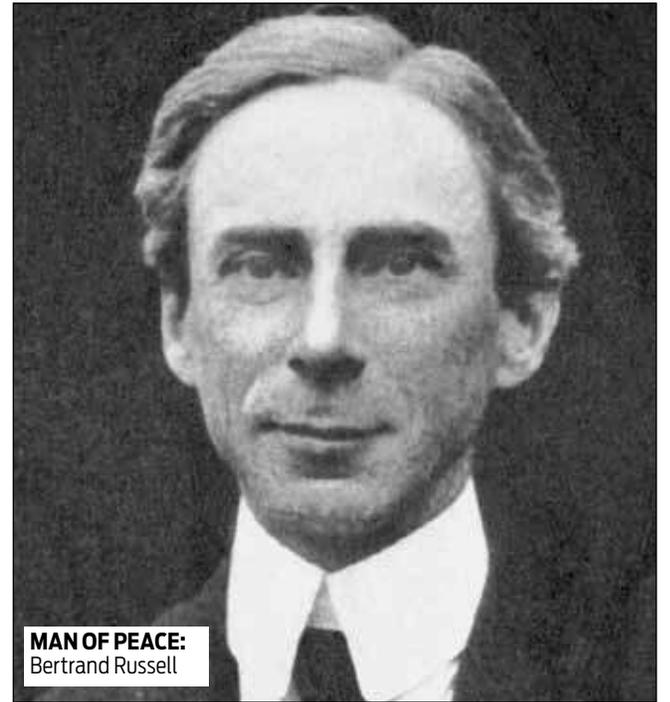
The British Socialist Party's *The Call* drove deeper, classing the adventure with that of Britain in 1882 when, on the pretext of restoring public order and the authority of Egypt's Khedive, British troops had landed in Egypt in order to put it under British control.

It stated flatly: "Japan and Germany, formally belonging to two opposite camps, are acting as the joint executors of the capitalist world."

From Petrograd, however, British agent Bruce Lockhart was cabling his Whitehall masters anxiously and vainly opposing support for Japan, as he considered it made less likely Russia's return to war against Germany.

Lockhart had a revealing meeting with Lenin on March 1, when told he would have facilities to work in Russia and would be free to leave when he wished.

In his 1932 book *Memoirs of a British Agent*, Lockhart recounted that Lenin told him: "So long ... as the German danger exists, I am prepared to risk a co-operation with the allies ... In the event of German aggression, I am even willing to accept military support. At



MAN OF PEACE:  
Bertrand Russell

the same time I am quite convinced that your government will never see things in this light ... It will co-operate with the Russian reactionaries."

Indeed, it was already financing them. Before the end of January the war cabinet had decided to send a gift of £20,000 to anti-Bolshevik forces in eastern Siberia.

Lockhart's London counterpart, Maxim Litvinov, Russia's "ambassador" since early January, was now enjoying less freedom of action.

Notice to quit his office rooms at 82 Victoria Street had been followed at the end of February by his landlord's agent's refusal of access.

Granted an injunction, Litvinov was able to return, but on March 8 Mr Justice Neville at the Royal Courts of Justice brushed away any thought of political neutrality.

The regime Litvinov represented earned only judicial contempt: "I know of no such government."

Litvinov's claim to remain at Victoria Street was dismissed with costs on the grounds that he had not come to court "with clean hands," having been apparently in breach of *Defence of the Realm Regulations* by making a statement to trade unions "likely to cause disaffection." He was compelled to work from home again.

He was now subjected to a new *Defence of the Realm Act* regulation – in force from March 5 – prohibiting an alien from addressing meetings and engaging in propaganda.

In mid-March *The Call* commented tolerantly on the demonisation of Litvinov and socialism: "There has always existed a curious notion among our bourgeoisie that socialism, and all other 'subversive' ideas are foreign importations, principally advocated in this country by uncouth individuals in wide-awake hats and mysterious trousers."

The government continued to pursue the cancellation of exemptions from conscription in the *Manpower* ("Manslaughter") Bill, though its intentions had been confronted by a substantial vote of the engineers' union against the "comb-out," and now by a smaller majority vote against by the miners.

On March 8 the *Daily Mirror* guessed where the German army would strike on the Western Front. It would be "at the extreme British right-wing, with a view to breaking its contact with the French left-wing."

The *Mirror* routinely recorded that day the latest *Roll of Honour* casualty list, which included 17 officers and 326 NCOs and men dead, and many more wounded and missing.

The much larger casualties necessarily resulting from another offensive were not the subject of mainstream press consideration.

If the German armies, strengthened by the end of the war in the east, were to win in the west, they needed to do so before the mass of US forces arrived.

The offensive began on the 21st, following a massive artillery bombardment, and, as the *Mirror* had predicted, just above the join with the French army, and on a 50-mile front.

By the 28th, to Field Marshal Haig's bewilderment, a 40-mile British retreat had taken place. Once again the generals underestimated enemy strength, reflected this time by putting far too many defending troops in the most forward trenches.

By evening on the 26th, a general noted that British casualties were up to 80,000.

A new "Manslaughter" Bill was now hastily planned to conscript not only men in Britain aged up to 50, but the men of Ireland too – while Irish nationalist feeling was growing ever stronger, inspired by the Easter Rising's bloody suppression almost two years before.

**W**E reproduce below an open letter signed by 100 prominent figures from across British society demanding justice for Marielle Franco, a prominent Brazilian progressive leader and rights advocate who was assassinated on March 14.

Across Brazil, and the world, people have been outraged at this tragedy and pledged their solidarity with those struggling for justice for Marielle.

In Britain we must do all we can to further raise awareness of this case and build the international pressure for justice and for an end to the deepening criminalisation of activists, government opponents and low-income people in Brazil.

“ON March 14, one of Brazil’s most courageous social leaders was brutally assassinated on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

Marielle Franco, a city councilwoman and human rights defender, was shot four times in the head by unknown assailants in a passing vehicle shortly after leaving a gathering of young black activists. Her driver, Anderson Pedro Gomes, was also killed.

Long before being elected to Rio’s city council in 2016, Franco was widely known as a tireless and fearless advocate for the rights of Afro-Brazilians, LGBT people, women and low-income communities.

A gay black woman – born and raised in one of Rio’s poorest neighbourhoods – she campaigned relentlessly against spiralling police violence in the city’s favelas.

Franco’s activism earned her many powerful enemies.

She vehemently challenged the impunity surrounding extrajudicial killings of black youth by security forces and, two days before her death, had denounced the police’s role in the killing of a young black man named Matheus Melo.

She was a leading critic of the military intervention in Rio de Janeiro and was the head of a city commission tasked with monitoring the intervention.

We are deeply concerned and shocked by this commando-style killing of a woman who was a voice for the voiceless and a symbol of resistance to state-perpetrated violence, militarisation and anti-democratic forces.

Given that Marielle’s murder bears all the hallmarks of a targeted assassination, we call for the creation of an independent commission comprised of prominent and respected national and international human rights and legal experts and tasked with carrying out an independent investigation of the murder of Franco with the full co-operation of state judicial and police authorities.

Shortly before her death, Marielle asked: “How many

**NOT INTIMIDATED:** Tens of thousands of protesters demand justice for Marielle Franco and her driver Anderson Gomes murdered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on March 15 2018 and (below) Marielle Franco earlier this year



# We demand justice for Marielle Franco

others will have to die before this war will end?”

We call for justice for Franco, the daughter and the partner she leaves behind and for an end to the killings and criminalisation of activists, government opponents and low-income people in Brazil.”

Signed:

- Chris Williamson MP (Labour), President, Labour Friends of Progressive Latin America & No Coup in Brazil.
- Diane Abbot MP (Labour), Shadow Home Secretary
- Kate Osamor MP (Labour), Shadow International Development Secretary.
- Richard Burgon MP (Labour), Shadow Justice Secretary
- Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP (Labour)
- Baroness Shami Chakrabarti (Labour), Shadow Attorney General
- Baroness Helena Kennedy QC (Labour)
- Lord Hunt of Chesterton (Labour)
- Bill Kidd MSP (SNP)
- Christina McKelvie MSP (SNP)
- Alex Rowley MSP (Labour)
- John Finnie MSP (Scottish Green Party)
- Benjamin Zephaniah, poet
- Naomi Campbell, model & activist
- Brian Eno, musician & writer
- Tariq Ali, writer & playwright
- Linton Kwesi Johnson, poet
- Ken Loach, filmmaker
- Michael Mansfield QC
- Richard Gott, writer
- Ann Pettifor, economist
- Andy De La Tour, actor & playwright
- Johann Hari, writer
- Owen Jones, writer & commentator
- Maya Goodfellow, writer & journalist
- Joy Johnson, writer & Tribune columnist
- Ava Vidal, comedian & journalist
- Chardine Stone, founder, Black Girls Picnic
- Phyll Opoku-Gyimah, Executive



## MATT WILGRESS introduces an open letter by No Coup in Brazil on the murder of a leading rights campaigner

- Director, UK Black Pride
- Denis Fernando, Rainbow Coalition Against Racism
- Myriam Kane, Executive member, National Union of Students
- Zita Holbourne, National Vice-President, PCS, Artists Union England National Executive & National Chair of BARAC UK
- Martin Mayer, Sheffield TUC & former Labour Party NEC member
- Rachel Garnham, Labour Party NEC member
- Cllr Alice Perry, Labour Party NEC member & Islington Councillor
- Cllr Claudia Webbe, Labour Party NEC member, Labour Party & Islington Councillor
- Peter Willsman, Labour Party NEC member
- Cllr Peray Ahmet, National Policy Forum member, Labour Party & Haringey Councillor
- Marcus Barnett, International Officer, Young Labour

- Artin Giles, Chair, London Young Labour
- Huda Elmi, NCG Member, Momentum & BAME Labour activist
- Mark Serwotka, General Secretary, PCS
- Matt Wrack, General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union
- Ian Lawrence, General Secretary, NAPO
- Ronnie Draper, General Secretary, BFAWU
- Doug Nicholls, General Secretary, GFTU
- Tony Burke, Assistant General Secretary, Unite the Union
- Tommy Murphy, EC member, Unite the Union
- Simon Dubbins, Director of International, Unite the Union
- Annmarie Kilcline, Regional Secretary, Unite the Union East Midlands Region
- Jim Kelly, Chair, Unite the Union London & Eastern Region

- Christine Blower, International Secretary, National Education Union (NUT Section)
- Gawain Little, Joint Executive Council member, National Education Union (NUT section)
- Max Hyde, Past President (Personal capacity), NEU (NUT)
- Bernard Regan, Trustee, National Education Union (NUT section)
- Carl Maden CWU NEC
- Steve Jones, National & Postal Executive, CWU
- Andy Bain, Past President, TSSA
- Samuel Tarry, TSSA, National Political Officer
- Terry Hoad, Past President, UCU
- Moz Greenshields, Trades Unions Councils JCC (personal capacity), TUC
- Barbara White, Executive Committee member, Musicians Union
- Karen Mitchell, Head of Legal Department, RMT
- Phil McGarry, RMT Scotland
- John Haylett, political editor, Morning Star
- Bob Oram, Chair, People’s Press Printing Society
- Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of London
- Maggie Bowden, General Secretary, Liberation (formerly the Movement for colonial freedom)

- Peter Purton, historian & former TUC LGBT Officer
- Jane Shallice, writer & activist
- Lindsey German, Convenor, Stop the War Coalition
- Kate Hudson, General Secretary, CND
- Pablo Navarrete, Alborada films
- Sandra Satterlee, journalist
- Georgia Platman, former Telesur English journalist
- Susanna Mitchell, Friends of Le Monde Diplomatique
- Liz Davies, barrister & Vice-President Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers (personal capacity)
- Bruce Kent, peace campaigner
- Murad Qureshi, Chair, Stop the War Coalition & former GLA member
- Stephanie Kennedy, journalist
- Callum Simpson, Movimientos
- Sue Branford, Latin America Bureau
- Rob Miller, Director, Cuba Solidarity Campaign
- Luke Daniels, President, Caribbean Labour Solidarity
- Louise Richards, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign Action Group
- Susan Grey, Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
- Professor Robert Blackburn, Associate Dean Research, Kingston University
- Dr Julia Buxton, Central European University / Swansea University
- Professor Mike Cole, University of East London
- Dr Francisco Dominguez, Head, Brazilian & Latin American Studies, Middlesex University
- Professor John Gledhill, University of Manchester
- Professor Peter Hallward, Professor of Philosophy, Kingston University
- Dr Conrad James, Department of Modern Languages, Birmingham University
- Dr Hazel Marsh, Lecturer in Latin American Studies, University of East Anglia
- Dr David Raby, former Senior Fellow in Latin American Studies, University of Liverpool
- Dr Sami Ramidani, academic
- Professor Jonathan Rosenhead, London School of Economics
- Professor Michael Wayne, Brunel University
- Matt Wilgress, editor, No Coup in Brazil
- Colin Burgon, Honorary President, Labour Friends of Progressive Latin America

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THEATRE REVIEW

# Misty's roots to virus of racism

Misty  
Bush Theatre, London  
★★★★★

THERE are two burning questions at the heart of Arinze Kene's extraordinary play *Misty* – what is a “black” play and what does it mean to write one?

Kene, who also performs in this visceral production, tells the story of a black man who gets into a fight with a drunk white male passenger on a London bus and his anger and sense of ostracism informs his narrative about institutional, structural violence.

But his friends Raymond and Donna chastise him for writing the kind of work that “white

audiences are interested in seeing about black people,” a play about “black trauma.”

At the core of the story is the representation of the capital as a living body, with the boroughs organs, the roads capillaries and the people blood cells and, at the opening, Kene (pictured) draws the audience into an image that momentarily appears beautiful.

Yet that's only fleeting. Not all people are blood cells and the black man is a “virus.”

The image, shocking and powerful, is an indictment of London's race politics. Just as the capital lives and breathes, so does Kene's central image and, as the story progresses, there's a radical shift. Suddenly white people

become the virus, with gentrification ripping communities from neighbourhoods and homes and destroying small businesses.

While *Misty* is a play about race politics and representing communities, it is also one about telling stories and it asks how they can be told within structures that have already decided which narratives you're allowed to construct.

Kene's performance and his storytelling are superb, with his energy, control and power hypnotic. The witty, sharp and clever script has a beautiful sense of language, especially in its use of rhythm and sound and, in moments where prose alone isn't enough, it explodes into song and rap, adding an

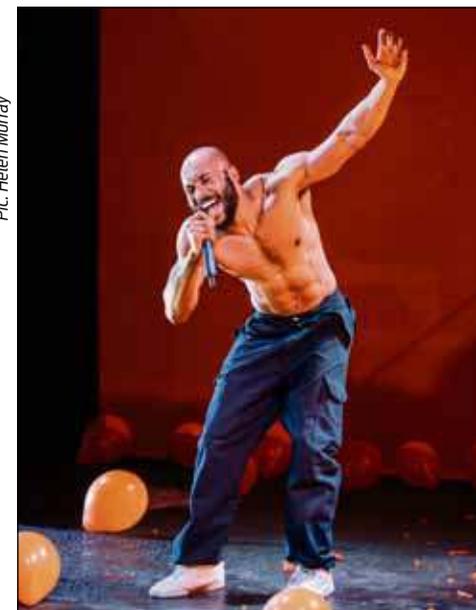
extraordinary texture.

The emotion and anxiety Kene fosters with the simple prop of an orange balloon creates a powerful theatrical statement and his performance is brilliantly supported by Shiloh Coke, Adrian McLeod and Mya Napoleon (who alternates with Rene Powell). Jackie Shemesh's lighting design, especially its play with shadow, is atmospheric and Rajha Shakiry's set is striking.

The urgent politics of *Misty*, coupled with its breathtaking theatricality and grasp of storytelling, make this an unmissable experience.

Runs until April 21, box office: [bushtheatre.co.uk](http://bushtheatre.co.uk)

KATHERINE M GRAHAM



Pic: Helen Murray

INTERVIEW

# 'This is as balanced a story as you can find'

Playwright **ISMAEL KHALIDI** talks to Joe Gill about how his theatre adaptation of the famous Palestinian novella *Returning to Haifa* was axed in New York, then found a home in London

**B**EFORE his assassination in Beirut in 1972 by the Israeli secret service Mossad, Ghassan Kanafani was one of the greatest Palestinian writers and political activists of his generation. His novella *Returning to Haifa* was highly influential in the aftermath of the 1967 war, when Israel seized east Jerusalem and the West Bank, which it holds to this day.

Kanafani got the inspiration for the book when his cousin and her husband crossed into Palestine after the June war in 1967. There they were told stories about how during the Zionist attacks on Palestinian cities and villages, many families forced to leave their homes got separated during the Nakbah (“catastrophe”) in 1948 during a war in which 700,000 fled or were expelled from their homes.

When Ghassan's cousin returned to Beirut she told the writer about a young couple who lost their young son. Out of this the novella emerged and it was recently adapted for the theatre by award-winning US playwright Naomi Wallace and co-writer Ismael Khalidi, himself born in Beirut in the bloody year of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

On stage at London's Finborough theatre, it is a moving and emotionally devastating story of separation and loss. In it, Said and Safiyya return to their home in Haifa two decades after they fled in 1948. It's now occupied by a Polish woman who survived Auschwitz and her son, who it turns out is the baby boy they left behind in the Nakbah.

For Khalidi, now based in Chile, the connection to the novella which he helped adapt for stage was personal. His father knew the writer in Beirut in the late 60s and early



1970s before he was killed. “As a Palestinian you would be hard-pressed to find many Palestinian who don't know who Kanafani is,” he told me.

*Returning to Haifa* had been adapted into Hebrew for a production in Israel in 2011. Then the Israeli writer Boaz Gaon, without permission, translated his own version of the work into English and had it produced in the US. “He changed a lot of the book, much to the displeasure of the Kanafani family,” says Khalidi.

“That was one of the reasons we wanted to step in and adapt it because there had been this really problematic adaptation and we felt that our aesthetic and our politics would serve Kanafani's work well.”

*Returning to Haifa* almost didn't make it to the stage on this occasion after its initial co-funders – New York's Public Theater – came under pressure and dropped the project last year.

Nothing appeared wrong after the initial read-through of the script. “They were incredibly happy with it according to them,” Khalidi recalls. “We did two readings in New York and Dublin in January 2015. “And then there was this long,

slightly suspicious period of silence in which we were not getting any kind of further information about the process.”

Finally, US producer Oskar Eustis said he could not produce it because of political pressure from his own board. “Basically they would not let him produce it in New York.”

The Public Theater is a powerful mainstream theatre, producing huge and progressive-leaning works like

*Hamilton*, the smash musical about the US founding father with a black cast and rap score, now wowing London's West End.

With the theatre axing the play, Khalidi and Wallace were in danger of losing the rights to the piece. “One of the reasons it was important for us to get a production and keep the exclusive rights is there are many people at all times who want to adapt Kanafani,” he explains.

At the eleventh hour director Caitlin McLeod, who had read

the play and wanted to do it, stepped in with independent producer Lynn McConway. The Finborough theatre in London agreed to co-present it.

Although the play looks at events from half a century ago, Khalidi insists that its message is essential today. “We are right now just past a century of Balfour, 70 years since the Nakbah, and partition. Those are all things we have to keep track off.”

“One of the most destructive patterns and strategies in the West when you are talking about the Zionist discourse and version of what's happening in Palestine, is

that we can be selective about what we include and what we don't. We can start with a rocket being fired from Gaza.

“It's simple chronology and political science, it's not something that started yesterday nor is it an ancient Biblical thing. It's related directly to British imperialism, American hegemony and Zionist settler colonialism.”

Khalidi is hopeful after the critical and commercial success of the London run that *Returning to Haifa* will find its way to other theatres – and back to the US.

“The big irony about the censorship of this play in particular is that Kanafani was so ahead of his time – it is probably a much more empathetic portrayal of an Israeli Jewish Holocaust survivor than you will find in any mainstream portrayal of a Palestinian, in terms of understanding.

“For all the talk of balance, which is usually a euphemism for excluding the Palestinian story, this is as balanced a story as you can find.”



Pic: Scott Rylander

## WEATHER OUTLOOK



### TODAY

Rain and hill snow will persist in northern Scotland, but there will be clear spells and showers elsewhere. Further south, a band of rain may turn to wet snow in some places.

### NEXT FEW DAYS

Often cloudy over the next few days with showers or longer spells of rain and a risk of snow at times, mainly on high ground in the north. Feeling fairly cold.

## CONTACT US

### GENERAL ENQUIRIES

**William Rust House**  
52 Beachy Road,  
London E3 2NS  
enquiries@peoples-press.com  
(020) 8510-0815  
(Mon-Fri 10am-5pm)

### CIRCULATION

**Bernadette Keaveney**  
circulation@peoples-press.com

### CAMPAIGNS

**Calvin Tucker**  
campaigns@peoples-press.com

### ADVERTISING

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## Fighting Fund

**YOU'VE RAISED: £14,723**      **WE NEED: £3,277**



3 days left

WE are holding our breath over here at Rust Towers because there are only three more days left to reach our fighting fund total and it's going to be a tight one.

But we have faith that readers will continue to dig deep. And just as every other day this month, you have done us proud. Yesterday's total came to a respectable £290.

The largest donation that we received was a tasty £100 that came with a message – we do love to read your dedications or personal messages – this one read: "Morning Star support for Corbyn, for socialism and against anti-semitism." Thank you comrade, we're glad you appreciate our coverage of the latest attempts to splinter the Labour Party.

It always makes us smile to see how far and wide donations come in from: thank you to the friend in Stockport who sent over a generous £50, three cheers to the mate in Warwickshire who donated £10 and a warm handshake goes to the comrade from Bedale in Yorkshire who also pledged £10 to your paper. Two of our brilliant "recrurers" let us know they

hail from Bromyard in Herefordshire and Bristol. Collectively, the team of recurring donors raised a mighty £51.

Yes, William Rust House is located in east London but there is no southern bias here, your paper is exactly that, reporting on the stories that affect people across the world.

Remember, there's only three days left to reach that total!

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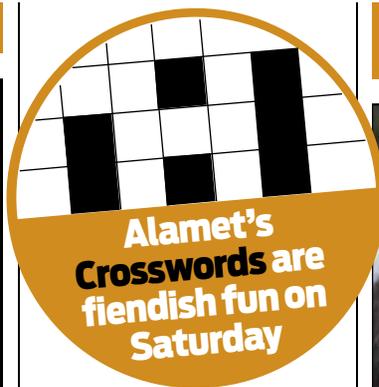
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## DAILY SUDOKU

(challenging)

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

Solution tomorrow...



Yesterday's sudoku

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

## TV preview

with Ann Douglas



**SHARED GRIEF:** Bereaved relatives outside the national memorial service for Grenfell's victims in December

## Stories from the hell that was Grenfell – how some escaped and others died

THE state of Britain's social housing is the subject of a new season of programmes starting on Channel 5 tonight.

It begins with **Grenfell Tower: Minute By Minute** (9pm), which tells the story of some of those caught up in the disaster.

Survivors describe their terrifying experiences and tell of the snap decisions that enabled them to escape the inferno, while memories of those who could not get out are recalled by their friends and family members, some of whom had agonising phone conversations with their trapped loved ones.

The season continues with **Social Housing, Social Cleansing** (10pm), which looks at the bigger picture – the neglect, demolition and regeneration of council estates in the past 30 years.

With regeneration having all too often become a cover for social cleansing, we hear from council tenants battling to save their home from demolition by private developers aided and abetted by the local authority.

Over on the wireless, Clive Myrie begins **Memphis and Martin Luther King – 'They Wouldn't Treat Me Like a Man'** (10pm Radio 2), a four-part series about the events surrounding the legendary civil rights leader's 1968 assassination in the Tennessee city.

Tonight's programme hears about the local sanitation workers' strike that Dr King was in Memphis to support, with the strikers and their families providing graphic accounts of the brutal racism then prevalent in the southern US.

Others involved in the civil rights struggle also have their say, including a teacher who was arrested on a daily basis for trying to break the colour bar in Memphis restaurants, and a pastor and local councillor who was almost beaten to death by police on a march in solidarity with the sanitation workers.

Such stories are interspersed with classic soul from the Memphis-based Stax record label, where the musicians and staff, including Mavis Staples, Steve Cropper, Booker T Jones and chief executive Al Bell lent support to the struggle.

Sticking with the '60s, **Jimi: All Is by My Side** (11.45pm BBC1) is a biopic about the late Jimi Hendrix and his emergence as one of the greatest guitar heroes of all time.

## QUIZMASTER

with William Sitwell



**MONKEYING ABOUT:** A male uakari

### TODAY'S QUESTIONS

1. What is the title of a book by Terry Eagleton about Karl Marx?
2. An apimaniac is a person who owns a lot of what?
3. Which late comedian said: "You can't beat a bit of Bully"?

### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

1. What sort of mammals are uakaris? **Monkeys, of South America**
2. True or false: the two largest islands in the Mediterranean both belong to the same

country. **True: the islands are Sardinia and Sicily, the country is Italy**

3. A rafter is a group of which domesticated birds? **Turkeys**

SEMITISM ROW

# No more apologies for toxic racism allegations

THE anti-Corbyn lobby within and without Labour is intent on smearing Jeremy with the paint of anti-semitism.

A lifelong campaigner against all forms of discrimination, including, along with Ken Livingstone, many attacks on the former socialist states for abuses of power, is now, suddenly, anti-Jewish – despite his history of long association with non-zionist Jewish activists and campaigners in various revolutionary and left reformist parties.

I want with all my heart to will Jeremy and all genuine socialists in the ranks of the 600,000 rank-and-file members and Labour's tens of thousands of young members to refute these mendacious and toxic allegations initially over a painting that Jeremy paid only a glancing look at during, maybe, a busy schedule.

There should be no more apologies for being human and



DEMO: Pro-Corbyn supporters rally against charges of anti-semitism in the Labour Party

having no evil intent. No more backing down. No more ostensible prevarication for genuine slips of tongue or consciousness when no offence was intended.

Or for genuinely held beliefs against an apartheid state, which Israel is, marginalising

millions in their human and civil rights who live within the same land that the zionists appropriated via the violence and fear of the Irgun Zvaei Leumi and the Stern gang initially and the many subsequent territorial wars that resulted in

the appropriation of swathes of land and the expulsion of many hundreds of thousands of people from their farms and businesses to live in the Bantustan of the Gaza Strip.

WJ BRUNT

Manchester

CUSTOMS UNION

## Workers' rights rely on strong trade unions

JOHN FOSTER confuses the wish for the deed in his article (M Star March 2) on Jeremy Corbyn's position on negotiating "a" customs union with the European Union.

Does he believe that Prime Minister May does not also understand the implications relating to varieties of customs unions and the single market set out in his piece?

Of course she does; it is the EU which is trying to put off a customs arrangement hoping delay will lead to the UK reversing the Brexit decision and they would have done the same, and possibly will, with Jeremy Corbyn.

Most of our trade unions claim to believe the EU is a source of progressive rights and trade union freedoms

and now John Foster seems to as well. Workers' rights and freedoms depend on the will and strength of trade union members not on rights granted by the super-capitalist EU.

Regrettably, the British trade union movement disarmed itself when it had no wish for a real fight with Thatcherism and was willingly seduced by Jacques Delors at the TUC in 1988.

Now, I get the impression that John's piece is a prelude to the Communist Party's principled opposition to the EU being modified to give support for a compromising accommodation between a future Labour government and the EU. We shall see.

BRYN ROWLANDS  
Malmesbury

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52 Beachy Rd, London E3 2NS  
or email [letters@peoples-press.com](mailto:letters@peoples-press.com)

ZIONISM

## Anti-semitism is not limited to Labour but in all parties

IF JEREMY CORBYN is guilty of anything it is not standing up to the zionists.

There is no more anti-semitism in the Labour Party than there is in any other party, or generally in society; Islamophobia is more prevalent and more overt.

The Israeli regime and their mouthpieces in Britain are upping their game because the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign is not going away, in fact support for it is growing.

Their attempts to persuade people that being critical of Israel and being anti-zionist is the same as being anti-semitic is not succeeding – not only is it not the same, it is actually the opposite.

Zionism as a political ideology,

racist and reactionary, must be opposed at every opportunity.

I'm not the first person to explain this, but the more the zionists target Corbyn, the Labour Party and the pro-Palestinian movement, the more vocal the Palestine and BDS campaign must become.

LINDA CLAIR  
Rochdale



LABOUR PARTY

## Mandatory election for incumbents

MANDATORY reselection? No thanks! Don't get me wrong; there are some MPs I would like to see selected again as Labour candidates – but some not.

Each time a statutory election (parliamentary or local) is called, local Labour Party members should elect their candidate(s) through an

open and democratic process.

If incumbents wish to stand again, they should be obliged to seek a fresh mandate, as one of a panel of candidates.

I prefer the term "mandatory election."

TONY BRISCOE  
South Ockendon

MURAL

## Context is key with Mear One painting

I LEARNT of the Mear One mural via local London BBC and ITV news in 2012. It was presented from the point of view that a piece of art was going to be painted over, at the request of the local authority.

The reporting stoked local interest and viewers were informed they had limited time to view this mural. The jury was out, according to the news, regarding the interpretation of this painting. It was, in that political climate, presented as a subjective piece with multi-

ple meanings rather than being "agreed upon" anti-semitic.

I worked with 16-19 year olds at the time and this piece raised a good level of discussion. There was a resonance with "feeling controlled," we had just hosted the Olympics and there was a real sense of being excluded, university fees had recently been imposed and their Education Maintenance Allowance scrapped.

The Jeremy Corbyn revolution that gives people a voice and a sense of empowerment

via involvement in their communities hadn't yet begun. The essence of previous struggles was too distant for this age group. I remember reflecting on how disempowered some of them felt. For them, the mural was a rare visible expression that aimed to ask political questions.

The students were, as you would expect, from diverse backgrounds.

Their views were not intolerant of, or specific to, any race or religion, we would have all challenged that view if it arose.

For them it was a class issue.

Context is an interesting thing, I wonder what those now adults would make of the current contextualisation of this issue.

I am also curious about what the then Mayor of London, Boris Johnson's response to this mural was in 2012. And Yvette Cooper's, and so many others that now condemn it. In the political environment of 2012, their revulsion to it didn't permeate out.

TINA JESS

London E15

GRAHAM STEVENSON explores the Star's online archives

## 80 YEARS AGO TODAY...

### Undercover activities of London nazis arouse deep suspicion

"Startling disclosures" were revealed on the front page of the Daily Worker of March 28 1938 about nazi activities in London. This involved a connection between "German money and certain activities of prominent members of the British Union of Fascists."

Searching questions were to be asked in the House of Commons. At the request of backbencher Winston Churchill the Home Office had already appointed extra plain-clothes guards at the London home of Sir Robert Vansittart, a key diplomatic official.

An open murder threat against him had been issued in General Goering's newspaper, the National Zeitung. It

was now being asked why nothing had been done to protect all those at risk against the workings of the nazi "Brown Net," undercover supporters of fascism.

In the Belgian Parliament, Socialist MP Louis Pierard had read a letter from a British solicitor to a businessman in Brussels, which showed that "German industrialists in close touch with Dr Goebbels" had put up £110,000 in Britain for a company, which was to finance "anti-communist and anti-left" propaganda in Belgium. The key was

for "the cover of a respectable looking British board," though several of these directors and staff were closely linked to the Mosley Fascists.

Upon further investigation, the Daily Worker had discovered that one such director, Dr Arthur Tester, was an early supporter of the Mosley Fascists. The board members were in fact linked with a number of companies, all with curiously large capital.

The Daily Worker's political correspondent concludes that "the demand for an inquiry is easily intelligible."



You can read editions of the **Daily Worker** (1930-45) and **Morning Star** (2000-today), online at [mstar.link/DWMSarchive](http://mstar.link/DWMSarchive)  
Ten days' access costs just **£5.99** and a year is **£72**



**Kadeem Simmonds**

Morning Star Sports Editor

# It's now or never for United to join the women's game

**T**HERE'S just no pleasing some people. That's how Manchester United must feel at the moment.

After months, years even, of football fans demanding they relaunch their women's side, they did.

And some still found time to complain.

The Football Association has set up a system where a women's side can apply to be in a division as opposed to working their way up the leagues.

It happened a few years ago when Manchester City made a successful bid to join the newly formed Women's Super League (WSL).

Doncaster Rovers Belles were harshly relegated to the Women's Super League Two to make way for City.

Though they have gone on to become one of England's most dominant sides, there was uproar that Belles were booted out of the top division.

Fast forward to 2018 and United potentially joining the new Women's Championship has bent people's noses out of shape.

Ignoring the fact that many have spent the last few years begging the Red Devils to challenge City and Chelsea for the WSL title, now they are on the path to doing it people want them to start out at the very bottom.

There isn't anything wrong with that. This time last week I was licking my lips at the prospect of FC United of Manchester taking on United in North West Women's Regional League Division One South.

But United aren't breaking any rules by starting one division below the top-flight.

And yes, it will be a massive shame that another team will miss out. But Lewes FC, a team that could miss out on playing WSL football next season because of United, are happy a new side has joined the game.

Perhaps they feel that the quality of players will filter down and many could end up at Lewes. In that situation everyone wins.

However, for every Lewes there will be a club that are furious with United jumping the queue. Though you can't blame the red side of Manchester for that.

The finger should be pointed at the FA for creating this system. And what about some of

No, it's not fair for a Manchester United women's team to jump ahead, but think what a world-renowned team like this will do for the women's game



**UNITED:** Fans gather outside Manchester United's Theatre of Dreams and (below) Manchester City Women's Jane Ross celebrates scoring

the newer women's sides, the ones that have been around for two decades applying for a place in the Championship ahead of some of the older clubs like Sheffield?

There has been little to no backlash against them.

While there is a minority that want the FA to reject their application, we all know that isn't going to happen and United playing in the Championship next season is a mere formality.

It's now or never for United to join the women's game. And many feel that part of the reason they are choosing to come in now is because they are starting so high up.

Those in charge at the Manchester club won't want to take on Leyton Orient and Norwich in the Premier Division.

The top players around the globe won't want to sign for a club that are eight promotions away from the WSL.

United will feel entitled to be sitting at the top table and may even feel disrespected that a club of their stature is being forced to battle it out for promotion – especially when the neighbours down the road didn't have to go through this.

But regardless of all that, United eventually saw sense and the women's game will



reap the rewards.

There's no denying that all eyes will be on the development of this team, even fans of the men's side will be intrigued as to what is going on and it will hopefully bring more eyes to the club.

Plus there will be a massive sense of what could have been. Imagine promising goalkeeper Emily Ramsey staying at United and not having had to leave for Liverpool.

What if Lianne Sanderson

got her dream move and played for the club she has supported since she was a child?

Manchester City's Izzy Christiansen would be wearing red instead of blue had there had been an adult side.

There are too many scenarios to go through individually but had United not disbanded their women's side in 2005, there is little doubt they would have built an extremely strong side challenging for the WSL and potentially Champions League.

This is why starting in the Championship is best for them. It gives the club a chance to find their feet and gel in a lower division.

There would be less need to open a blank cheque book and buy a squad capable of competing in the WSL side. More opportunities will hopefully be given to the players coming through the academy.

One thing I hope the United women's team is able to do is bring in their own sponsors.

Liverpool have done it with Avon and, given the amount of companies that want to be involved with the Manchester side, Ed Woodward must negotiate separate deals for the new club.

It would be the easiest way to make the club self-sustainable and show other clubs that it is doable. Not to mention the last thing United will want is the women's side stopping the men from spending £200 million per season on more mercenaries so the sooner they bring in their own money the better.

I for one am looking forward to what United do over the next few years. The first Manchester derby is going to be an amazing occasion and if the FA can work out a way where both the men's and women's derbies are on the same day, that is going to be a must-watch day of football.

**W**ho knows, United joining may force the BBC and other television companies to invest more in the women's game.

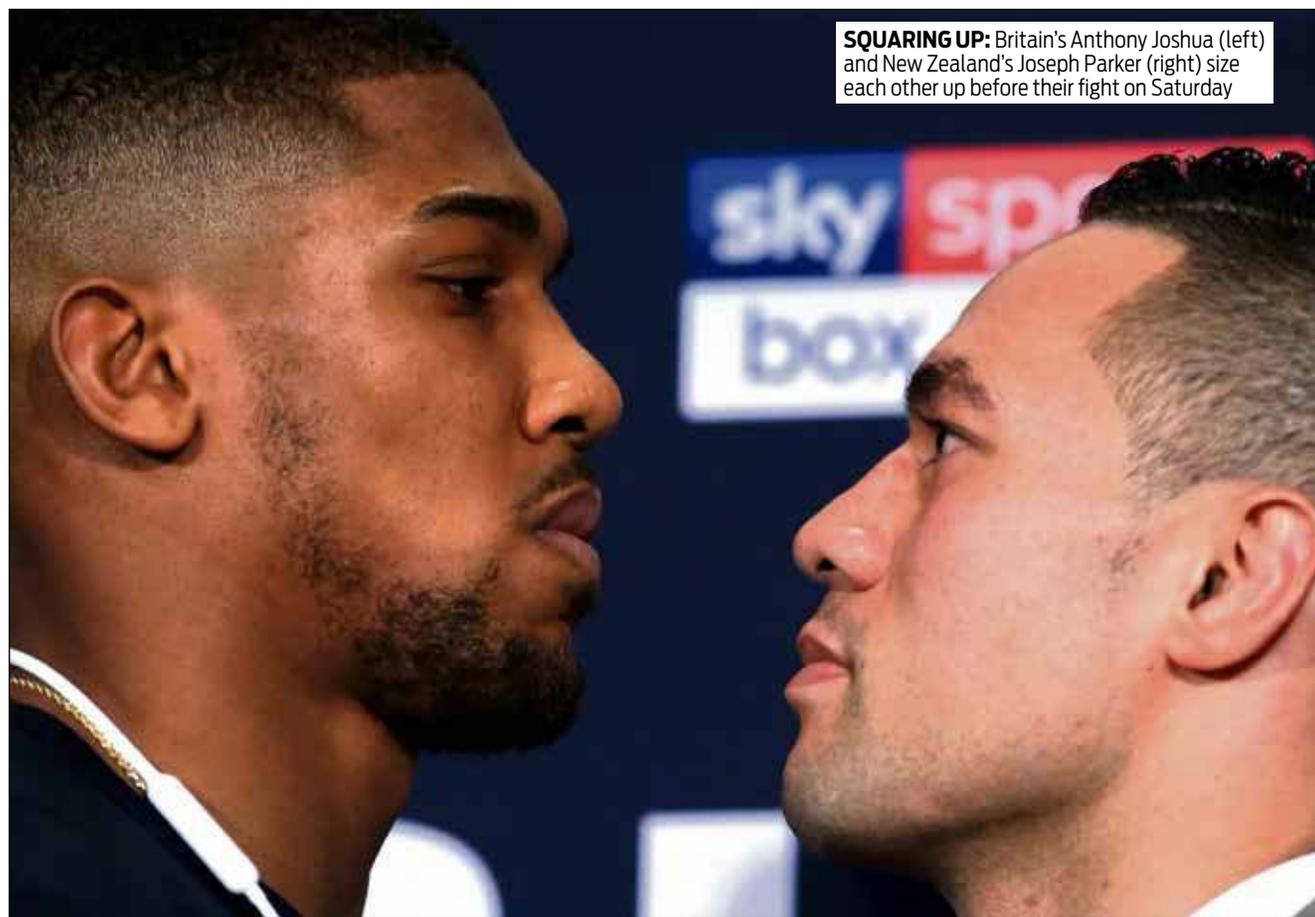
They will certainly be more interested and while I want the WSL show to stay on free to air TV, Sky Sports may want a piece of action, especially when they can show Manchester United v Manchester City on the same day in two different competitions.

A bidding war for the right to show women's football is the investment the game needs, as long as the money is given straight back to the teams and grassroots movement.

Last weekend, despite there being no live Premier League games, Birmingham v Liverpool in the WSL was only shown on Facebook live. The FA cup games weren't broadcast live.

That would have been the perfect opportunity to get the women's game on TV and attract bigger audiences.

Once United take a seat at the table, this could all change. Last week's announcement has the chance to revolutionise the WSL and wider women's game, such is the drawing power of Manchester United Football Club.



**SQUARING UP:** Britain's Anthony Joshua (left) and New Zealand's Joseph Parker (right) size each other up before their fight on Saturday

■ MEN'S FOOTBALL

# UEFA SCRAPS 'CUP-TIE' RULE AND ALLOWS AN EXTRA SUB

by Our Sports Desk

TEAMS in Uefa's club competitions next season will be able to make a fourth substitute in extra time and use new signings who have already played in the tournament for their former sides.

These changes were among several announced by European football's governing body yesterday and they follow decisions made by Uefa's executive committee in February and the game's law-making body, the International Football Association Board, earlier this month.

From next season, clubs that reach the Super Cup and the

finals of the Champions League and Europa League will be able to have 12 substitutes on the bench, up from the usual seven.

In a statement, Uefa said this will give "coaches more flexibility regarding substitutes, and facilitate their squad management for the most important fixture of the season."

A fourth substitute in extra time has already been trialled by Uefa in age-group tournaments and is allowed in this season's FA Cup.

The decision to let clubs register three new players "without any restrictions" after the group stages, however, may be more controversial, as it effectively ends the idea of being "cup-tied."

For example, if the rule was in place this year, Philippe Coutinho would be able to play for Barcelona in the Champions League, despite already featuring for Liverpool.

But Uefa believes it is simply bringing its rules into line with what happens in domestic leagues across Europe.

The governing body also announced new kick-off times.

Champions League play-offs, group-stage games and knockout matches will now kick off at 8pm, but in the group stages, two of the games on Tuesday and Wednesday will start at 5.55pm, apart from on the

last match day, which will be played simultaneously.

Europa League games will be split between these two kick-off times until the quarter-finals when they will all start at 8pm. The Super Cup will also kick off at that time.

These split kick-offs may cause headaches for domestic fixture schedules, as nobody will want to schedule a game against televised European games. Two years ago, UEFA was annoyed when Manchester United's FA Cup replay at West Ham was played at the same time as a Champions League quarter-final, and Barcelona have played a league game in the earlier slot this season.

■ WOMEN'S BOXING

# Whiteside poised to seize the day

by Our Sports Desk

LISA WHITESIDE is determined to seize her overdue chance to shine in the Gold Coast sun next month.

She may sigh at the mere mention of her former fly-weight rival and double Olympic champion Nicola Adams, but it is a fact that the 32-year-old's aspirations were for so long dependent on Adams' own boxing destiny.

Whiteside had to grab her rare opportunities to underline her status as a true global contender, most notably in the 2014 World Championships in Jeju City, South Korea, where she stepped in at 51kg after Adams withdrew with a shoulder injury and won the silver medal.

But a serious head injury suffered in a freak accident away from the sport in 2015 left her unable to capitalise on Adams' decision to go professional, and left many doubting whether the Preston fighter's time would come.

Whiteside said: "After going through not getting selected for certain tournaments and then my head injury, it's great to be back and going to such a big event."

"Back then there were probably people who didn't think I would box again. I struggled with my balance and all sorts, but I'm so self-driven and ambitious that retirement was never an option."

"I know I'm capable of going out there and getting that gold medal. I didn't want to be sat at home thinking, 'Why am I not going to the Commonwealth Games?' I didn't want to have that regret."

Whiteside, a serving police officer, also has the European Championships to follow shortly after Gold Coast, and has not ruled out one day pursuing the likes of Adams in the professional ranks.

"I've got options in the future, but I'm just taking it step by step at the moment and that next step is the Commonwealth Games," added Whiteside.

■ WOMEN'S TENNIS

# Williams sees off Konta at Miami in fourth round

JOHANNA KONTA'S defence of her Miami Open title ended on Monday as US veteran Venus Williams beat the British number one 5-7 6-1 6-2 in their fourth-round match in Key Biscayne.

The result will see 11th seed Konta drop from 14th in the world rankings to outside the top 20.

Konta won last year's Miami Open, beating Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki 6-4 6-3 and becoming the first British woman to take the title.

Williams, making her

19th appearance at the tournament and reaching the quarter-finals for a 13th time, enjoyed the vocal home support as she produced an outstanding display after coming off second best in a wobbly opening set.

The 37-year-old will face fellow American Danielle Collins in the last eight.

Collins triumphed 3-6 6-4 6-2 against Puerto Rico's Monica Puig, who had seen off world number two Wozniacki at the weekend.

■ RUGBY LEAGUE

# Rick Stone sacked after poor start to the season

by Our Sports Desk

HUDDERSFIELD'S Rick Stone has become the first Super League coaching casualty of the season.

The 51-year-old Australian has been sacked by the Giants just two months into the season with the team next to bottom of the table after winning only two of their

opening seven matches.

Stone succeeded Paul Anderson at the John Smith's Stadium in the summer of 2016 and his contract was up at the end of this season.

Assistant coach Chris Thorman has been placed in temporary charge ahead of Friday's home game against champions Leeds.

Huddersfield managing director Richard Thewlis said:

"It is a very difficult call for any club to make in respect of the head coach but the board felt that a change was needed and that the change should be made sooner rather than later with much of the season still to run."

Stone was unable to prevent Huddersfield finishing in the bottom four in 2016 but guided them to safety via the Super 8s Qualifiers and last season

steered them to a top-eight finish.

Thewlis added: "Rick Stone is an outstanding man, character and coach but the results for us simply haven't worked out as anyone would have wished for."

"Everyone here will be upset to see Rick leave as he is a very popular man but with this decision now made we focus on sup-

porting Chris Thorman in the role with the recognition that we will be inundated with offers of names wanting to come in – all of which we will evaluate in the fullness of time.

"Chris understands this but he also understands that this is an opportunity for him to put himself forward too as he knows he is very highly thought of in our club."



MEN'S CRICKET

# VAUGHAN 'PRETTY SURE' AUSSIES TAMPERED WITH THE ASHES BALL

by Our Sports Desk

MICHAEL VAUGHAN says he is "pretty sure" Australia were tampering with the ball during this winter's 4-0 Ashes series win over England.

The former England captain's claim comes after Australia skipper Steve Smith admitted this weekend his side had tried to manipulate the ball during the third Test defeat to South Africa.

Smith insisted it was the first time time it had happened under his captaincy, but Vaughan believes it has been going on for "quite a while."

Vaughan told BBC Sport: "I can't believe that this hasn't happened before. I look at the amount of tape some of the fielders have worn, particularly during the Ashes series, mid-on, mid-off. [You] don't have to name names but they know who they are."

"I'm pretty sure that it was going on during the Ashes series."

"But it wasn't the reason why England lost 4-0. They still would have lost that series."

Former England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff is another cricketer to hit out at the scandal, insisting Australia have pushed gamesmanship beyond reasonable limits "for years and years."

"Australia attempted a lot of times to be 'poor us, we're fine, we don't cross the mark'," said Flintoff on his BBC podcast. "But lads to be honest, you've done it for years and years and years, and now you're getting found out."

Australia's prime minister

**CONCERNED:** Michael Vaughan (centre) chats with England's Joe Root (right) and Trevor Baylis (left) during day three of the Ashes Test match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in December



Malcolm Turnbull labelled the incident a "shocking affront" to the country, adding: "This cheating is... it is a disgrace. We all know that, it is a terrible disgrace."

"[Cricket Australia] now have to make sure that this great,

national game, this great international game that is synonymous with fair play, is once again a game that is played by champions, that everybody can look up to.

"We want to get to the point where we can all say once again,

not rhetorically but heartfelt and with sincerity, that cricket is a fair game, cricket is a game that is synonymous with a fair go and fair play, that is what has to happen."

As the Star went to press last night Cricket Australia's chief

executive James Sutherland announced a press conference in Johannesburg at 6pm to go ahead after meeting Cricket Australia's head of integrity Iain Roy to discuss possible sanctions against captain Steve Smith and Bancroft.

SPORT ON TV

- **BASEBALL:** MLB, Miami Marlins v Chicago Cubs — BT Sport/ESPN 5.30pm, Texas Rangers v Houston Astros — BT Sport/ESPN 8.30pm.
- **BASKETBALL:** NBA, San Antonio Spurs v Oklahoma City Thunder — BT Sport 2 1am (Fri); Golden State Warriors v Milwaukee Bucks — BT Sport 2 3.30am (Fri).
- **BASKETBALL:** NBA, Utah Jazz v Boston Celtics — BT Sport 2 2.30am.
- **CRICKET:** Second Test, New Zealand v England — Sky Sports Main Event 11pm.
- **DARTS:** Premier League from Belfast — Sky Sports Action 7pm, Sky Sports Main Event 9.45pm.
- **FOOTBALL:** Sky Bet League One, Blackburn v Bradford — Sky Sports Main Event 7.30pm.
- **GOLF:** PGA Tour, Houston Open — Sky Sports Main Event 1.30pm, Sky Sports Golf 1.30pm and 9pm; LPGA Tour, ANA Inspiration — Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Golf 5pm and 12am (Fri).
- **TENNIS:** WTA Tour, Miami Open — BT Sport 1 6pm and 12am (Thu); ATP Tour, Miami Open — Sky Sports Main Event 8pm and 2am (Thu).
- **TENNIS:** WTA Tour, Miami Open — BT Sport 1 6pm and 2am (Fri); ATP Tour, Miami Open — Sky Sports Action 12am (Fri).

TONIGHT'S FOOTBALL

- International**
- US.....Paraguay, 12.30am
  - Iceland.....Peru, 1am
  - Mexico.....Croatia, 3am

- Scottish Premiership**
- St Johnstone.....Hamilton Academical, 7.45pm

TODAY'S TIPS

Farrington's Doubles

- PADDY'S RUNNER**  
Warrick 16:55 (nap)
- CASPER KING**  
Wincantone 15:40

Houseman's Choice

- DREAM MALFUNCTION**  
Wolverhampton 16:00

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WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

# Phil Neville 'delighted to have Houghton and Nobbs back'



by Our Sports Desk

PHIL NEVILLE has been boosted by the return of Steph Houghton and Jordan Nobbs for England Women's forthcoming World Cup qualifiers against Wales and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Manchester City defender Houghton and Arsenal midfielder Nobbs missed the recent SheBelieves Cup campaign in the United States through injury but are back in the squad for next month's Group One matches.

England host Wales at Southampton's St Mary's Stadium on Friday April 6, before travelling to Zenica the following Tuesday.

Neville has also added Reading goalkeeper Mary Earps and Arsenal forward Beth Mead to his squad, who are now ranked second in the world behind the USA team who beat them 1-0 in the final game of the SheBelieves Cup.

England boss Neville said: "I am really pleased for the players that their hard work has been recognised in the new rankings."

"To get to second in the world is a wonderful achievement, but if we want to take the last — and biggest — step to become number one then we have to deliver in matches like the two we have coming up."

"Because of what's at stake,

they are more important than the SheBelieves and we will prepare accordingly."

"Wales will be my first competitive match in charge and it will be an incredible honour to walk out at a packed Premier League ground with this group of players."

"We are delighted to have

Steph and Jordan back, but we also want to keep giving opportunities to the next generation coming through."

Neville has also brought in Sunderland coach Melanie Copeland to assist him as Mo Marley is focusing on the Under-20 World Cup this summer.

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