

Scottish Left Review

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We celebrate the centenary of the Fire Brigades Union

Celebrating 100 years of the Fire Brigades Union

In October 1918, a small group of firefighters, disillusioned with poor treatment at the hands of those who oversaw their service, set up the 'Firemen's Trade Union'. The founding aim was 'a means to reorganise the conditions of their labours and thus bring more happiness into the lives of its members'. Soon renamed the 'Fire Brigades Union', the union built its membership across Britain, forging 100 years of supporting and protecting firefighters through the ethos defined in our motto, 'Unity is Strength'. FBU members in Scotland have fully played their part in building the FBU nationally, not least in providing key leaders for the union like its general secretary (Ken Cameron) and presidents (Enoch Humphries, Ruth Winters).



**The democratic and professional voice of
firefighters and other related workers across
Scotland and throughout the UK**

Executive Council Member for Scotland: Chris McGlone

Scottish Secretary: Denise Christie

Scottish Chair: Brian Cameron

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comment

100 years young

It is a pleasure and an honour for *Scottish Left Review* to play its small part in helping to celebrate the centenary of the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU). We are grateful for the cooperation and support of the FBU in Scotland and Britain in order that we could do this. There have been a host of commemorative events for the 2018 centenary, starting with the launch of a dedicated website (<https://www.fbu.org.uk/centenary>) and then followed by the release of a special centenary film called *The Firefighters' Story* (reviewed in this issue) and the publication of an official union history (reviewed in the next issue).

Scottish Left Review chose its September-October edition to celebrate the FBU centenary because of the centenary date falling on 1 October 2018 and the special memorial event at Southwark Cathedral taking place on 13 October to commemorate all those FBU members who have fallen in the line of duty. In the latter part of the year, the FBU will also publish a pictorial book to complement the other publications. In order to celebrate the centenary, we have articles

from the union's general secretary, Scottish regional secretary, executive member for Scotland, president, education officer and Palestinian support coordinator.

Behind the occasion of the celebrating the centenary, there are two vital components. The first is to pay tribute to the men and women of the fire and rescue – those that provide not just one of the vital emergency services but the one which is the most dangerous one to provide, with over 2,500 firefighters having died in the line of duty since modern record keeping (of such fatalities) began. But surely, one might say, that is a matter for celebrating and commemorating the heroes and heroines of the fire and rescue service itself. The answer is 'no', because firefighters and the FBU have been the primary people and organisation that have fought to defend and advance the quality and quantity of the provision of fire and rescue services as well as the safety and well-being of the men and women that provide those services. Moreover, the vast majority of staff in the fire and

rescue service – especially the frontline firefighters – are FBU members.

The second vital component is that the FBU, as simultaneously a trade union of, and the political voice for, firefighters, is rightly recognised as constituting one of the best organised sections of the working class. Although it has experience setbacks in recent years over pay, pensions and firefighter numbers, it has maintained a tight organisation with a high level of union density and high degree of membership commitment that is often envied by others in the union movement. Added to this is that the FBU has long been on the left of the union movement and has punched well above its weight especially in international solidarity work – see Jim Malone's article in this issue.

Public support for the fire and rescue service and the workers that provide these frontline services remains high. Most citizens believe that an essential component of a decent and civilised society is a proper fire and rescue service, where 'proper' means a not just publicly-owned, controlled and funded service but one that has national standards of service delivery which are of the highest order, is under the direction of dedicated local fire authorities (and not police commissioners or the like), and where building standards are robust and rigorously enforced through regular inspections by trained fire officers. But they also believe, because the most precious thing of all – human life – is at risk, that one fatality is one too many. As a consequence of this, they believe the fire and rescue service should be sufficiently well funded to allow for a service that never has to worry about not having enough resources to provide that level of service.

We know that these two core beliefs have clashed and continue to clash with government policy which is based upon their notion of risk assessments and matching 'supply' to 'demand'. As deaths from fires have overall fallen due to improvements in the domestic living

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environment (like less use of fires for heating, less smoking of cigarettes etc), this has provided governments with the arguments to defend their behaviour of cutting firefighter numbers, closing fire stations and reducing the number of fire engines. The result has been the increased length of call out times, putting lives at even greater risk. The policy of austerity since 2010 has but made this situation much, much graver. It is here that most citizens say the fire and rescue must have the funding to provide a high level of service for every locality and community without consideration of cost because a price cannot and should not be put on human lives.

We must give our support to the FBU in this battle to defend and advance the fire and rescue service because it is the most dedicated, specialist and largest body from the working class movement organising to defend the fire and rescue service. But we must also give our support to the FBU when it seeks to defend and advance its members terms and conditions of employment because we recognise the compensation for doing their jobs must take into account the dangerous and physically demanding nature of their work. That support must take the form of visiting picketlines, lobbying MPs and MSPs when the FBU is in dispute over various matters like shift lengths and pensions. But it must also take the form of political support when the FBU is not in open dispute. In all these matters, how we treat the fire and rescue service and firefighters themselves is a measure of whether we are a decent, civilised society or not.

Behind the issue of the fire and rescue service itself, there is something much greater and which concerns what collectivism in a progressive society is fundamentally all about. This is about not just why we need public services but why these services should be provided collectively and that is about sharing the risk (of fires, accidents, ill health, unemployment and the like). If citizens share this risk through collectively funding measures of prevention and cure, this is the most effective – in cost and other terms – way to do this. Of course, the taxes to do so should be based on ability to pay. Some would call this socialism.

Turning to the off theme articles, *Scottish Left Review* continues its examination of the SNP's Sustainable Growth Commission report. This time around we have critiques from the left which do not support independence as well as

on New Zealand as a possible model for following. That the New Zealand Labour government has just introduced a ban on wealthy non-New Zealanders buying property there indicates just how broken its housing market is for most of its citizens.

We hope this edition and the last will have fed into the SNP assemblies in Ayr, Aviemore and Edinburgh where the report was to be discussed. But it does not seem that the SNP – its leadership at least - wants a thorough discussion of the report because although non-SNP members can participate, these are just one-day events where the much of the time will be merely spent presenting the report – and not holding any events in the 'yes' cities of Dundee and Glasgow is deeply suspect. So, hardly, a recipe for getting as many of its 125,000 members involved or for creating a popular democracy. And then we are informed that it will not be debated at the annual conference in October (following on from the same situation with the delayed Spring conference in June this year) at the behest of the conference's Standing Order and Agenda Committee. This was even though motions were submitted to debate it. The earliest that a debate at SNP conference will take place on the report will be Spring 2019.

As is often said ... 'and in other news' ... It is troubling that it has taken Labour so long to get ahead of a weak and divided Tory party in the polls and, now that it has, that Labour's lead over the Tories is not also higher than it actually is. More recently, some polls put them both on 40%. To form a working majority government, Labour should consistently be at least some ten points above the Tories. The attacks on Labour for alleged anti-Semitism from the right (both inside and outside of Labour) have stung it badly. There is a new McCarthyism being born: 'Are you or have you ever been a critic of the Israeli state?' – which is being simultaneously used to attack the left in Labour (Corbyn, McDonnell etc) and shut down criticism of Zionism and the Israeli state. But so too has the Labour leadership's rather slow and lacklustre response, which starts off by conceding way too much (like Corbyn's article in the *Guardian* of 4 August 2018) and which merely encourages more attacks as well as knee jerk reactions (like suspending former Labour MP, Jim Sheridan) without establishing first whether there is a *prima facie* case to answer. On top of that, Labour is divided on Brexit in a way that prevents both its policy from being clearly

recognised in public and being able to bring down the May government when such opportunities arise.

The situation in Scotland is equally acute as the possibility of any Corbyn-led government relies heavily upon Labour doing significantly better in Scotland at the next Westminster election. At the moment, this does not seem likely, raising the issue of whether the SNP would enter into a coalition with Labour to keep the Tories from remaining in office. At Holyrood, Labour seems to have stalled a bit, needing to refocus on a small number of key areas to rebuild support for it under Richard Leonard. The SNP seems increasingly vulnerable over education, transport and health and yet Labour is not able to make much hay with that. It may not seem so immediately obvious in Scotland but plans do seem to be afoot by some to seek split Labour in an SDP mark 2 reboot. This could keep Labour in the wilderness, north and south of the border, for many years.

One last thing - the *Herald* (4 August 2018) reported the judge in the case of alleged discrimination against SNP councillor by his employer, a contractor for the Ministry of Defence said: '[Mr McEleny] was clear in his evidence that he does not believe in Scottish independence because it will necessarily lead to improved economic and social conditions for people living in Scotland. It is a fundamental belief in the right of Scotland to national sovereignty'. This was something of a startling admission because the reason why support for independence took off from its normal level of lacklustre support in the run up to the referendum in 2014 was precisely because many people saw independence as offering a way out of the neo-liberal nightmare of then Labour and Tory politics. Any subsequent referendum will not be won for independence if arguments about national self-determination are all that is on offer. It is the ends and not the means that must command attention. And that is a question to be posed sharply to all those tens of thousands of marchers on the 'All Under One Banner' demonstrations this year in Dundee, Dumfries, Glasgow, Inverness and Stirling. The numbers show that the independence movement can still mobilise significant numbers but it is less clear with these marchers what the balance is between the quest for social justice and the quest for national self-determination. We hope it must be heavily tilted to the former.

FBU at 100: courage, conflict and perseverance

Matt Wrack looks back on the past, analyses the present and examines the future

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) is relatively small compared to the big general unions but to have lasted a hundred years as an industry-specific organisation is some achievement, especially in light of the long history of union mergers. We have much in our past and our present that FBU activists and others can learn from.

Our centenary should be marked and celebrated but it is also a time to re-state and re-assert our case for the type of fire and rescue service (F&RS) we want to see. This role – of setting out a better way for our trade and our industry – is one that has been a part of our culture for several decades. We have battled to ensure that we are not simply boxed into a narrow remit of pay, terms and conditions. Not least, we recognise the inevitable link between what our members do at work and what they are paid.

Our centenary will give FBU members past and present, as well as others interested in building a labour movement fit for the challenges of the twenty first century, an opportunity to reflect on the lessons of the past and discuss the way forward.

Several themes of particular note emerge for me as I examine the first hundred years of our union. These include the vital importance of strong rank-and-file organisation rooted in the workplace; the relationship between pay, terms and conditions and the functions the F&RS undertakes; how best to challenge and address issues of racism, sexism, homophobia and the other divisions that exist both in wider society and within working-class organisations; and the relationship between union organisation and wider working-class politics.

While the FBU is not the largest union in Britain, we do enjoy one of the highest levels of membership density of any union. For me, this is largely because we have remained an industrially based union: we are focused on the F&RS and on organising those in 'firefighting, rescue or related services'. For the past decade or so, we have addressed this issue head on in internal discussions

and, so far, have made the decision to maintain an independent F&RS union. That gives our members a strong sense of identity.

We also focus our efforts on organising in the workplace, encouraging the building of our union around workers organising themselves. It contrasts sharply with, for example, a 'servicing' model of trade unionism that sees members as consumers buying a series of services from the union. Of course, the FBU does provide members with a wide range of services (financial, legal, representative, etc) but that is not the primary purpose of our organisation. Rather, the aim is to enable workers in our industry to be self-organised. Therefore, a key strategic aim is constantly to create new generations of activists – union members who will represent workmates and also endeavour to organise them industrially and politically. These are leaders at a local level.



Key to this approach is the need to build organisation within the workplace. Our model is not based on passive union members who simply call some remote office for advice, assistance or representation (although that also happens, of course). Rather, we aim for the workers in a fire station or other workplace to represent and organise themselves. In this context, the workplace branch is the essential building block of an active and membership-based structure. Of course, things are never straightforward. The FBU, like every workers' organisation, has its ups and downs. We have gaps in

the structure. We have periods of anger and demoralisation. But the strategy of the union should be based around the permanent need to build and rebuild a democratic and campaigning organisation at workplace level and to develop the new layers of workplace organisers and leaders.

The FBU has played a central role in developing the modern F&RS. This was most clear in an earlier period – the years of the Second World War and its aftermath when firefighters worked to limit the damage to the civilian population during the Blitz. At the same time, the extremely difficult but strategically correct decision to recruit and organise members of the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) gave the FBU a much larger membership and a truly national structure. After the war, these factors combined with other shifts in the political situation following the election of the 1945 Labour government. Unions were accepted as having a 'seat at the table'.

The FBU made the case for new structures and ways of organising the service, as it had done in the run up to, and during, the war. The union, led by general secretary, John Horner, did not always get its own way but it was increasingly listened to as the credible voice of the profession and it was able to exert greater and greater influence on the direction of travel. The FBU was firmly at the heart of the new F&RS structures established by the *Fire Services Act 1947*.

Before the war, the FBU clearly linked the need for a modern and professional F&RS with the case for better pay, conditions and pensions for FBU members. In the 1950s, this meant new campaigns for better equipment and safety procedures. In the 1960s, the union campaigned for firefighters to take on a new and broader fire safety role, inspecting workplaces and other premises rather than simply responding to fire calls. In the 1980s, the FBU was central to the campaign for greater fire safety in the home, with the campaign on foam-filled furniture. So, for most of our history, we have sought to be the

professional voice for our trade as well as an advocate for better pay.

This approach by the union has been challenged by others; most notably during the period of so called 'modernisation' from 2003 onwards which saw central government, local F&RSs, politicians and numerous chief fire officers go to considerable lengths to try to put the FBU 'back in its box'. The aim has been to sideline the voices of those on the front line and to promote a new type of managerialism in the service as an alternative to genuine negotiation with the workforce.

Some have done very well out of this agenda. The biggest pay rises for many years went to those at the top of local F&RSs. They essentially made the case that the more they cut, the bigger their pay rises should be. Disgracefully, many local politicians have fallen for this time and time again. This period has also seen numerous cases of very well-paid principal officers 'retiring' only to be re-employed the very next day on almost identical terms. These decisions have been a shocking embarrassment for the F&RS, yet there has been nothing but silence from those who claim to lead and who claim to be the 'professional voice'.

The vision of the FBU for the F&RS has always evolved and developed as the risks facing our communities have changed. The firefighters of the 1940s fought fires. By and large that was it. Over decades since the 1950s, the FBU has argued for fire inspections, familiarisation visits, an acknowledgement of (and funding for) the new role of attending road traffic collisions, proper planning for major floods, adequate preparation for responding to terrorist attacks and for a similar approach on a wide range of other issues. When others have sought to limit the union's role, we have resisted.

Our centenary is an opportunity for us to look back and reflect. Where would we be now if those who went before us had simply been content with the status quo? What kind of service would we be providing to the public and how much would we be paid for delivering it? Throughout most of our union's history, we have taken a more strategic approach to the development of our members' profession and to improving their pay and conditions.

The FBU has a proud history of tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment. The F&RS remains male-dominated and, therefore, the union reflect this. The service also remains overwhelmingly white, even in communities where the local population is far more diverse. All workforces will inevitably reflect, to some degree, the prejudices and outlook of wider society. Such issues pose sharp and difficult challenges to union activists. How to challenge such ideas? How to win support among workmates? What is the best approach to take? These are questions FBU activists have been grappling with for many decades.

The starting point for any answer is to remind ourselves what our organisation is and what it is supposed to be for. Unions, by their very existence, are based on the idea that an individual worker alone cannot achieve anything: only through collective action can progress be made. That means we aim for all workers to be members of the union and for union members to act together. Hence, the famous trade union slogan 'Unity is strength'. If we start from here, then anything that undermines unity stands in opposition to the collective interest; so if a union allows discrimination against any of its members or if it fails to confront harassment, it weakens and undermines the unity that is the very basis of its existence.

This approach is a far cry from the stance taken by those who, when asked why we need to discuss equality issues, answer: 'Because we need to comply with the law'. Compliance with this or that law is not an argument – or certainly not a very convincing one. It does not make the case for anything and it is unlikely to motivate people to do very much at all. And, of course, laws can change. So while it is important that union reps appreciate and understand relevant legislation and how they might use it, that is not the same as making the case for why the union should take up such issues. Convincing people of why such issues are important provides a much firmer foundation for campaigning.

The history of the FBU provides stories of struggle and heroism. It is the story of women and men who built an organisation against the odds. They had to campaign, fight and make sacrifices to build it. At times, many of them were

victimised for their stand. They also had to think carefully about, and debate, the challenges they faced at various times. We owe it to the previous generations but, above all, we owe it to those still to come to continue that work – to think, debate, organise and struggle – in the decades ahead so that it is a case of 'The past we inherit, the future we build.'

Matt Wrack is the General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union. He was first elected in 2005 and re-elected in 2010 and then returned unopposed in 2014. Although originally hailing from Salford, he joined the fire service in 1983 in London and held various union positions in the London region of the union before becoming its organiser and secretary.



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The FBU in Scotland - our centenary

From a perspective of understanding the past, Denise Christie assesses the present and future of the union and service in Scotland

When all is said and done, firefighting comes down to this: that a small number of people will go into a darkened, smoke-logged building, not knowing what they are going to meet, having faith in each other, in the long run prepared to risk their lives to save the lives of other people. In the long run, no matter what transformation we effect in the fire service, firefighting in its final stages remains just that. And we do not forget it.

These were the words spoken at an FBU conference in 1960 in Rothesay by then FBU General Secretary, John Horner. They are as pertinent today, when discussions are taking place on transforming the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, as they were when first spoken then.

It has been said that the fire and rescue service (F&RS) is in urgent need of transformation from the days of the inception of the *Fire Services Act 1947*. But analysis like this could not be further from the truth and I would ask those who support this view to reflect on the decades of transformation that has made firefighters into the highly skilled and dedicated professionals that we are today.

Firefighters have continually adapted to new and emerging risks, trained with new techniques and equipment and continually expanded our role throughout the decades after the 1947 Act. The name has changed from fire brigade to fire service and now to F&RS due to the expansion of incidents firefighters now attend. Rescues from height, rescues from water, rescues from collapsed buildings, rescues from road traffic collisions, rescues from chemical incidents - the list goes on.

The disgraceful element of all of this is the complete lack of funding to increase the pay of firefighters. For too many years, our employers and governments have taken the good will of firefighters for granted, especially their desire to intervene swiftly in any situation as it is widely known that this is built into a firefighters' DNA. They are quick enough to pat us on the back at major fire and flood incidents and roll up to a

fire station for a photo opportunity, but when it comes down to remunerating us for those efforts through a pay increase then the sound of tumbleweed is deafening! Many of the new roles firefighters have taken on have been without proper recompense and, at the FBU conference this year, we heard stories of firefighters regularly attending foodbanks and of genuine hardship.

Proposals for a Britain-wide deal for an increase in firefighter pay for new work are currently being discussed between the FBU and our employers through the National Joint Council (NJC) but any such deal is heavily dependent upon investment and sustainable funding by the governments across Britain.

These proposals must come with a substantial increase in pay that cannot be self-funded by further cuts to the Scottish F&RS. The FBU has consistently made it clear that there will be no negotiations that include job losses or the closure or down grading of fire stations. We have already seen the loss of over 700 frontline firefighter jobs since the introduction of the single Scottish F&RS in 2013 and a direct impact of that is the unavailability of between 60 to 100 fire appliances in Scotland each day.

Discussions, through the NJC, on new work for an increase in pay, are taking place in Scotland and at a recent meeting with the Scottish Government Minister for Community Safety, Ash Denham, the FBU welcomed the broad commitment to provide funding. However, this commitment needs to go further if the Scottish Government is serious about long-term investment for the Scottish F&RS and this must also be laid down in its programme for government.

The campaigning work Scottish firefighters have carried out needs to be applauded. When I was elected as Scottish regional secretary last year, my first priority was to prepare our members and officials to lobby politicians of all parties to support our campaign to stop the cuts. The previous four years had seen year-on-year budget cuts amounting to £53m in real terms.

Members and branches need to be

organised and have the tools for an effective campaign. We readily made available professional briefing packs on how to lobby a politician as well as evidence and details of where the cuts were hitting hard. Firefighters were and still are regular visitors to the Scottish parliament and constituency offices making the case for more investment. We must continue to keep that pressure on.

That pressure amounted to two urgent questions being asked in the Scottish Parliament about cuts to the Scottish F&RS. The first question in October 2017 was to summon the Minister 'to ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reports that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service plans to close fire stations and reduce firefighter numbers'.

The Minister responded by saying that no decisions had been made regarding transforming the Scottish F&RS and during the debate, she was further asked 'if the Government will adequately fund the transition to ensure that no part of Scotland does not have adequate fire cover.' The Minister responded by saying that 'it is clear that transformation can work only if the resources are available to the Scottish fire and Rescue Service to ensure that it can deliver the service that we all expect from it.' This direct pressure from the union resulted in the Minister publicly stating that resources need to be made available for any successful transformation programme.

The second urgent question in January this year again summoned the Minister 'to ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the reported reform of firefighters' pay and conditions.' This question stemmed from the Scottish F&RS bypassing the FBU and writing directly to firefighters over their pay, terms and conditions. Immediately, we ran a campaign with the STUC to challenge the undermining of collective bargaining which ultimately resulted in the urgent question being asked. The Minister committed to the collective bargaining process and the strength of the union and wider movement shone through during that time.

The union movement in Scotland also

came out and supported us at our lobby of the Scottish Parliament during First Minister's Questions. This was directly before the setting of the Budget and it was vital that firefighters' voices were heard. We had some degree of success when our lobbying secured an extra £15.5m into the Scottish F&RS budget. That lobbying also included the ability for Scottish F&RS to reclaim the VAT back at a cost of £10m per year. I want to place on record my thanks to the many members and officials who campaigned hard during that time.

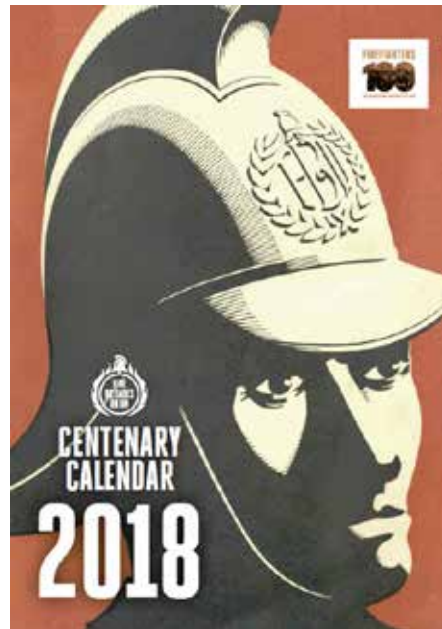
Firefighters are incredibly proud that the FBU is a Britain-wide union - one of the few that still has Britain-wide collective bargaining powers. Members have worked extremely hard over the years to maintain our strength and unity. That commitment continues until this day. But it is important to acknowledge the vital role the FBU in Scotland has when it is dealing with a devolved parliament and devolved legislation. An example of this was when a fire swept through a 14-storey block of flats in South Ayrshire in 1999 destroying nine floors of the Garnock Court block in Irvine. The fire was caused by flammable cladding. The FBU campaigned for legislation to change across Britain.

This was a devolved issue and the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament, at that time, took on board the many safety issues we had raised along with other interested bodies. This then led to a change in building regulations in 2005 that made it mandatory for builders to ensure that any external cladding inhibited fire spreading. Unfortunately, Westminster didn't take heed of our concerns and twelve years on we saw the horrific Grenfell Tower tragedy where 72 people were killed in a fire that burned like a Roman Candle. The investigation into the fire is still ongoing and a fuller picture of what part the flammable cladding played will become clearer at the conclusion of that.

The FBU wants to see a resilient F&RS, capable of dealing with the full range of risks consistently across Scotland and Britain. That requires resources and most of all, the firefighters, to do the job. The FBU wants the F&RS to be democratically accountable, both to the public we serve and to the firefighters who work in it. Whatever plans may come forth in the coming period, the FBU is clear that austerity is the worst

environment for re-organisation and transformation. The union will continue to fight for investment in the fire and rescue service and to oppose cuts.

Whatever institutional structures are proposed, they will require common and consistent national standards that can improve firefighter and public safety and can stand up to professional and public scrutiny at a national and local level. Confidence and assurance in the service provided are significantly assisted by an independent regulator and inspectorate setting the standards and bringing the providers to account. The F&RS has become dangerously fragmented since the scrapping of national standards including the deterioration in the speed and weight of emergency response needed to deal efficiently with an expanding range of incident types.



There is a crying need for a high-level and professional advisory and standard-setting body, with a wider remit and more resources than those of the current chief fire and rescue advisor arrangements. This would include senior elected FBU officials to contribute to and oversee the production of operational guidance throughout the service such as the previous role the Central Fire Brigade Advisory Council (CFBAC) for Scotland had before it was closed down.

But to achieve all of this we must not only have a high density union but also a high participation of our members. In Scotland, we have seen in recent times this participation increase. Branches all over Scotland are meeting regularly with well attended area and sectional committee meetings. Reps are continually subscribing to educational

courses and our members are getting more organised.

We have reps for all of our equality sections for black and ethnic minority members, LGBT members and women members. We have reps in place for operational control members, officer members and retained members. All the regional remits for health and safety, fairness at work and education are full and the seats round the regional committee are filled with passionate and committed trade unionists.

Scotland has always been a key part of the FBU throughout our centenary. We have produced great leaders and firsts such as our former General Secretary, Ken Cameron, and two Presidents in Enoch Humphries and the first women President, Ruth Winters. Many officials have come before us and like many unions there have been disagreements and differences but there is also a deep rooted respect. That respect stems from the knowledge of the long hours, days away from the family and home and the passion we have to strive for better pay terms and conditions for our members and the love we have for our profession.

I want to thank all those that have kept the FBU from being eaten up by bigger unions. It's imperative that we maintain our reputation as the professional voice of firefighters and the defenders of the fire and rescue service. I'm incredibly proud of the role my union has played these last 100 years through our internationalism, our socialism and our solidarity with others in the movement. Here's to the next 100!

Denise Christie is the FBU Scottish regional secretary. She is the first woman in the FBU's history to be elected to the post and is currently the most senior woman official in the FBU. She joined the fire service as a firefighter in 1997 in the Lothians. She has also been the Scottish regional treasurer and FBU Lothian and Borders Brigade chair. After attending an FBU women's school in 2004, she joined the FBU's National Women's Committee, then becoming its Executive Council Member.



**THE PROFESSIONAL VOICE
OF YOUR FIREFIGHTERS**

100 not out and still fighting on all fronts

Ian Murray outlines the struggles the FBU is undertaking for its members and for the general public

This is an historic year for the FBU – our centenary as a union of firefighters, for firefighters and run by firefighters across Britain. I am proud to be the union's senior elected lay official in this year when we celebrate building this great union of ours. It's an immense achievement to sustain our organisation, a union that has contributed so much to our industry and to the labour movement we belong to.

In many places across the globe, firefighters are prevented from forming unions or bound by vicious restrictions on the right to organise and take industrial action. Elsewhere firefighters are subsumed into general unions, or divided among different organisations. The FBU is deliberately an industrial union, organising all ranks and roles in our sector. The FBU is a political union, because it is essentially governments that employ our members and who make the key decisions about the resources and staff. The FBU is now fully re-engaged with the Labour Party and fighting for a Labour government, which we believe is the best way to improve our fire service and our members' pay and conditions.

The Grenfell Tower public inquiry is currently hearing testimony from firefighters, just over a year on from the worst fire in living memory. The FBU agrees with survivors and residents that this fire was an atrocity – how could such a conflagration happen in the capital city in one of the wealthiest places on earth? If it had occurred anywhere else in Britain, then the death toll could have been even worse as other fire and rescue services (F&RSs) do not have the resources to tackle such a blaze.

The fact that hundreds more tower blocks in England still have dangerous cladding on their exterior is a disgrace that has to be resolved at Westminster. The FBU is aware that regulations in Scotland were tightened after the Garnock Court fire in 1999, effectively outlawing the flammable cladding that continued to be installed elsewhere. This is a good example of where devolution in Scotland can be used to benefit other parts of Britain.

In the public inquiry, the FBU wants

justice for the victims and the community – our duty to them and the public we serve is to ensure nothing like this can ever happen again. We want politicians at the top who made the strategic decisions that led to the fire to be held to account - it was ministers who failed to regulate, failed to resource the fire service and failed to oversee the local authorities, the landlords and the contractors.

The FBU also want to ensure that firefighters are not scapegoated by industry profiteers and politicians wriggling to get themselves off the hook. The union is immensely proud of the work our members did that night for, as we have been hearing in phase one of the public inquiry, firefighters went way above the call of duty. From the operational firefighters who went into that building to rescue scores of residents, to the control staff who spoke for hours to those in distress, as well as the inspectors who investigate these matters – all acquitted themselves with distinction. The appreciation we received from the community strengthens our resolve to get justice in the public inquiry.

The FBU faces many battles on the industrial front. The Tories have handed over the running of some of our brigades to police and crime commissioners, who know nothing about the fire service. Chief fire officers all over Britain are attacking 24/7 cover to the public (especially night cover), which in turn means they want to impose ridiculous Victorian shift patterns on our members. They want to make our members ride small vans to emergencies, when only fully staffed and equipped fire engines are sufficient for many fires we attend.

Another significant victory for the union was our successful Judicial Review in the High Court that ruled that a duty system requiring firefighters to work 96-hour shifts as unlawful. The case centered on a duty system operated by South Yorkshire F&RS known as close proximity crewing (CPC), but the judgment could affect dozens of F&RSs that operate similar shift systems.

CPC and similar type duty systems are borne out of the reductions F&RSs have

seen in the central government funding grants. They operate on a system whereby the number of firefighters based at a traditional fire station is cut in half and those remaining provide 96-hours continuous cover to ensure the communities receive the same twenty four hour cover.

For several years, the FBU has argued that these duty systems are not safe. Firefighters carry out work under dangerous conditions and often the incidents we attend are long and arduous, such as the response to the Grenfell Tower fire, the recent moorland fires and protracted flooding incidents that we now see more regularly.

The fight back continues with the union gaining some significant successes over recent months, notably in the West Midlands. Our members won a very important victory, following returning a massive result in a ballot for industrial action: 90% voting in favour of strike action on an 82% turn out. This was our first ballot conducted under the *Trade Union Act 2016* and the undemocratic restrictions imposed on trade unions. So it was pivotal we smashed the thresholds laid down within it for 'important public services'.

The ballot was over the disgraceful imposition of new contracts on new recruits, which permit the chief to make them work anywhere and on any hazard regardless of their training and other colleagues. This is unsafe for firefighters and unfair to the public: our communities do not want a two-tier workforce or their firefighters doing social care when they have real emergencies to tackle.

Following the ballot result, West Midlands F&RS has now agreed to withdraw the contracts. It is a disgrace that a Labour-led fire authority was backing the two-tier proposals, despite strong opposition from national and local Labour politicians. Firefighters never resolve to take industrial action lightly, but our members were driven to ballot after all of our reasonable requests to negotiate had been ignored.

After eight years of pay restraint imposed by the coalition and subsequent Tory governments, the union's joint attempt with the national

employers at gaining a much needed 'above the pay cap' rise for expanding the role of firefighters is now coming to a head. At the time of writing, our employers have offered to uplift the pay of firefighters by 2%. This is while national negotiations continue on the issue of broadening the role but that is dependent upon adequate and sustainable funding being sourced.

The union has sought to take these issues forward jointly with the employers, including various attempts to lobby government ministers for adequate resources for the F&RS, including to cover the need for increases in pay. While fire is a devolved matter, firefighters' pay is still negotiated Britain-wide via the National Joint Council. Although the situation is complicated by the current political situation in Northern Ireland, we have made some progress in Scotland and in Wales but disappointingly discussions at Westminster have not progressed to the same degree and the Home Office appears to remain committed to supporting a programme of cuts to the F&RS and cuts to the living standards of our members working within it.

We are currently consulting with our members regarding the employers pay proposal as it fails to address what we see as the already expanded roles firefighters carry out. As part of that consultation, we will also be seeking the views of our members on the need to prepare for industrial action. This includes the need to prepare for strike action as well as developing plans for a withdrawal from all non-agreed or non-contractual work currently undertaken within the service.

So the FBU will go into overdrive during the next few months as we face battles on several fronts to defend our members and the F&RS we work for. One thing is clear for the FBU: firefighters will stand together and will stand up for the communities we serve.

Ian Murray is the President of the Fire Brigades Union. He joined the Humberside F&RS in 1994 and served at West Hull and Hull Central fire stations. In 2010, he was elected to the union's executive council representing the Yorkshire and Humberside region and in addition served as the FBU vice-president from 2014. Ian also sits on the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

In Focus Productions for the FBU

The Firefighters' Story: 100 years of the FBU, 2018

Reviewed by Bob Thomson

This is an interesting and, at times poignant, short film, reminding us of the courage and sacrifices shown by firefighters. It traces the history of the FBU since its inception at the end of the First World War, and the contribution the union has made over ten decades to improve public and firefighter safety through its campaigning work. Known as 'tombstone legislation' these improvements generally follow big fire incidents such as the Manchester Woolworths fire of 1979 which resulted in a ban on foam filled furniture. It explores several major fires - such as the Glasgow Cheapside fire of 1960 in a whisky and tobacco warehouse in which 19 firefighters died - and their subsequent impact on safety.

The film, produced by In Focus Productions for the FBU to mark its centenary this year, uses archive footage throughout, including the Blitz which shows the incredible bravery of the firefighters Churchill called 'Heroes with Dirty Faces'. More than 900 firefighters lost their lives during the war. I was indignant hearing the story of how one firefighter's family had to share his burial with that of a comrade killed in the same action because they did not have the money and the fire service refused to help. The often forgotten contribution of the 88,000 women firefighters who worked on the frontline as well as in control rooms are depicted in the film as part of the huge recruitment of auxiliaries who helped the war effort

The film examines the appalling conditions and 'continuous duty' system early firefighters worked under, and the militaristic discipline, with pensions unheard of and holiday and sick pay almost non-existent. These firefighters, who lived in fire stations in cramped conditions with

their families, were crying out for a union to represent them. No wonder they sometimes described themselves as municipal slaves!

As Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, says: 'The FBU has never been solely concerned with the important issue of members' pay and conditions - we have always had a wider role in society that is concerned with keeping citizens safe. We are extremely proud to have made such an impact on safety through our long history of campaigning and lobbying. And now, 100 years after we began, we have the Grenfell Tower atrocity to address. We will do our utmost to ensure that policies around social housing, building regulations and fire safety will be extensively improved so that people living in tower blocks are safe'.

Find out where the film is screening on the FBU centenary events page at www.fbu.org.uk and see <https://www.fbu.org.uk/news/2018/02/01/new-film-tells-story-firefighters-and-their-union-over-100-years> and <https://www.fbu.org.uk/firefighters-story-100-years-fire-brigades-union>

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Educating for the struggles ahead

Lindsey McDowell explains the big perspective that lies behind the FBU's educational work

There's an old adage that 'education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire'. It speaks wisely. Learning should make us full of energy and change us in a way there's no going back from, not leave us feeling heavier and more difficult to move. So, if education is about lighting fires, where does that place learning in an organisation representing firefighters?

Union education always faces inwards and outwards. We build strength from the inside, growing capacity, providing the means by which our unions can make their objectives a reality. Every strategy, policy and decision in a collective organisation, from recruitment to industrial action to international solidarity, requires people to make it happen. We can support and develop democratic leadership at all levels so that no one is deterred from becoming active and getting others involved, overcoming whatever preconception they have about what a trade unionist looks and sounds like. Through debate and dialogue, we change how activists and reps see themselves and how they understand their own agency, turning latent power of workers into a tangible reality.

Education is also the process through which we start to have an impact on the world around us. A union needs its presence to be felt as widely and deeply as possible to be effective. While public profile and national negotiations are essential, reps and active members can make their presence felt in their workplaces using confidence, knowledge and judgement that's been explored, tested and shared in an informal collective learning space. Understanding that a rep's authority comes from having active members and learning that reps have rights in the workplace means poor health and safety practice will be improved, inappropriate conduct challenged, and the employer may think twice before attempting to implement something unreasonable. Add to that recognising every member is a whole worker with a network and community which can be connected to union campaigns through outreach and solidarity, and education is changing not just the reps in the classroom, but members, workplaces and communities.

The landscape of decision-making and bargaining throughout our public services has changed, as a result of formal fragmentation and austerity-imposed local cost saving and corner cutting. Unions may try to accommodate to this by individualising their offer to members, or denying it to maintain their existing structures, but the inevitable impact at local level is that decisions will be made. Either unions are involved – consciously and carefully investing in their reps, supporting them in formal and informal negotiations – or they're not. We can no longer simply train reps to deliver a defined function that is constant and permanent. Reps in this fragmented context need to be able to speak up, be local leaders, and be conscious – aware of the dynamics at play in work and the ideological and economic forces affecting the service they work in. They need to feel agency and be able to instil a sense of that in their members.

To develop that self-reliance and confidence in reps, we need to offer education which is an on-going learning process, rooted in their lived experience. Activists' education takes place primarily on the ground, with their learning and support coming from their local officials and/or the equality networks they may belong to, and sometimes from others in the wider movement. Mentoring is a necessity in democratic organisations. Reps get involved in meetings, activity, discussions with members, and interactions with employers, and they learn, ideally carrying on learning for as long as they are involved in their union.

Classroom-based learning is a part of this process, and also separate from it – a union space where the time, environment and fuel for thinking and growing is provided. There is the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate what's been learned on the ground. We have the opportunity to show our values through our practice in the classroom. Hearing from reps from other workplaces develops solidarity and class consciousness as well as contributing to knowledge and understanding. Engaging in discussion and debate substantiates the democratic principles of our movement. There is a world of experience and theory that we can and

must share with every new generation of activists and officials.

As with all organising activities, we have to listen as well as talk. We have to provide spaces in our courses and beyond where reps can talk and listen to each other so that they can teach as they learn. And if we get this right, if we're listening to reps collectivising their individual lived experiences, then they're teaching us as well. As educators we learn from every group we facilitate. Done correctly, as learners engaging critically in the world around them, education provides a platform for a union to learn, as reps describe the injustices, challenges and successes of their lived experience in work. They are making suggestions, evaluating the way we've always done things, and defying common sense to become active in the union right here and right now.

Classroom-based union education is expensive and time-consuming, but there is no substitute. Unions continue to offer a challenge to our individualised, corporatized existence and education is an inalienable right for all working people. On the occasion of the FBU's centenary we recognise that collective learning is crucial to passing on our heritage and firing up our newest reps and activists.

Lindsey McDowell is the Head of Education at the Fire Brigades Union. Previously, she worked for the National Union of Teachers as a Training Adviser. Her emphasis is on democratic and facilitated learning and the transformative power of union education. She is a contributor to Trade Union Education: Transforming the World (New Internationalist, 2017).

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From the good times to the bad times - and with a lot of callouts in between

Chris McGlone reflects on his working life as a firefighter and the changes he has witnessed

Certain events and times in your life demand you take stock and reflect. 2018 is just such a time. It marks the centenary of our great organisation, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). It also represents a landmark in my own personal and professional life as a firefighter - the completion of my thirty years of operational service. It should have signalled the end of my firefighting career. However, there is life after death and I fully intend to see out my term as Executive Council Member for Scotland (which ends in mid-2019).

Rewind to 1988. The 1977 national strike is becoming a distant memory, recalled only by the 'old hands' with a mixture of pride and bitterness, a badge to be worn as a scar from a childhood scrap. Christ was it sore at the time but the passing years have since healed the wound and softened the memory.

As a recruit firefighter, talk around the mess table was never far from the 'good old bad old days'. I was only in the job because of the actions of my older comrades - or so I was told - who had exercised their right to withdraw their labour and for the benefit of not just them but the generation of firefighters who would follow.

The consequences of the strike were not only the blurred images on reels of black and white footage. They were tangible and real for a younger generation, only just making their way in the job. The truth was the 'old hands' were spot on.

The sacrifices they made and industrial action they took under the FBU banner were, indeed, why cities like Glasgow required yet more firefighters. I wasn't quite press-ganged as I wandered past Cheapside Street, the old training centre at that time. However, the recruitment drives were frequent enough to tempt myself as a young 23 year old with no real idea of where his life was heading.

Where I did head was 'White watch' at the Govan fire station. A stone's throw from where I was born and one of the new, state of the art stations which was built, like many, to replace the old Victorian tenement-cum-firehouse that typified the Glasgow Fire Brigade of old.

Change was in the air, modernisation had arrived and money was increasingly available to invest in the new Fire and Rescue Services of a new age. However, cork helmets, plastic leggings and gardening gloves were *de rigueur*. Health and safety and the 'near-miss' were terms we still associated with a night out in town. Clearly, there was still some way to go.

Things were looking up, however, and the recruits I joined with were now receiving annual pay rises that the present generation can only dream of. The salary of a firefighter was on the move. The agreed pay formula, secured in the aftermath of the 1977 national strike, was doing its job and gradually bringing salaries into line with comparable public sector workers and other industries. In addition, appliances and equipment were increasing and improving apace and the job role of the modern firefighter was changing and adapting to the world around us. We moaned like we always had but the job was great!

Fast forward to 2018. The FBU is celebrating its centenary - a fantastic achievement but against a backdrop of the worst fiscal and economic squeeze in living memory. It has been ten long years since Lehman Brothers famously imploded in the financial world of irrational exuberance - or were taken out in a collective act of revenge. Who needs friends when you've got capitalism?

The resulting fallout spawned, among other things, the brutal ideology of austerity and triggered the worst attack on the living standards of the working classes since the Great Depression of the 1930s. For decades, profits had been privatised. The catastrophic losses were now socialised and foisted on the working class.

Tax payer funded bailouts but with money we didn't have so we burdened our children with the reparation for our mistakes. Wielding the tool of 'quantitative easing' (counterfeiting to you and I) to deliver the final act of betrayal. In my opinion, it is one of the greatest social crimes of the past

century. The reality for firefighters and the FBU has been a decade of savage cuts and year-on-year real time pay erosion, accompanied by attacks on our conditions of service and the reversal of many of the genuine gains and improvements secured by organisations like the FBU, National Joint Council and the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council. Collectively and with the FBU ever present, we improved the pay, terms and conditions of our members and the safety of workers and the public.

In Scotland, the publication of the Christie Commission report in 2011, which looked at the future delivery of public services, sounded the alarm for the fire service: innovate, collaborate and transform or wither on the vine. The result was the merging of the 8 Scottish brigades into a single entity in 2013.

New technology, innovation and proposed changes in response models are trumpeted as the saviour of the service. Delivered on a tight budget, by a workforce reduced in numbers and who are already overworked, demotivated and demoralised ... The prospects for success, if based upon experience to date, are not good.

The deregulation of our profession, and the associated industries and the cuts to F&RS, have dealt a blow to the FBU and our members. However, we have not hung around for 100 years to take flight at the first sign of a fight. We will continue to protect our profession, even if others won't. Things will improve and will do so with the help of our sisters and brothers from the wider union movement. After all, and to quote a favourite saying, 'nowhere worth going is easy to get to'.

Chris McGlone is the Executive Council Member for Region 1 (Scotland)

From Scotland to Gaza with much love, favour and affection

From Dundee to Nablus, Jim Malone shows what solidarity, not sympathy, looks like

In 1982, at the TUC Congress, Ken Cameron, FBU General Secretary and a member of the Trade Union Friends of Palestine, tabled an emergency motion which condemned Israel's brutal invasion of its neighbour Lebanon and recognised 'the national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination within an independent sovereign state'.

Ken's advocacy in supporting Palestinians and the Palestinian cause remained within him until his passing in 2016. Those of us in the FBU who shared his commitment have taken forward an honourable legacy. Since 2009 when Ken Ross, then FBU Scottish Secretary, brought eight firefighters to Britain from Dundee's twin city of Nablus, the Scottish FBU have led on various projects aimed at supporting Palestinian firefighters through training initiatives and the delivery to Palestine consignments of firefighting kit and equipment.

In 2010, Tayside FBU sent donations of firefighting kit to Gaza from Dundee. In 2011 at FBU Annual Conference delegates donated funds to allow the purchase of two fire appliances by the Scottish FBU. The union engaged with the Scottish Parliamentary Cross Party Group to assist in the logistics, contacts in the Histadrut and PGFTU also offered help, Dundee TUC saw the convoy off and these appliances were driven 2,500 miles from Dundee by FBU officials. One eventually, packed with firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), compressed air breathing apparatus (CABA), helmets, fire boots and RTC cutting equipment was, after being impounded by the Israeli authorities, delivered to the Nablus Municipality in December of that year. This appliance still serves the people of Nablus emblazoned with the FBU Dundee to Nablus logo.

The years 2012 to 2013 saw a partnership between the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service the (SFRS) and the Palestinian Civil Defence (PCD), and courses facilitated by the FBU which saw all PCD senior officers receive modern management training in Dundee and Glasgow. In 2014, at the request of the PCD and after several civilian

fatalities, two courses were delivered on Swift Water Rescue, with firefighters attending these courses at the National Training Centre at Cambuslang with practical sessions on the River Clyde and Loch Lomond. In 2015, I returned to Palestine to assess the current support requirements for the Municipalities of Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron and the PCD, I was accompanied on this visit by FBU documentary filmmaker, Ciaran Gibbons. We met friends, old and new, visiting firefighter comrades throughout Palestine and also at two Israeli stations in West Jerusalem. The visit to the occupied old town of Hebron (Al Khalil) was particularly harrowing. The FBU pledged full support to the Municipality by promising to assist in training and the delivery of equipment. Ciaran's FBU sponsored award winning documentary, *Firefighters under Occupation*, has been seen throughout the world. In 2016 it premiered in Dundee, was shown in Palestine on a return visit, and Ken Loach gave the film warm praise at a showing in Brighton, saying 'the film gives a firefighter's view on delivering humanitarian public services under military occupation, it captures brilliantly the humanity at the heart of the role of a firefighter'.

As promised, the FBU worked hard in sourcing more PPE and firefighting equipment, so that a shipping container packed with kit left Dundee for Palestine on 3 January 2017. After the FBU donation was once again held up by the Israeli authorities, it reached Palestine so that hundreds of fire kits, helmets, boots, much needed medical kit and Breathing Apparatus were donated. The FBU had witnessed the shocking situation in Hebron where firefighters had no PPE, no fire kit, no boots, no helmets and no CABA sets, when they received the FBU donation it afforded them excellent protection but the Al Khalil comrades still required training in the use of the donated kit. Our comrades in the PCD with excellent kit, equipment and management training still had to travel abroad to receive training due to the lack of qualified trainers in Palestine.

Then the Scottish FBU embarked on its

most challenging support programme, again in partnership with the SF&RS, Scottish Government, PCD, the Municipality of Hebron, the Scottish Cross Party Palestinian Group. With these bodies, the union facilitated the first ever CABA course for Hebron firefighters and the first ever Training Instructors course for PCD firefighters. So, in January and February this year these ground breaking initiatives were delivered at the National Training Centre, comrades attended the Holyrood and Westminster Parliaments and two excellent receptions at the STUC during their training programme. The FBU has now facilitated the training of over 100 Palestinian firefighters since 2009, and we have delivered hundreds of sets of CABA, fire kit, hose, branches, cutting equipment, search and rescue equipment, medical kit and a fire appliance.

Our Palestinian comrades have achieved so much but require so much more in order to do more. The FBU has led the way in the union movement in our solidarity work with Palestinian firefighters - in doing so, we have shown solidarity to the occupied people of Palestine. In 2014, when Ken and Nuala Cameron came to meet our Palestinian comrades at their hotel in Glasgow, the young Palestinian firefighters response to Ken's visit was one of quiet deference. Like all young people they were on their mobile phones telling their friends and family that they had just met 'Mr Ken' in Scotland! Ken's legacy will, we are assured, live on.

Jim Malone has been the FBU Palestinian Support Coordinator since the union's Scottish Region 'Dundee to Nablus' project started in 2011. Prior to this, he served for 30 years as an operational firefighter in Dundee and was an FBU branch, brigade and regional official. He was elected Scottish Regional Organiser, serving between 2009 and 2013 when he retired. He is a member of the executive of Dundee Trades Union Council.

- More about the film can be found at <https://www.fbu.org.uk/blog/firefighters-under-occupation-0>

History and development of fire engines

David Adams outlines how and why fire engines have developed over the years

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Heritage Trust, which is affiliated to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SF&RS), and is a registered Scottish Charity (SCO43929), operates a preservation through operation policy, whereby our fleet of historical fire engines is kept in a mechanically sound and roadworthy condition. This allows the trust to provide a living museum facility where we take our vehicles and other exhibits to the public. It is the policy of the trust to support events in the community, especially those with a charitable cause. The Firefighter Charity and the Scottish F&RS Family Support Trust are the two main recipients of the Trust's efforts. In addition, to staging our own Fire Engine rally's and other events, the Trust attends over one hundred events annually including Fire Station Open Days, gala days, fetes and public displays.



The Heritage Trust works in conjunction with the Community Safety departments of the SF&RS, demonstrating how the history of the fire service has contributed to public safety throughout the years. In partnership with the SF&RS and Inverclyde Council, the Trust manages and runs the Greenock Fire Museum and Heritage Centre. The museum which is located in the old Victorian Fire Station in Dalrymple Street, Greenock, opened in 2013 and allows the Trust to showcase its collection of vintage fire engines, uniforms, and equipment, and brings to life the stories of the firefighters and their families who lived and worked there. The museum which is run and staffed entirely by trust volunteers has already received a 4 Star Visit Scotland

rating, and received an award from Greenock Chamber of Commerce 'as best Ambassadors for the Inverclyde Area attracting the most tourists'.

A major part of the Trusts work is the restoration, conservation and preservation of old fire engines, the history of the development of fire engines and the associated firefighter's safety throughout the years. Traditionally fire engines were steam powered and horse drawn. The technology of firefighting took a major step forward in the early 1900s with the innovation of the internal combustion engine as this allowed the development of self-propelled fire engines and higher-pressure pumps which could deliver higher volumes of water, making firefighting more effective. The design of fire engines was still influenced by the traditional horse drawn appliances with crew standing on the side of the engine while attending fires.

It was not until the 1930s when the limousine design of fire engines became more common. This innovation allowed the fire crew to sit in an enclosed cab, protected from the elements and proceeding to fires in a safer manner. Some of the larger fire appliances such as turntable ladders were still manufactured with unenclosed cabs up until the 1940s. From the 1950s onward, the enclosed crew cab, offering greater protection to the crew became the norm. These appliances were still traditionally built, with a metal skin over a timber frame. This type of design offered the crew little protection in the event of a serious collision or accident. It was only from the early 1980s that crew safety was seriously considered in the design of fire engine crew cabs. This meant cabs were now being fitted with seatbelts, metal framed and antiroll bars as standard.

From 1947, fire engine design in Britain was regulated by the Joint Council for Design and Development, under the direction of Central Fire Brigades Advisory Committee (CFBAC). In 2000,

the CFBAC was disbanded and from then on fire appliance design and the associated safety standards became virtually unregulated. In 2001, a draft European Directive (BSEN 1846 part 1 and 2) set future standards for fire appliance design.



In May 2008, the FBU in cognisance of issues of health, safety and wellbeing, produced a document detailing the elements for the design of crew cabs for fire engines. This document provided valuable guidance in the development of crew safety cab design for fire appliances. In order to meet the safety requirements of contemporary fire engines, in 2017 the London Fire Brigade produced a prototype design for the safety of crews in fire appliances. The design incorporated a crew cab which was purposely planned for the comfort and safety of firefighters. The design considers the means to make driving through heavy city traffic safer, including lower engine emissions. Less equipment is now stored within the crew cab area, with heavy and bulky items of equipment being stored in lockers to the rear of the fire engine. All modern fire appliances are now designed with the safety of the crew paramount.

The Scottish F&RS Heritage Trust can trace the design and development of fire appliances through our fleet of preserved appliances. Our appliances are regularly presented to the public, where the development of fire appliance design can be compared alongside contemporary appliances. If you would like to know more about the work of the SF&RS Heritage Trust and the events we attend, please visit our web site at; www.sfrheritagetrust.org

Dave Adam is chair of the Scottish F&RS Heritage Trust.

Images courtesy of Scottish F&RS Heritage Trust

No cash for questions: just long years of hard labour



Bob Thomson, engaging in one of favourite pass times – walking - at the bottom Buachaille Etive More in Glencoe while sporting his favourite badge, a combination of pride and CND

Scottish Left Review interviews Bob Thomson as he steps down at the age of 75 from the leading role he has played for the magazine for the last 18 years. Bob retired in 1999 as Associate Scottish Secretary of UNISON and since then he has taken on an almost full-time and never paid role as company secretary of Left Review Scotland (the company that owns the magazine and Jimmy Reid Foundation), chair of the magazine's editorial board, chair of the Foundation's project board and general organiser. He's now due a proper retirement.

You're from a large family (eight brothers and three sisters) from Wishaw. It seems you have been the most politically progressive and politically active of all the children in your family. What would you put that down to?

My parents, especially my dad were quite political; he was an Independent Labour Party supporter. My three brothers in Canada vote for the left party, the New Democratic Party. My mother as well as raising a large family looked after neighbours and had a strong sense of community. I often did without but saw worse poverty and inequality around me. It has been my anger and determination to do

something about this which has driven my political beliefs.

You became politically active as a young man, joining a union at the age of sixteen and the Labour Party at twenty. You have held many senior positions in both unions (NUPE, UNISON) and the Scottish Labour Party. How would you say your politics have changed and developed over the years?

I am a socialist by upbringing and life experience. A friend said to me recently: 'Bob as you get older you are supposed to mellow and become more moderate but you are more left wing'. I told him he was wrong because as a young man I was on the left of the Labour Party and that is where I remain. It is the political centre that has moved to the right!

Tell us how you came to know of and work with Jimmy Reid in terms of the setting up of Scottish Left Review.

In the 1970s, we were both regularly travelling to and from London and shared our thoughts and a bottle on the long train journeys. He was in the Communist Party and I in the Labour Party. The need for a forum for more unity within the left was regularly discussed and this became more urgent with the rise of 'new' Labour.

As the remaining founding member of the editorial committee of Scottish Left Review, can you tell us what the intention was behind launching the magazine?

It was a vehicle to counter the neo-liberal philosophy and policies of Tony Blair and 'new' Labour which many on the left had swallowed after eighteen years of Tory governments. Jimmy Reid was early in exposing this in his *Herald* columns, famously stating: 'People say that Tony Blair has no principles. They are wrong. He has principles. They are Tory principles. He is in the wrong party.' As Treasurer of the Scottish Labour Party, I had personally experienced Blair's duplicity and contempt for democratic decision making in his interference in the questions on the referendum to establish

the Scottish Parliament. Jimmy gathered together an eclectic group of activists and thinkers to start the magazine including Aamer Anwar, Campbell Christie, Roseanna Cunningham, John Kay, Cathie Jamieson, Isabel Lindsay, John McAllion, Henry McCubbin, Tom Nairn, Andrew Noble, Alex Smith and myself.

In the light of this, what has Scottish Left Review achieved since 2000?

As part of a then small group of often distinguished voices from many parties and none who argued the case against neo-liberalism and for progressive policies for Scotland and Britain, I think we are now a majority, at least in Scotland. *Scottish Left Review* is now the main forum for left politics with an online traffic of over 1500 visits per day. We set up the *Scottish Left Review Press* which has published occasional books on the political and economic situation. And, we established the Jimmy Reid Foundation, the only left think tank in Scotland.

In the light of this, what has Scottish Left Review not achieved?

In the big picture while we have been a forum for all left parties and individuals

there has not been any great success on creating joint co-operation in campaigns and policies with left parties and groups. Our print subscribers have not increased significantly. With printing and postage costs rising, publishing a print issue could be in danger of not continuing in the not too distant future, something the Editorial Board has so far resisted. However, there has been an increase lately of union branches taking out subscriptions so we hope to avoid that situation.

How has Scottish Left Review managed to sustain itself over the years while other magazines have foundered?

Primarily by the work of volunteers (who have carried out the organisational and administrative tasks), our Editorial Board and, importantly, our contributors who have given their time freely. We have never had the resources to employ anyone full time. Special thanks to past editors, Jimmy Reid and Robin McAlpine, and to current editor, Gregor Gall. And, of course, also to our loyal band of print subscribers and the labour and trade union movement for their adverts.

What has Scottish Left Review still to achieve?

Our online traffic has trebled in recent years and we hope to increase this with Facebook and Twitter pages etc. Posting the magazine online costs money and our donation button has raised a disappointing amount so this is something we will have to improve upon. As already mentioned we need to increase print subscribers to keep the print issue viable. Subscribers and readers can help by forwarding links to the Review and particular articles to acquaintances by email, Twitter and Facebook. And, after 18 years of publishing are we still radical enough? Do we need more blue sky thinking? This is something we want to hear from our readers on so we invite feedback to editorial@scottishleftreview.org

What motivates you to do day-in-day-out all the tiny little tasks that are required to run a tight ship when it comes to the Left Review Scotland, the magazine and foundation? Presumably, it is more than the fact that you didn't intend to spend your retirement in the garden potting shed, fishing or playing bowls.

I regret not reading and walking as much as I would have liked. However,

the political situation in Britain has worsened, mass killings and poverty are rampant in all continents, my anger and motivation to do what little I can to reverse these remains.

The magazine runs on voluntary labour. You have put in so much of your own time but you have also recruited many others to its fold over the years. How have you managed to do that?

As a union lay member and official and Labour activists, I have met a lot of like-minded comrades, some of whom shared my interest in the need for a forum for left discussion while readers agreeing with our ethos have also volunteered.

Scottish Left Review draws its audience and support from across the political left. One of its greatest challenges has been to span the divide of Labour-SNP and pro- and anti-independence supporters. How would say it has coped with that challenge and do you think it has been able to mould a common left perspective for Scotland?

The sad reality is that Labour and the SNP are both generally on the left in their social and economic policies but hate each other more than they hate the Tories because of the national issue. I believe this helped the Tories going from one to thirteen MPs at the 2017 General Election. The Review has tried to steer both parties on socially progressive issues with limited success.

As is in your helpful and committed nature, you have agreed to be the vice-chair of the editorial board for the next year to help manage the changeover given that Pat Kelly is the new chair of the editorial board. What do you see your main tasks as being in this remaining year?

Our website is eighteen years old and, like me, creaking. We hope to have a new website that is more navigable and easier to view on hand held devices by the autumn. We need a dedicated administrative capacity and to fully utilise our new office in, Glasgow kindly provided by UNISON. We hope to convert our limited company into a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). And, lastly, there is always the need to increase our paying readers – the subscribers.

You were also a key figure in the Scottish Left Review setting up the Jimmy Reid Foundation in 2011. How do you think

the Foundation has fared and what should its goals and ambition be?

We have made steady progress since establishment in 2012 and have produced many radical policy papers and most of the major trade unions are now affiliates. A number of unions have commissioned research projects from the Foundation, something we hope to increase. Our intention is to be the leading left think tank in Scotland.

As an out gay man since the 1970s, how has society in Scotland become less homophobic and what still remains to be achieved?

The speed of transformation has surprised and delighted me. There is now much more understanding and acceptance amongst all age groups especially in the young. There is the need to campaign against all forms of discrimination as they all have the same origins.

On your jacket, you'll always find a badge. It's either from CND, the Spanish civil war international brigade memorial foundation, gay pride or the Labour Party. Which have been the most important political causes to you in your lifetime and why?

They are all important and have shaped my political drive, the need to create a better society.

- On behalf of *Scottish Left Review* and all its readers, subscribers and supporters, we wish Bob Thomson an enjoyable and fruitful retirement.
- Introducing Pat Kelly as the new chair of the editorial committee of *Scottish Left Review*:

A past STUC president and former PCS Scottish secretary, Pat was elected in August 2018 to succeed Bob Thomson as chair of the editorial board of the magazine. Pat has been the vice-chair for two years and on the editorial board for four years. He was a Labour Party member for over 30 years (until 2015) and on the executive of the Campaign for a Scottish Parliament as well as serving on the Claim of Right Committee that established the Scottish Constitutional Convention. His book, *Scotland's Radical Exports*, a history of Scottish contributions to the unions and political parties in the Scottish diaspora, was shortlisted for the Saltire Society's History book of the year in 2012.

Sustainable Growth Report: From old to new Caledonia via New Zealand?

Carol Jess says to the left if that's where you want to get to don't start from here

Over the years, New Zealand (NZ) has often been taken as a good example in many progressive political and economic debates. This September, New Zealand will celebrate the 125th anniversary of (almost) universal suffrage, while our third female Prime Minister in 20 years has just returned to office from 6 weeks maternity leave. Along with the progressive, however, come the ideals of neo-liberalism, embedded in NZ culture since the mid-1980s introduction of 'steroid pumped Blairism' as Cat Boyd put it in the last issue of *Scottish Left Review* (106). There was some amelioration of its effects by the Clark government, but neo-liberalism has remained the benchmark of NZ politics at least until now.

The Growth Commission Report (GCR) regards NZ as one of three small countries contributing to a hybrid model on which a future Scotland's economy could be based. For those of us on the left looking at the features of the hybrid model searching for the NZ influence there's a difficulty in reconciling the ambition of a productive economy with the notion of a fair and inclusive society. At A1.89 the Growth Commission goes so far as to praise NZ's neo-liberal reforms which, they assert, led to the economy performing well over the past 20 years. According to the report 'a significant portion of this growth has been due to growth in hours worked (low unemployment and high participation rates, favourable demographics, and very strong rates of net migration)'.

This 'rock star economy', according to William White, former chief economist of the Bank of International Settlements, however has not resulted in wage growth, rather the opposite, with NZ remaining a persistently low wage economy. In addition, over the past 20 years, NZ has also had one of the lowest wage and salary shares of country income in the OECD. Legislative changes to liberalise employment law in 1991, in tandem with the neo-liberal structural

adjustments, can be seen to have caused this. Post-1991, NZ may well turn out to be an unfortunate warning of the post-Brexit labour market, should the Dominic Raab view of unfettered labour markets take hold.

While the NZ of 1991-2017 might not be a viable starting point for a new progressive Scotland, there are some grounds for optimism. The new Labour-led government is now consulting on new employment legislation with the goal that the restoration of workers' rights, and of union power to more freely organise and bargain collectively, will go some way towards re-balancing the rewards of productivity in the economy. Yet coincidentally on 28 August 2018, the PM and Finance Minister launched the 'Business Partnership Agenda', with its subheading 'Partnering with business to develop a productive, sustainable and inclusive economy.' At first glance, there are many similarities between this and the Sustainable Growth Report.

NZ's fiscal responsibility and monetary policy also come in for GCR commendation. Current Finance Minister, Grant Robertson, has committed the government to tight public borrowing and spending limits, with the focus on deficit reduction. This is in line with the Clark government of 1999-2008, and other centrist governments across the OECD. Changes, however, are coming to various areas of fiscal and monetary policy, in an attempt to create a more progressive and fair economy. One of the changes, introduced in a Policy Targets Agreement with the Reserve Bank (March 2018) and due to be an amendment to the Reserve Bank Act, was not just to set out specific targets for price stability but a requirement that this be done with consideration for sustainable employment outcomes.

One of the least progressive areas of policy in NZ is that of the 'simple and clear' taxation system, said to work in favour of investment, business and therefore the economy. A working group has been set up to examine the

structure, fairness and balance of the system. One on-going issue is the lack of a capital gains tax, thought by many to have contributed to a lack of capital investment in the productive economy and over-reliance on property investment. Further regressive issues with the tax system are the lack of any personal income allowances, and the existence of a flat rate Goods and Sales Tax (VAT) applicable to all purchases of goods and services. It is, however, unclear that these every day regressive taxes will be examined.

One major addition to the discussion of the economy that Scotland may want to examine is the introduction of the 'Wellbeing Budget' in 2019. Given the apparent success of the NZ economy in traditional measures, as opposed to the reality of life for NZers, the aim is to focus government spending on improving quality of life through the 'Living Standards Framework'. This is to be done by 'growing the country's human, social, natural and financial/physical capitals', rather than simply the financial/physical capital measures generally used. This should allow a more critical approach to economic success to be taken, adding some nuance to the blunt object of GDP.

Many of the new government's policies could be described as continuing to put a human face on capitalism but the shift from treating the economy as an end in itself, measured solely through GDP might give hope for future change. While I would not recommend taking the NZ of the last 20 years as a starting point for a future Scotland, it's possible that the NZ of the next few years could be a more hopeful addition to the hybrid model.

Carol Jess is an affiliate of the Faculty of Law, University of Otago (Dunedin, NZ) and a member of the NZ Labour Party.

SNP's Growth Commission report – Surely No surPrise?

Neil Findlay says those looking for radical social change should join and support Labour

This year corporate lobbyist and former RBS banker, Andrew Wilson, delivered his long awaited Growth Commission Report (GCR) on the prospects for an independent Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon's reaction since, and the reaction of the SNP's rank and file, has been muted to say the least. The collective reaction of the 'Yes' movement's left wing, however, has been both vocal and damning. Influential writers and activists who saw independence as a route to a 'socialist' or 'left wing' Scotland have been left angry, let down and abandoned following publication of the report. I completely understand their anger. Independence may have seemed like something bold and exciting for many people turned off by stale party politics, but if the prospectus laid out in the GCR is the independence we can look forward to from the SNP, then it is no wonder the reaction has been so damning – bold and exciting it is not (unless you are a masochist).

George Kerevan, an economist and former SNP MP, said: 'Andrew Wilson's conservative economics might win dubious praise from the professorial superstars of a failed bourgeois economics ... But there are those who will not be enraptured by this document – the poor, the unskilled, and the working-class voters who want hope in their lives and might be persuaded that an independent Scotland will give it to them. These are the very voters Jeremy Corbyn is also appealing to'. Crash!

The *Herald's* Iain MacWhirter followed with: 'Nicola Sturgeon, who was always thought of as a dedicated left-winger, has found herself defending a document that reads in places like one of George Osborne's Budget speeches'. Bang! Meantime, Robin McAlpine of the Common Weal advised: 'The commitment to a deficit reduction programme, an incredibly low public debt ceiling and a commitment to peg public spending below the rate of GDP growth already has a name – it's called austerity.' Wallop!

It appears these commentators were caught unawares and are surprised that a former RBS senior adviser and director of lobbying firm, Charlotte Street Partners (which is financed by merchant banker Sir Angus Grossart and whose client list includes some of Scotland's wealthiest business people), would not write a single word that would offend corporate Scotland. I certainly was not.

Of course, Wilson is a true believer in right-wing, free market, neo-liberal economics that has always been a strong feature of the SNP's economic policy. In that he is not alone – Mike Russell (in his book *Grasping the Thistle*), Fergus Ewing, Derek MacKay and John Swinney all hail from this school of thinking. Socialists, or even social democrats, they are not!

The report's co-authors include Finance Secretary, Derek Mackay, Education Minister, Shirley Anne Somerville, senior SNP councillor Marie Burns, and MSP Kate Forbes amongst others. Its content is supported and endorsed by people at the very top of the SNP. That should alarm many who put their faith in that party to deliver a progressive vision for Scotland.

Their vision is of a Scotland of fiscal restraint, of austerity and cuts, of a country whose interest rates and monetary policy are set by another state, where unions don't even get a look in. It is a vision of a Scotland based on the continuation of a neo-liberal Scotland. This is not the Scotland the independence supporting left were sold in 2014, but it was the one we would inevitably have ended up with had the vote gone another way.

A newly independent country without the power to set interest rates and monetary policy would be independent only in name. The GCR suggests that Scotland would look to move to its own currency once six economic tests had been met (including stable public finances). On current predictions, based on Scotland taking on its share of public debt, that period would be at least

ten years if not more with a £5bn 'annual solidarity payment' to be paid to the Westminster government as part of the deal. If the Scottish economy can be fixed without control over its own currency, then why have an independent currency at all? The GCR was supposed to solve the contradictions of the 2014 White Paper – it has only ended up exacerbating them.

Compare this to the vision of Labour's leaders in Scotland and Britain and the choice for socialists is obvious:

'Our party's mission is not simply to secure a fairer distribution of wealth from the existing economic system, it is to fundamentally change the existing economic system... That is the only way to end the stark inequality of wealth and power that confronts us in Scotland today' (Richard Leonard) 'The great problems of our age: fighting for people's rights and living standards against the power of international capital... have been fought for and defended by people on the ground for generations. These are problems which individual nations cannot deal with alone' (Jeremy Corbyn)

This vision of hope and aspiration for all our people, not just the corporate voices which Andrew Wilson seeks to reassure, is radical and refreshing. The choice now in Scottish politics is between more managerialism delivering the same failed economic orthodoxy or a Scotland of real change delivering progressive policies for the many not the few.

Labour is the party of socialist progress in Scotland and Britain – and we welcome pro-independence voices who understand that their hope for a new country was not driven by a flag or history, but by a desire to see a fundamentally reformed economy and society.

Neil Findlay is a Labour MSP for the Lothians

End of the broad ‘Yes’ alliance?

Pauline Bryan excoriates the SNP’s attempt to gain mainstream support for independence

The Growth Commission Report (GCR) has many flaws but the most glaring is that woven into its fabric is a belief that global capitalism with its free markets and neo-liberal policies is the only possible economic structure for a future Scotland. It seems to forget that this is the very system that Scotland has been operating under and that is responsible for most of its economic woes.



Some SNP supporters may have believed that once it was free of the iron grip of the UK Treasury it would take a different course. But Nicola Sturgeon’s endorsement of the GCR has made it loud and clear that we can expect more of the same from a future SNP government. Sturgeon claims that the GCR explicitly rejects austerity. And right enough it does include that statement. But those words are merely inserted within a document that has, running through every page, an approach that will demand austerity to meet its fiscal targets.

The GCR fails to analyse some basic weaknesses in the Scottish economy. It would have done well to consider the work of John Foster for the Red Paper Collective. Foster describes how the ownership of the Scottish economy had changed in the past 30 years detailing the steady erosion of the number of major companies owned and controlled from within Scotland and shows how this has accelerated in the past 10 years. The result is a loss of manufacturing jobs and a huge increase in low paid low skilled precarious work. The Growth Commission endorses and would encourage the SNP’s policy of offering financial incentives to transitory global companies such as Amazon and Hewlett Packard.

The main thrust of the GCR is that Scotland can emulate other small countries that appear to have more successful economies. The flaws in that approach are numerous including differences in history, culture, geography, politics, and levels of exposure to international capital etc. But the lesson Andrew Wilson, the main author, draws is that countries that run tight, prudent economies are doing better than Scotland within Britain. In essence, the Growth Commission would enable current austerity policies to be locked in for at least the next decade with appalling consequences for public services and jobs.

The contradiction of demanding independence while continue to use sterling was a clear weakness in the 2014 SNP’s White Paper for independence. The GCR was expected to explore the viability of a Scottish currency, but instead has simply adopted the sterling option for the foreseeable future. This approach would tie Scotland into financial policies of another state and restricts the levers available to it to stimulate investment and growth. But this is not surprising as it sees no need to adopt a different economic strategy than the present Tory Treasury.

A further example of its neo-liberal underpinnings is shown in its belief that ‘flexicurity’ is the way ahead. The Danish model has been taken up and encouraged by the EU but is in reality a euphemism for insecure employment. It makes it easier for employers to sack workers and assumes the state will take responsibility for retraining workers to equip them for another job.



While the GCR recognises ‘the need for government, businesses and trade unions to work together’ it did not invite unions to participate in the business-dominated Commission. Not

surprisingly, the STUC is unhappy about the contents of this report but perhaps it should be grateful that its name does not appear on it and that it does not have to defend it.



The GCR may well signal the end of the broad ‘Yes’ alliance that allowed disparate groups from revolutionary socialists to conservative business people to project onto an the idea of an independent Scotland the kind of future their perspective demands. The exclusion of unions exposes the contradictions at the heart of the nationalist project, a contradiction that centred on class.

Scottish Labour’s policies are now taking it in a very different direction and exposing how similar the SNP and Tories are when it comes to fiscal and industrial policies. Richard Leonard’s commitments to different forms of ownership, investment for growth and workers’ rights give the basis for a growth that will benefit the many.

The Red Paper Collective has always argued that class and not nation should be at the core of our concerns. The SNP has never based its policies on class. So no one should be unduly surprised that it has allowed itself to drift to the right in an effort to regain ground ceded to the Tories. It has always been thus. The nationalists have never been anchored in a belief in the rights of working people to have democratic control of the economy. This document clearly exposes that truth.

So far as we know the GCR will not be discussed at the forthcoming SNP conference but there will be no way of dodging the differences emerging between the central cabal of the SNP and the left of the party, particularly the members that thought they had signed up for radical change. Like so many nationalist movements before it the SNP will put nation above class.

Pauline Bryan is convenor of the Red Paper Collective (redpaper.net)

Finance at the expense of democracy and development

John Foster unearths some disturbing characteristics of the SNP Growth Commission Report

The SNP's Growth Commission Report (GCR) bears some similarities to the Westminster Government's EU White Paper issued a few weeks later. Both accept neo-liberal, pro-market assumptions. Both seek, though in different ways, to maintain a relationship with the EU law that will perpetuate restriction on public sector intervention. Both, therefore, represent a challenge to the left.

If either is implemented, whether across a post-Brexit Britain or in an independent Scotland, they will block any advance towards the democratic control of the economy and ensure the decisions continue to be made in the interests of the very rich by a small cluster of investment syndicates, which is what pro-market, neo-liberalism really means.

However, neither the White Paper nor the GCR are anywhere near to being implementable policy and this is why it is so important that the left exposes the actual character of both documents and, still more important, develops alternatives that can mobilise popular support for genuinely democratic control.

Most left critiques of the GCR have correctly focused on its financial orthodoxy and its resulting commitment to governing within strict deficit limits. The proposed reduction in Scotland's deficit from 7.7% to 3.1% would require cuts of at least £7bn over a five to ten year period – well beyond what has already been inflicted (paragraph 3.185). John McLaren's analysis for Scottish Trends suggests still higher cuts as a result of the failure to factor in inflation: up to 15% for all areas outside the protected sectors of health, education and social care. Housing, transport and other council services would be decimated.

At the same time, the GCR commits itself to EU Single Market membership and hence to EU competition law. Any active industrial policy involving state aid or comprehensive public ownership would be precluded. However, there is a strange anomaly in the GCR. Deficit restrictions on public spending are not

mandatory under Single Market rules (they are only so for EU/Euro members). Nor does the Single Market cover tax policy - where the GCR commits itself to maintaining Britain's existing, very low levels of corporation tax and to other taxes rates that will be 'sensitive to the behaviour of individuals and business' (shorthand for maintaining minimal taxes for the rich: paragraph 3.172).

So what is the reason for these additional commitments – which in the case of tax can only worsen the proposed austerity cuts? The explanation would seem to be linked to another aspect of the report that has so far been given less attention. This is its proposal to make financial services a central, possibly the central, plank of a future Scottish economy. The financial sector is, the report claims, of 'greater importance to Scotland's economy than in any other economy' and, it argues, Britain's withdrawal from the EU would offer a clear opportunity for the 'relocation of financial services' from London to Edinburgh (A.657).

This is why the GCR calls for sterling to remain, meantime, Scotland's currency, for Scotland to maintain a 'close and respectful relationship' to the Bank of England and British financial stability institutions and why the Report insists that Scotland should remain in the EU Single Market (paragraphs 3.120 and 3.203). This, it hopes, would make Edinburgh the prime destination for the international banks operating in the City of London which want to continue operations within the EU.

The need for the continued use of sterling and for 'close and respectful' relations with the Bank of England is because Scotland by itself would not be able to provide a financially secure base. The lead author, Andrew Wilson, knows this only too well. He was deputy chief economist at the RBS when it went bust.

The other side of this Faustian deal – grabbing finance at the expense of industrial redevelopment – would be very rough justice for Scotland's productive economy and the workers within it. There would be no significant state intervention. Growth will depend

on attracting big business investment from elsewhere. Hence, low corporation tax. Hence also a labour market regime that would make Scotland attractive to external investors: so the proposal for labour market 'flexicurity' on Danish lines.

And don't be conned by the reference to Denmark. It's not about the welfare state. The introduction of a 'flexible' labour market in Denmark over the past ten years has involved undermining what remained of welfare provision: weakening employment contracts, introducing compulsory workfare for the unemployed (you work for benefits after three months) and a retirement age that has already been extended to 69.

So the GCR offers a pretty dystopian future. But it is also one that mirrors Theresa May's White Paper. This equally seeks to privilege the financial sector – making it more attractive to global speculators by excluding the City from EU Single Market regulations – while subordinating the rest of the economy to all the EU prohibitions on an active industrial policy.

This is what the left has to expose. Both documents are presented as offering sensible, cautious technocratic paths to an economically sustainable future. The reverse is the case. They demonstrate the power and dominance of big finance and its ideas in our society and the degree to which all state institutions, including the EU, express its interests. The immediate challenge is to win a countervailing mass understanding of the need for a pro-people alternative – one that can enable popular ownership to displace the existing regime. As Mariana Mazzucato argues in the *Value of Everything*, this finance-dominated state system destroys, rather creates, value and threatens the future of us all.

John Foster writes as joint secretary of ROSE -Radical Options for Scotland and Europe (www.radicaloptions.scot). Its next AGM and conference is on Saturday, 3 November at 10 a.m. in the conference suite of Unite the Union, 145 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 4RZ

Recipe for austerity and exploitation

David Byrne argues that Tartan Toryism is back on the cards

In 2015, Nicola Sturgeon established a Sustainable Growth Commission chaired by the former SNP MSP Andrew Wilson, generally identified with the right and pro-market wing of her party. The Commission's membership included no trade unionist. Evidently the SNP's Trade Union Group was not considered relevant as a source of personnel. They consulted with 23 organizations of which 20 represented various forms of business interests. They did not consider it worthwhile to consult with the STUC or with any individual union.

The general argument presented is simple enough. An independent Scotland could emulate other successful small nation state economies and through economic growth alone could generate enough production to fund a welfare state on the current scale, reduce inequality and halve the incidence of poverty in the country. Although the Commission included three social scientists, none of them seem to have pointed out the problem posed by path dependency – an important concept which can be summed up in the classic Irish response to a request for directions – if you want to get there you can't start from here. There is one reference to the problems posed by the transition undergone by Scotland and the UK as whole from being an industrial to post-industrial society but no serious consideration of what is required to address them.

The relative lack of any positive industrial strategy from the SNP can be contrasted with Labour's proposals for state intervention in industrial development, particularly in relation to funding and an industrial training strategy. One favoured international comparison is Denmark's supposed success with a labour market strategy based on '... flexicurity', which combines highly flexible labour markets (an ability to hire and fire) with a well-developed social insurance scheme and active labour market policy, which provides support for people to find their next job'. Well, Denmark's system has its real disadvantages for workers. Since the global recession following the financial crash of 2008, it has proved incapable of handling

increased unemployment. Its supposed benefits were massively overestimated even before that by OECD and much of the gains were in fact a product of a statistical artefact.

However, Denmark, along with most of the other small national economies so praised by the SNP Commission is not Scotland. In Denmark, unions organise two thirds of the workforce and play a key role in labour market policy. There is far more job security in Denmark than in contemporary Scotland. For example, apart from some highly paid self-organised dockers in one port and some students moonlighting as postal workers in Copenhagen, there are no zero hours contracts in the country. Scotland has only 30% of its workforce unionized, now mostly in the public sector. Interestingly in general the small national economies praised by the SNP Commission often have very high levels of union density – Finland 65%, Belgium 54%, Norway 53%, and Sweden 67%.

Even New Zealand, by far the most neo-liberal of them (apart from the City States of Singapore and Hong Kong which are really not appropriate comparators) has legislation outlawing zero hours contracts. Flexible labour markets in countries with weak unions mean low wages and this is particularly the case if there is large scale immigration in low waged sectors. It is not immigration itself which is the problem and, given Scotland's ageing population, there is a lot to be said for immigration on economic let alone social justice grounds, but the combination of an immigrant reserve army of labour with weak or non-existent unions leads to low wages. Britain has one of the most aggressive set of legal constraints on union activity in the democratic world. There is no mention in the SNP Commission's report of doing anything about this.

Then the proposals for public finance made by the Wilson report would require an even more stringent level of austerity than that currently being pursued by the Tory Westminster government. Wilson's report argued for holding public expenditure growth to 1% below growth in Scottish GDP. Given that current GDP growth is less

than 1% that would mean further cuts and the economic indicators, let alone the prospect of a global trade war, do not point to things getting any better. Nicola Sturgeon (*Sunday Herald* 3 June 2018) denied that this means continuing austerity. There would be even more cutting services of all kinds and slashing public sector employment. The politics of this are important. For much of the second half of the twentieth century democratic governments in industrial societies pursued a mix of economic and social policies which improved the living standards of ordinary people. Strong unions increased the share of economic resources going to workers. From the 1980s onwards this has gone into reverse.

Since the financial crash of 2008, we have seen the welfare capitalist states which paid attention to the interests of the many replaced by neo-liberal states which regard the financial markets rather than electoral democracy as their key constituency. Wilson's commission certainly is of this hue for it argues for fiscal austerity which would lead towards a balanced budget in which Scotland's current expenditure would be matched by Scotland's tax revenues. The only allowable borrowing would be for capital expenditures on infra-structure and similar projects and current expenditure would include interest and capital repayment charges.

There is some allowance for deficit financing within an economic cycle but the well-known fallacy of composition in which a national economy is equated with a household budget is alive and well in this report. What this means in practice can be illustrated by comparing Scotland with the East of England, a region which is in fiscal balance – revenues equal expenditures – and has a similar population, tax revenue and economic performance to Scotland, making it a good comparator.

Scotland has a history of high expenditure on services funded by the Barnett Formula so it spends 11% more per person than the East of England and that is the level of cuts required to achieve a fiscal balance for Scotland. The SNP maintain that a thriving Scottish economy based on a

flexi-secure labour market and growing exports would yield the tax revenues to close this gap but recent economic forecasts for all of the global economy, Britain and Scotland itself suggest that this is not likely.

Real wages in Scotland are lower than they were before the crash and there are no signs of radical innovation and new sectors for export growth. It may be that the new upper middle classes of China and India will drink more Scotch whisky and eat more smoked salmon but that will not close either the trade or the fiscal gap. It is a pity that Scotland's high value knitwear industry is in such decline and there is nothing wrong with producing luxury high value added goods for a global market but that is not enough. As always with SNP policy documents, there is a formal commitment in this report to increased equality in Scotland and a reduction in poverty.

But this is talking the talk, not walking the walk. Labour has proposed a radical recasting of the tax system so that the great majority of households will pay less or no more and the most affluent and corporations will meet their social obligations. The best Wilson's report could come up with was a proposal to establish for a comprehensive review of tax in an independent Scotland. The way to reduce inequality is by raising wages – a high minimum wage gets rid of subsidies to low wage employers paid from the taxes collected from

ordinary workers in the upper half but not very top of the income range. The SNP commission did recognize that higher incomes for poorer people stimulates economic demand – they spend what they have – but tied all discussion of this to economic growth rather than redistribution. To refer to the small country comparisons again in Denmark the top rate of effective income tax is 56%, Belgium 60%, Finland 58%, and Sweden 60%. Of the European comparators only Switzerland at 42% is less than Britain's current 47% and the threshold for higher rates is lower in most Nordic countries. We need redistributive taxation and proper taxation of capital to fund the welfare state and Labour knows how to do this.

In this respect the Commission's proposals to continue to use the pound as the Scottish currency in an independent Scotland for the foreseeable future are particularly relevant. That would tie key aspects of economic policy to macro-economic decisions on interest rates and money supply taken by another state. The Commission wants a say but would Scotland get one? Certainly those countries which use the US dollar have no say whatsoever. Of course, with a Tory government that would tie Scotland into austerity and a continuing abandonment of the welfare state. With a Labour government in England and Wales things would become very interesting indeed! Oh – and what

about oil? Well, the Commission argues that an independent Scotland should imitate Norway and use oil revenues for a kind of sovereign wealth fund.

Here is a prime example of path dependency – it is too late for this to amount to very much. Sure governments under Thatcher, Major, Blair and Brown badly mishandled the opportunity posed by oil but it is too late now and the Scottish Greens have a good case for leaving oil under the sea if we are to move towards a post-carbon economy. In an excellent article in *The Herald* (30 May) Ian MacWhirter said that if the SNP take up the proposals made by Wilson's commission, then that is goodbye to any pretence of being a left of centre party. Those who like me voted 'Yes' in 2014 because they thought an independent Scotland could become a proper social democratic state on the Nordic model can give up any hope of that. The election of Corbyn and Labour's return to socialism changed the game – hence my return to the party I was a member of for most of my adult life. The report of the Sustainable Growth Commission puts the tin lid on it. The Tartan Tories are back in force!

David Byrne is an Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Applied Social Sciences at the University of Durham. He is also the Treasurer of Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire Constituency Labour Party.



The Jimmy Reid Foundation

SIXTH ANNUAL JIMMY REID MEMORIAL LECTURE

Thursday 27 September, Banqueting Hall, City Chambers, Glasgow, 7.00pm
A Future after Brexit? Unions and the Scandinavian model of social democracy

Speaker: Frances O'Grady, General Secretary, Trades Union Congress

Chair: Lynn Henderson, President, Scottish Trades Union Congress

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the formation of the TUC. As in 1868, workers and their organisations are under sustained attack from austerity, job losses, neo-liberal economics and anti-union legislation. Union membership is at its lowest since the 1930s, especially amongst younger workers. Wages have suffered their longest period of stagnation since the Napoleonic War in the early 19th century. Frances O'Grady will discuss whether the Scandinavian model of social democracy offers a viable means of re-introducing workers' rights, social justice and equality back into our workplaces and communities after March 2019 when Britain is due to leave the European Union.

Doors open from 6.00pm, tea and coffee, exhibition and stall in the Picture Gallery. The lecture commences at 7.00pm, followed by question and answer session, finishing about 8.30pm.

The City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow G2 1DU is in the city centre convenient for Queen Street and Central railway stations, Buchanan Street Underground and bus routes. There is limited street parking bays and nearby multi storey car parks.

Tickets: £10/£6 unwaged can be purchased online by card or PayPal at <http://reidfoundation.org/2018/06/sixth-annual-jimmy-reid-memorial-lecture/>

Fighting the football fascists

Sean Ballie argues only a movement from within football lads and lasses can fight successfully

Recent mobilisations and demonstrations by groups such as the Democratic Football Lads Alliance (DFLA) have shocked many but should have surprised few. It is widely accepted that these newer organisations are just the reincarnation of loosely held together far right street movements such as the English Defence League (EDL).

But what is different this time is the move from the right to draw support from a cultural identity rather than a national one. In the past, far right street movements have attempted to unite their base and speak to anyone that feels their nationality or patriotism is under attack. Today, we see them trying to unite a much broader base with a less tarnished face, by presenting themselves as the voice of 'Football Lads' and the defenders of free speech. They are attempting to tap into both popular culture and some sense that democracy itself is under attack.

Far right groups have attempted to recruit from football crowds for years – they've identified the fertile ground and potential power any large groups of prominently working class young men have when angers and frustrations are channelled. This is a something sadly missed by many when they echo elitist condemnations of football fans as mindless, drunken thugs.

The combined attempts of the far right leaders and those condemning their followers have almost been successful in creating a cultural hegemony around the movement - saying if you are a young, working class 'football lad' then 'you are one of us'; we are protecting you, and this is where you politically belong. No other political narrative speaks to them at all, never mind in the same way. When liberal political commentators denounce the affiliations people like Tommy Robinson have had with football groups, they are only reinforcing and amplifying that embryonic political and cultural hegemony.

Unemployment, poverty, debt, alienation and sense of lost hope drive hundreds of men to kill themselves

each year. It's clear young men are the most likely to commit suicide, the most likely to develop drug and alcohol addictions, and the most likely to be drawn in by the far right. When these conditions contribute to the twisting of young men's ideologies, it's little surprise far right groups are the predators. Breaking the growing political and cultural hegemony amongst 'football lads' will be essential if we are to combat this growing fascist sentiment.

Many football lads not on these demonstrations understand and share many of the frustrations and anger. Anger and resentment due to economic mismanagement that has seen the destruction of our social infrastructure such as housing and education is being fuelled and directed by far right middle class opportunists to divide the working class in order to line their own pockets or to achieve a public platform for dangerous, bigoted and racist beliefs.

Continued failure from an out-of-touch and self-interested political elite will only force more football lads to flock to the banners of bigoted loud mouths. We need to acknowledge that many of today's problems have been deliberately caused by economic plans designed to crush working class people, the consequences of which are now being played out as a cultural war. The longer these divisions are left to take hold in our communities the further we travel from a solution.

Any attempts to speak directly to football lads, or the presence of a 'left wing' football lads movement coming from 'football lads' themselves, will likely not be welcomed by either the left or the right, but many feel that action must be taken to prevent the situation deteriorating further.

We cannot forget some of the most important anti-racist and anti-fascist efforts have come from football clubs and 'football lads'. Many of those who risked violent retribution for actively opposing the far right in the 1980s and 1990s would be classed as 'football lads' today.

Even today, many supporters groups maintain a non-political stance as a

compromise and this has as much to do with preventing outside subversion from right wing groups as preserving unity among fans. Today's problems pose a greater danger exactly because they are presented as cultural rather than political.

There is hope that by reaching out and offering an alternative narrative to today's social and economic issues, by telling a story that is relatable and easily understood, told by those they recognised as 'some of their own', that we could turn the tide and begin to protect our communities from both out of touch politicians and divisive bigots.

Already we have organised representation at over 20 different teams across Britain with dozens more coming forward every day, every one of them with decades of experience, commanding respect that comes from being rooted in the fan culture within our clubs. Already we have caused a stir within the ranks of the DFLA, but our aims go far beyond merely opposing a hardcore of bigots at the centre of these groups. We will engage and deliver an alternative that can hopefully draw from their support to deliver a cultural and political change that truly represents the working class history of our football crowds. Only by standing shoulder to shoulder on the terraces, in the streets and in our communities will we have a chance doing what needs to be done.

Sean Ballie is an electrician, community organizer a member of Football Lads and Lasses Against Fascism (FLAF) and was previously banned from every ground in Britain. For more on FLAF, see <https://www.facebook.com/FootballLadsAgainstFascism/photos/flaf-is-a-group-by-and-for-football-lads-and-lasses-we-are-not-a-liberal-pressur/494628914332294/>

Labour, anti-semitism and the IHRA

Henry Maitles outlines the dangers of anti-semitism being conflated with anti-Zionism

Anti-semitism, like all racism, is reactionary and can permeate all sections of society. Rooting it out is essential no matter where. Not only is it morally unacceptable, but it makes it harder to develop unity and radical alternatives if these ideas take hold. But we also need to condemn those conflating Zionist and Jew, or using Zionist when they mean Jewish. We need to understand that the majority of Jews who express support for Israel do so in the context of the Holocaust and the immigration controls of the West after the war. Recently, there has been an unrelenting attack on Corbyn, Labour and the radical left as being anti-semitic. As I write, the *Jewish Telegraph* has devoted 7 full pages of its 17 pages of news to this, including statements that the election of a Labour Government would be an 'existential threat' to British Jews.

These attacks on the left are part of a wider political agenda. The accusers seem to have some shared aims. Some see it as a part of a general foulness of left politics and, thus, seek to undermine the left in general. And, there is an agenda to discredit those of us on the left who make legitimate criticisms of Israeli policy or Zionism as a political ideology by arguing that such critique anti-semitic.

The accusation that the left is anti-semitic is given legitimacy by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) statement, now adopted in principle by governments all over the world, including Scotland. It gives 11 contemporary examples of anti-semitism in society. Most are relatively uncontentious, but one - 'Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour' - is highly problematic.

For many years the left (Jewish and non-Jewish) has argued that Zionism has been a disaster for the Jewish and non-Jewish peoples in Palestine/Israel and the solution to the problems is a democratic secular Palestine. However, we are now told that both these contentions are race hate. This is profoundly dangerous and needs to

be contested for five reasons.

First, it denies 130 years of Jewish history and debate over the merits of Zionism as a solution to anti-semitism. Second, it legitimizes the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian Arabs from their homes in 1948, which has been highlighted by internationally respected Israeli historians with access to the files, such as Ilan Pappé. Third, it denies those Palestinians whose families have been in camps for 70 years now any right of return or justice. Fourth, the alternative to a democratic state - the two state solution - has been made problematic if not impossible by Israel's illegal actions through its settlement programme. There are now some 500,000 settlers, many armed and with military training, in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. To claim those that argue for a potential democratic solution are anti-semites and hate criminals will ensure that real hate continues in the Middle East. The cycle of intifada being met by the snipers and the overwhelming fire power of the Israeli Defence Force will continue. The breaking of the deadlock will require justice for the Palestinian refugees, the espousal of which is now deemed to be race hate. Fifth, the July 2018 Israeli race laws outlining restrictions on the rights of Israeli Arabs have been roundly condemned inside Israel. But to argue that these are racist, falls foul of the IHRA definition. Finally, and dangerously, it allows racist alt-right governments and movements to argue that they are the friends of Jews and the left is anti-semitic.

The IHRA definition has led to temporary suspensions of respected Jewish socialists within Labour for expressing either anti-Zionist and/or anti-Israel positions. The IHRA definition is, thus, being used to silence or at least frighten the left. It has had the immediate effect of muting responses to ongoing killings in Gaza, as people are afraid of being accused of anti-semitism. This is exactly what the attacks on the left are designed to do.

So, what is the way forward? Firstly, we need to support struggles in

the Arab world. Not only because those events of the Arab Spring of 2010-2013 showed the possibilities of challenging and defeating the dictatorships and developing fairer, more just, democratic societies but because they all raised support for the Palestinians. Secondly, we need more demonstrations and rallies, involving Palestinian activists, Jews who oppose the violations of Palestinian human rights, and unions and political parties in support of Palestinian defiance and against Israeli oppression. Thirdly, Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (BDS) - despite the fact that Zionists make the case for this to be race hate - is crucial. BDS has the potential (as did the campaigns in South Africa) to isolate the regime. But it is not just individual boycott of goods but rather a call to stop sending weapons used to kill Palestinians to the Israeli government and to stop our pension and other funds being invested in industries which benefit Israel. Fourthly, the defence of the left against calls of anti-semitism is central, as the attack on the left is to deter people from supporting Palestinian defiance of Israel, the call for a democratic state in the region and BDS. If the hard line pro-Israelis win the argument that BDS is anti-semitic, union support will become very much harder and BDS is not viable without union support.

Corbyn, Labour, the left and unions have to stand up for the right to criticize Israel as racist and Zionism as reactionary. The adoption of the IHRA in entirety will not stop the attacks on Corbyn; rather it will fuel it, as suddenly there will be many more 'anti-semitic' Labour activists to be picked on. Corbyn will be called upon by all sides to condemn and discipline critics of Israel.

Henry Maitles is a professor of education at the University of the West of Scotland and a member of Scottish Jews for a Just Peace.

Allegations of Labour anti-semitism: both Trojan and stalking horse?

Vince Mills looks behind the headlines to see what is really going on

Perhaps the saddest aspect of the 'debate' on anti-semitism in Labour has been how it has been degraded by those whose central concern is to ditch Corbyn. Of course, not everyone arguing for the unamended International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition and examples are on the Labour's right but most are.

Instead of a robust definition of anti-semitism which deals with the actual level of offending within Labour, we are being pulled towards acceptance of the IHRA definition with all the examples despite the fact that even Kenneth Stern who is widely credited with drafting the IHRA definition and examples said to the US House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary that: 'The definition was not drafted, and was never intended, as a tool to target or chill speech on a college campus. In fact, at a conference in 2010 about the impact of the definition, I highlighted this misuse, and the damage it could do.' Trying to use a system designed to collect data, which was his intention, as the basis of disciplinary action will make it more difficult to take effective steps against anti-semitic behaviour and language.

This is of little concern to Labour right-wing wreckers whose intention is to damage Corbyn and Labour on the basis of allegations of widespread anti-semitism. Evidence of widespread anti-semitism in Labour is difficult to find. As *Scottish Left Review* already reported (issue 106), the Campaign against Anti-Semitism commissioned a YouGov survey found Labour supporters less likely than Conservatives to agree with anti-semitic statements. Both groups showed a significant fall in anti-semitic attitudes from 2015 (which coincides with Corbyn's leadership). This fall was greatest among Labour supporters.

This is supported by other studies. For example, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown wrote in the 'i' (24 April 2018): 'A 2017 study looking at British attitudes towards Jews by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found 30% of the general population hold at least one 'anti-Semitic attitude'. Figures on the left are similar to or below the population

mean, while those on the right are significantly more likely to hold at least one anti-Semitic attitude. Such facts do not stop the oft repeated accusations against the left.'

Support for the IHRA definition and examples can come from strange places. Anas Sarwar MSP has a solid reputation of supporting the Palestinians and, therefore, of criticism of Israel's behaviour in Gaza. Yet he too has joined the right-wing bandwagon: 'I think the Labour party, without delay, should adopt the IHRA definition of anti-semitism immediately and without delay and without caveats ... It is for the Jewish community to lead and shape what the definition of anti-semitism is because they are the ones who experience it' (*Guardian* 21 August 2018).

It appears Sarwar is misinterpreting the Macpherson report on Stephen Lawrence - the supposed source of the so-called 'Macpherson principle' that victims of racism alone can define that racism. Macpherson gave a specific instruction to the police that the victim's perception of the motive for an attack is what the police must record as the motive for the attack as opposed to the police's interpretation of it. That does not constitute a general principal that only victims can define racism as they experience it. Indeed, the Community Security Trust (CST), a charity whose mission is to protect British Jews from anti-semitism and related threats, wrote in its 2009 Anti-Semitic discourse report: 'The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident has significantly influenced societal interpretations of what does and does not constitute racism, with the victim's perception assuming paramount importance. CST, however, ultimately defines incidents against Jews as being anti-semitic *only where it can be objectively shown to be the case* [emphasis added]...'

So how should Labour assess whether language or behaviour of party members is anti-semitic? The

National Executive Committee (NEC) code adopted in July had already done it. What the NEC has already accepted

is the following working definition as set out by IHRA: 'Anti-semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.'

Because this is vague both the IHRA and Labour's NEC adopted examples. It is in the examples that variation between the NEC and IHRA definitions occurred. There are 11 examples in the IHRA framework, 5 of these are accepted more or less exactly by Labour's NEC as they are set out by the IHRA; there were also enhancements in the NEC variation which are generally seen as clarifying the examples given by IHRA.

There are four IHRA examples that were not adopted and all of these are in relation to criticism of Israel and were excluded because of concerns about free speech. As the highly respected University of Oxford and Jewish academic, Brian Klug pointed out 'The four IHRA examples that do not make it into the list in par. 9 of the NEC Code are not simply waved away.' He argues that instead the NEC in many ways strengthened the applicability of the code making it easier to tackle anti-Semitism, while also pointing out that it is a *working* definition that can be improved on the basis of experience.

There was, therefore, no strong case to alter what had already been developed by the NEC. It is difficult, on this basis, not to see those who sought to impose the IHRA definition without the NEC amendments or caveats as being unconcerned about the need for free speech on Palestine or hell bent on undermining Corbyn on any pretext whatever, or both. If the NEC has now accepted the unamended version of IHRA definition even with caveats to allow criticism of Israel, subsequent NECs should not feel bound by that decision if it becomes clear that it is being used to mute or gag legitimate criticism of Israel's apartheid policies.

Vince Mills is Secretary of Scottish Labour Left.

Do we need a Scottish Fair Wages Resolution?

Mick Rice makes the case for the Scottish Parliament to improve the treatment of its own staff

The Scottish Parliament can show a degree of 'independence' from the diktats of the Tory Westminster government by adopting its own Fair Wages Resolution (FWR). A suggested wording is:

This Scottish Parliament agrees that from (insert date) all directly employed staff and all staff employed by bodies that receive funding as a consequence of a budget approval by this parliament, shall, as a condition of receipt of such funding, have contained within their contract of employment the following:

'Your terms and conditions of employment shall be no less favourable than those who are employed in comparable jobs within the European Community. Further, all contractors providing goods and services to this parliament and to any other bodies in receipt of funding as a consequence of a budget approval by this parliament, shall, as a condition of the contract to supply such goods and services, include a commitment that its staff shall enjoy conditions of employment no less favourable than comparable workers employed within the European Community.'

It is important to understand that FWRs are decisions of public bodies to impose a requirement upon themselves (and any subsidiary bodies). When parliaments legislate they impose conditions upon others, whereas resolutions impose conditions upon that public body. The first FWR was adopted by the House of Commons in the 1890s and came about after a campaign by unions against 'sweated trades' where unscrupulous employers were driving down pay and conditions in order to win public contracts. Doesn't this sound familiar? The Tory Brexiteers want to celebrate cutting red tape (aka your rights?) in order to become more competitive (aka make higher profits). The FWR used 'normal wages and conditions' pertaining in Britain as the comparator. There is no legal reason not to use an international comparator.

Thatcher abolished the FWR in 1982.

She had to give 12 months' notice to the International Labour Office (ILO) as the commitment to Fair Wages had become an ILO commitment. Her motivation was to privatise public services and drive down wages and conditions below the comparable public-sector rate. At the time, I was working for the public sector union, NALGO. I set about, with some success, in getting local NHS District Health Authorities to amend their Standing Financial Instructions to adopt their own FWR. Any public body, or for that matter any organisation whatsoever, can adopt a FWR.

A Scottish FWR, in the terms I have set out above, would ensure that contracts of employment were changed to those specified. The contract of employment would be enforceable by application to an Industrial Tribunal. Clearly, such cases are likely to be the preserve of unions submitting claims through appointed solicitors and on behalf of groups of workers.

Whilst, technically the resolution could be used to enhance wage rates, applicants would have to prove that the comparable group of workers within the EU had wages that were normally greater. This would be hard to prove and it is unlikely that the resolution could be used for this purpose – although if the EU adopted a minimum wage that was higher than the UK minimum wage this would be enforceable.

However, what is indubitable is that EU directives on worker protection do have general significance across the EU as a whole. If these rights are greater than those pertaining in the applicable public bodies, or contractors supplying goods and services to those bodies, then EU rights and protections apply. In effect EU worker rights will have been enshrined in the individual contract of employment of the worker. Moreover, the opt out of the Westminster government to the Working Time Directive, would be bypassed as this would now apply via the Scottish FWR.

There were 561,300 public sector workers in Scotland (21% of the total

workforce) in January 2017. The Scottish public sector is responsible for £11bn of orders for goods and services each year. Obviously, £11bn must equate to a large number of jobs. But, in addition, the private contractor would be signing up to a commitment that its staffs are covered by the Scottish FWR - substantially more than those just employed on the delivery of the contract itself. Moreover, where firms have staff based in other countries, they would also be covered.

Brexit will not affect the application of a Scottish FWR – unless the UK parliament specifically includes legislation limiting the power of Holyrood. But this would result in a full-blown constitutional crisis and expose the Tory Brexiteers as free market ideologues determined to rip up worker protection!

A Scottish FWR is likely to be supported by many small firms and SMEs – who are fed up with multinationals underpaying taxes – they want a level playing field and not a race to the bottom generated by international spiv companies.

It is likely that the SNP would support a Scottish FWR for the following reasons: no immediate cost consequences; the rights that it gives workers can only be enforced through application to an Employment Tribunal; provides a level 'playing field' with other EU countries; proves the Scottish Government's EU credentials; and is one in the eye for the Tories.

If the Scottish Parliament adopted a FWR, then it is likely that the Welsh Assembly would also do so. This would place pressure on the Westminster Parliament. It would expose the Tory Brexiteers who want to drive down pay and conditions. If Labour or the SNP do not propose it, perhaps the Greens would do so. A simple majority in the Scottish parliament is all it takes!

Mick Rice is the Secretary of the Glasgow UNITE Retired Member's branch



The Eyes of Orson Welles **(2018)**

written and directed by Mark Cousins
Reviewed by Jackie Bergson

Mark Cousins' personally spoken, second-person narrative throughout *The Eyes of Orson Welles* casts a conversational spell which conjoins his audience and subject. A full-screen-sized black and white photograph of Welles in repose is intermittently shown, evidently to suggest that he is somehow listening. This image intersperses still and animated studies of the contents of a precious box of Welles' private art; close-seeming soundscapes; film clips, which are given pseudo psycho-analytic treatment - points are often made about Welles' psyche rather than his fame. 'I hate to do this to you, Orson' later forewarns Cousins' incarnation about his documentary's perceptual inquiry.

Pre-film-screening, Cousins invites his audience in person to share his live phone conversation with Beatrice Welles, Orson's daughter. We hear her tell the film historian that this is the best documentary about her father that she has seen. We are invited by Cousins to applaud reassuringly, in capacious throng.

Appearing to replace former clichés about Welles' body of work, *The Eyes of Orson Welles* freshly reveals elements of its subject's lifelong ability in observing the world - his 'looking life'. The rediscovered box of Welles' paintings and drawings is central to showing and talking about rarer aspects of his life. This art archive, to which Cousins' film audiences are made privy, was accessed through his contemporary, Michael Moore: post-screening news to this attentive audience. Said by some critics to be 'pretentious', Cousins' cinematic in-crowd revelations seem impressive; his left-wing connections trusting and facilitative.

Widely acknowledged as a true legend in cinematic history, Welles' relationships were often publicised - Cousins alternately confronts, discusses and concludes on this subject with a dose of cryptic, conversational cynicism. To exemplify

Welles' own flaws, he draws mythological comparisons and allusions to chivalrous characters like Don Quixote and to authority figures like Macbeth. This unusual juxtaposition reveals darkness and light in Welles' more private life: he evidently understood human conditions of lust, power and addiction rather well.

Possibly forgotten or unseen philanthropic attributes which Welles possessed are also examined in the film. Particularly, his scrutiny in painting and sketching working people in Ireland and Europe; his borrowing of imagery from Eastern European and Slavic films; his dramatic use of dark and light 'lines and calligraphy' in his work; his humanistic psychology of emotion; his sincerity in publically speaking out about corruption and injustice.

Early in the film, Cousins rhetorically asks Welles how he would have used the 'dark magic' of the internet. Recent photographs of New York are accompanied by the brief explanation to Welles that 'the twin towers are no more'. Esoteric themes of tragedy and curiosity, of light and dark, of then and now thus consistently recur. One of several ripostes - or quotes - to Cousins, cleverly sourced from Welles' original writings, is spoken towards the end of the film. He declares 'I was a satirist' through an actor's impression; he also appears to point out that Cousins missed the humour of his work.

During the last third of his documentary, Cousins' narrative device changes from letter-reading to categorising and lecturing. Reviewing through more elliptical interpretations, he avoids simply regurgitating epithets from the past which affirmed Orson Welles' legendary status. It is a fact which needs no repetition that, since its release in 1941, *Citizen Kane* has been critically lauded as one of the greatest movies ever; *The Third Man*, released in 1949, has moreover been consistently acclaimed as the 'perfect' movie.

The Eyes of Orson Welles enables us to get a bit closer to the creative and human spirit of its titular titan. The sheer stature of this actor and director can never be forgotten. Nevertheless, talking both

inside and outside of his documentary, Cousins conveys his understanding of his subject as a complex figure whose socialist, industrialist and romantic interests were subsumed by his films. It may be for another time or another film-maker to postulate how Welles would rise up creatively, probably in majestic protest, against certain American Republicans, were he alive today.

This documentary about Orson Welles is fascinating in its familiar and playful yet technical approach to finding the man behind the acclaimed work. According to Cousins, Welles left more than an autobiography for people to read and see. This extended letter to a man who, in its writer's view, was one of the great iconographers of the 20th century purveys distinctive, interesting bulletins, through its author's narrative consistency of poetic Irish soul, mischievous curiosity and droll scepticism.

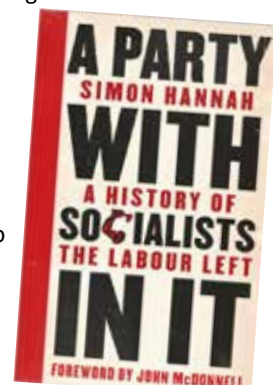
Jackie Bergson has worked in the voluntary sector and commercial business development in technology and creative sectors. Educated in and living in Glasgow, her political and social views chime left-of-centre.

Simon Hannah

A Party with Socialists in it - a history of the Labour Left

Pluto, 2018, £12.99, 9780745337470
Reviewed by Dave Sherry

Popular among younger voters and older Labour stalwarts alike, Jeremy Corbyn has proved hugely controversial and threatening to both the British establishment and Labour's Blairite faction. Together they are ganging up on Corbyn, this time with crudely contrived accusations of anti-Semitism. No other Labour leader has been so denigrated and conspired against in such a short space of time as Corbyn. His rise makes relevant



the history of the Labour Left from which he comes. But that history is not widely known.

With the tensions between Labour's left and right intensifying, Simon Hannah, a union activist and Labour member, has written a timely book with a good, honest summary of the ups and downs of the Labour left, from the formation of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 right through to the present. He states: 'The arguments raised and the political divisions that emerged in 1900 have continued to reverberate down the years' as he describes the three sources that formed Labour as a parliamentary party—socialists mainly from the Independent Labour Party (ILP), a union bureaucracy desperate for representation at Westminster and Liberals grouped around the Fabians, led by Sydney and Beatrice Webb.

Keir Hardie's ILP was prepared to compromise socialist ideals for electoral gain and the support of union leaders. So Hannah freely admits: 'Labour has never been a socialist party, even if— in the words of Tony Benn — it has always had socialists in it' — hence the title.

It lays bare the divisions that have played out between right and left ever since, but more importantly Hannah shows that while the left could win important victories it was never able to consolidate or sustain them in the face of right-wing attacks and the power of the union block vote.

Ahead of a possible Corbyn government, Hannah's cautionary tale shows how British capitalism has both accommodated Labour governments and undermined them when it felt threatened by even the most moderate measures.

For Hannah the failure of the Labour left historically has been its inability or reluctance to focus and concentrate its activities outside Westminster, combined with an over-reliance on its parliamentary leaders to deliver, as happened with both Nye Bevan and Tony Benn.

With a foreword by Deputy Leader John McDonnell, the book's author welcomes Corbyn's leadership and celebrates Labour's last conference — the biggest in the party's history. That's why the warning in the book's conclusion should be taken to heart: 'Any serious reading of history can lead only to one conclusion; the socialist left will have to break down the traditional institutions of government and power in order to make any headway at all'. This means, 'doing something the left has always talked about but never done—building a mass, extra-parliamentary movement'.

Hannah is right: a Corbyn government will face the hostility of the bosses and the forces at their disposal. If it is serious about

fundamental change, it will provoke the fury of an undemocratic, unaccountable state.

On the eve of the WW1, the Tories allied with the Unionist bosses of Ulster and the British Army High Command to threaten the elected Liberal government of the day with a civil war if it tried to implement its manifesto promise of Home Rule for Ireland.

In the run-up to the General Strike of 1926, Trotsky wrote: 'The present British parliament forms a monstrous distortion of the principles of bourgeois democracy. Without revolutionary force one can hardly obtain in Britain even an honest division of parliamentary constituencies or the abolition of the monarchy or the House of Lords'.

Little has changed since. When Corbyn was elected leader, a senior serving army general told the *Sunday Times* that if he became prime minister: 'There would be mass resignations at all levels and the very real prospect of a mutiny. You would see senior generals directly and publicly challenging Corbyn over vital policy decisions such as Trident, pulling out of NATO and any plans to emasculate or shrink the armed forces. ... The army just wouldn't stand for it. The general staff would not allow a prime minister to jeopardise the security of this country and I think people would use whatever means, fair or foul, to prevent that ... The intelligence services will refuse to let Corbyn see information on live operations because of his sympathy towards some terrorists'.

So Hannah's appeal for the Labour left to focus on the building of a mass movement is urgent and ought to be pursued. The problem, however, is that even according to his version of Labour history there is no evidence to suggest that it will.

Sadly as things stand at present, Corbyn's retreats before the right seem to confirm this. That can only change if Corbyn himself goes on the offensive — and not just on anti-Semitism and Palestinian rights, crucial as they are.

In Scotland, Corbyn is campaigning to win back Labour seats from the SNP, something that he believes will be critical in ending Tory rule at the next general election. But so long as Labour opposes a second referendum it repels potential voters, no matter how much to the left its policies may be compared to the SNP. Many see independence as the route to less inequality, anti-austerity and a less racist society. They may like Corbyn's policies but have difficulty in seeing beyond his opposition to independence and his backing for Trident renewal. To gain momentum here, he needs to break with

the Blairites on these questions too.

Dave Sherry is a longstanding member of the Socialist Workers' Party and serves on the Scottish Left Review editorial committee

Lesley Riddoch

Blossom — what Scotland needs to flourish

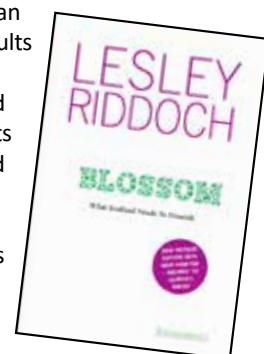
(Post Indyref Post EUref edition), 2018, Luath, £11.99, 1912147521

Reviewed by Stephen Smellie

First published in 2013 amidst the independence referendum campaign, *Blossom* is a mixture of journalism and an optimistic vision that Scotland could be a much better place if the kind of efforts reported on could be encouraged and supported. It highlighted the achievements where local communities and people have 'more control, more levers.' And the examples are inspiring. Local people, organised and working co-operatively to identify and address local issues can achieve a great deal. Examples such as West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative, the Isle of Eigg community buyout, or community health projects where professionals work with patients and not just treat them, work with and not just in communities, demonstrate this.

I declare an interest. As a community development worker for many years, I worked with many local activists committed to making things better for their local community. As a local government union activist, I know that the vast majority of council and other public sector workers and elected members actually live in the communities that they are employed to deliver services to. The rhetoric that local communities are oppressed by the petty bureaucrats ignores this fact and a vision that says localism is part of an answer must include both the people who live locally and those who work locally. It must also recognise that local volunteers need backing from supportive, enabling local authorities that can underwrite their efforts and ensure a fall back when the volunteers lack specialist knowledge, reach their limitations in time and numbers or when they want a rest.

An almost folksy belief that the little people and little communities can achieve much better results than big councils and governments is balanced in the book by arguments about state planning and strategic answers to the big issues that the little people and communities seek to respond to. So rather than a vision of a David Cameron style



'Big Society', Blossom's manifesto was for a political class and state that understands the importance of increasing democratic involvement, local engagement and control alongside more radical planned strategic interventions to address access to land and the health and environmental crises that confront us. An excellent and inspiring read, its utopianism, of course, fitted better with the positivity of the 'Yes' campaign which envisioned a better fairer Scotland than the wholly negative 'No' campaign.

This is a new edition, post referendum, general election and Brexit vote, and new chapters reflect on the state of Scotland now. Riddoch asserts that voting and polling confirms that the constitutional future of Scotland has replaced class as the dividing line in Scottish society. The rise of Corbyn in the Labour Party has not changed that. However, the power that the land-owning aristocracy and the control of the economy that the largely non-Scottish owners of capital have meant that class, or who controls the wealth of Scotland, remains a fundamental issue. Whilst the Corbyn-inspired unionist Labour camp emphasise this point and the Davidson-led Tories are well aware of it, large sections of the 'Yes' movement do not seem to appreciate it at present.

The prospects for Brexit are not encouraging and Riddoch argues that Scotland's future needs to include greater not less links and engagements with European neighbours, ideas and actions, as well as the greater democracy, localism and systemic change that she argues for in every preceding chapter. The question the book does not ask or answer, however, is: given the systemic and strategic changes needed to address the Scottish people's issues and the challenge to the economic elite that this poses, can a movement be built to achieve this without an understanding of why class remains the dividing line within society?

Stephen Smellie is a senior UNISON lay official (Depute Convenor, UNISON Scotland, branch secretary UNION South Lanarkshire, national executive member) and serves on the Scottish Left Review editorial committee.

Rebecca Solnit

Call Them by Their True Names: American Crises (and Essays)

Haymarket Books, £11.99, 978-1-60846-329-9

Around the corner from where I sit in Edinburgh, a number of shop fronts are covered in chipboard. Stuck to those boards are posters displaying the slogan SAVE LEITH

WALK, a protest against an application from Drum Property Group to redevelop a stretch of old, sandstone-fronted buildings in which a number of local businesses currently operate. These include Leith Depot, Leith's only dedicated music venue.

This huge redevelopment is the latest flashpoint for conflict regarding the gentrification of Leith and local action groups are fighting to force big business to take seriously the concerns of the local community. It is difficult, though essential work, familiar to activists all over the world, though particularly familiar to those in the big cities of economically developed countries.

When not in Scotland, I live in Brooklyn, New York, a borough that has long struggled with the problems associated with gentrification and the changing demographics of what were formerly working-class neighbourhoods. This struggle was illustrated with horrifying clarity earlier this year when, in Crown Heights, Saheed Vassell, an unarmed, 34-year-old man with a history of mental illness, was shot nine times in the head and torso by police. 911 had been called when Vassell was witnessed pointing a metal object at people in the street. The object was later discovered to have been a pipe. Vassell had bipolar disorder and had been previously identified by police, according to the *New Yorker*, as an 'emotionally disturbed person'. He was also well known in the neighbourhood and questions were immediately asked whether the caller to 911 was familiar with Vassell or, indeed, with the ways and values of the wider community. The argument was made that a local would have known that Vassell posed little threat. Residents also questioned whether Vassell, who was black, would still be alive had he been white.

In 'Death by Gentrification,' from the essay collection *Call Them by Their True Names*, Rebecca Solnit tells the similar story of the killing of Alex Nieto in Bernal Heights Park, San Francisco. Born in Bernal Heights to Mexican parents, Nieto lived in the area all his life. Accounts of his killing differ, but some details are widely agreed upon: that Nieto was eating in the park; that he was wearing the Taser he used for his security job; and that he had become agitated following an altercation with an aggressive dog and its owner.

Following this altercation, a different park user—a white man and recent arrival in the area—observed Nieto's behaving 'nervously' and putting his hand on a holster on his belt. The man warned other park users to stay away, and urged his partner to phone the police. They arrived minutes later.

The four officers involved claim that Nieto then approached the police, unholstered his Taser and pointed it at them. Believing it to be a gun, the officers opened fire and continued to fire when he fell to the ground, claiming Nieto had assumed a 'tactical sniper posture.' Together, they discharged a total of 59 rounds.

Despite a number of troubling inconsistencies in their testimonies as well as contradictory evidence provided by a bystander, all four officers were acquitted when the case went to trial. The verdict was widely interpreted to be evidence of the judiciary's indifference to violent crimes when they are committed by the police against people of colour.

The systemic racism of gentrification and policing are only two of the issues Solnit tackles in *Call Them by Their True Name*, a book which casts a wide net. In another writer's hands the scale of America's problems might lead to despair. Here it is not so, for while Solnit acknowledges that activism often does not bring about the desired result, she chooses instead to focus on its cumulative effect.

Take the Dakota Access Pipeline: it would be a mistake, Solnit argues, to measure the success of the activists simply by whether or not the pipeline was eventually built. Similarly, the success was not only that the protest cost the DAP investors a fortune—which it did—or the fact that future pipelines now strike investors as riskier investments—which they do. Rather '[i]t is an affirmation of solidarity and interconnection, an education for people who didn't know much about Native rights and wrongs ... a confirmation of the deep ties between the climate movement and indigenous rights ... It has inspired and informed young people who may have half a century or more of good work yet to do.' Solnit cautions against despair, especially in newcomers to activism: results are not non-existent simply because they are not immediate; lack of immediate success is not failure.

Which brings us back to Leith Walk. Both the council and Drum Property Group continue to push for the project to go ahead. This being the case, there is a good chance the protesters will—in the short term, at least—be disappointed. Even so, incremental actions matter and one result of the protest is that future developers in Leith will have to consider this sort of public response before drafting their plans. What's more, activists will be better prepared, better practiced and will have developed better networks to do the work of protest in the future. And, as Solnit makes plain in her concluding remarks, this is 'the work that matters.'

Robin Jones lives in New York where he works as an editor. His writing has appeared in the Edinburgh Review, Jacobin, Gutter, and the Huffington Post.

Kick up the Tabloids

The start of September has traditionally signalled the end of the 'Silly Season'. Nobody appears to have told Theresa May, Jeremy Hunt or Phillip Hammond about this though.

May's embarrassing trip to Africa is but the latest in a series of desperate moves to try to re-position the Britain on the world stage post-Brexit. The very idea that African countries - which have been invaded, exploited and then abandoned by the British Empire - should be falling over backwards to do a trade deal with Britain is beyond laughable. However, in Tory news-speak, our country's colonial exploitation of the African continent is now viewed as 'shared history'

Let's examine the history that Britain has 'shared' with Africa. We went there a couple of centuries ago, committed genocide, raped the continent for its resources, sold a sizeable percentage of the population into slavery and coerced them into fighting our wars for us. We then bugged off and left when they were of no use to us any more, although Margaret Thatcher still liked to offer support to the odd racist regime and would continually denounce Nelson Mandela as a terrorist. I don't think that kind of 'shared history' is likely to be a great starting point for trade negotiations, particularly for a country like Britain that has very little to trade.

Because, let's face it, thanks to Tory policies of the nineteen-eighties, this country actually makes bugger-all to sell to anyone. Look at the packaging of most electrical products, clothing or foodstuffs and you will find out how little is actually made in this country.

The sum total of what Britain produces in 2018 is Tunnock's caramel wafers and inane television

programmes about baking. I drive a Mini, seen by many as a quintessential iconic British brand. It was made in Germany by BMW. Come next March, I may not be able to get spare parts, if we crash out of Europe with no deal. I may as well drive it off a cliff, which is what appears to be the government's tactics in dealing with the EU.

The whole African trip was embarrassing enough even without May's impromptu dance routine. One wonders who advises the Prime Minister on these matters. There is nothing more cringe-worthy than an anally-retentive, buttoned-up vicar's daughter from the Home Counties trying to be spontaneous at any time, let alone when she is attempting to do so in time to the music of a foreign culture which she quite clearly does not understand. The entire spectacle teetered between the car-crash viewing of a straight-laced schoolteacher trying to look cool at the sixth-form prom and the kind of sketch in which Rick Gervais attempts to find humour from poking fun at disabled people.

Theresa May is so bad at these kind of embarrassingly crass photo opportunities that she has almost raised this lack of self-knowledge to an art form. In particular, she seems to now specialise in ones that can be seen as a metaphor for her hold on government.

To watch her gyrating and wobbling like a marionette with a drunk puppeteer who has lost all sense of rhythm, timing or self-respect could be seen as an apt commentary on her negotiations with Europe. She doesn't know the tune, has no sense of what she should be doing and appears to be making up everything on the spot.

Likewise was the photo-shoot at last year's Conservative conference

where she and Phillip Hammond were photographed taking a trip in a driverless car. What better metaphor could one think up for her government? Heading off blindly towards who-knows-where with nobody in control! Indeed, the only thing that would have made that publicity stunt better would have been if they had knocked Boris Johnston off his bike at the same time!

May has surrounded herself with such a shabby bunch of shady characters, half-wits, and non-entities who any time one resigns that you'd think they've reached rock bottom. Yet they always manage to find a drill to dig that bit deeper.

Boris Johnston resigns and most people think, after his two years of pedalling casual racism around the globe assume that we cannot possibly have a worse foreign secretary than that. It appears that we can. We now have a Foreign Secretary in Jeremy Hunt who does not know what country his own wife comes from. He made a speech in which he said she is Japanese, when in reality she is Chinese. Worse still, he made the speech in China. At least he had the common sense not to try dancing.



Vladimir McTavish

ASLEF CALLS FOR AN INTEGRATED, PUBLICLY OWNED, ACCOUNTABLE RAILWAY FOR SCOTLAND

(which used to be the SNP's position – before they became the government!)



Mick Whelan
General Secretary

Tosh McDonald
President

Kevin Lindsay
Scottish Officer

ASLEF the train drivers union - www.aslef.org.uk

FIGHT ANTI-UNION LAWS



General Secretary: Mick Cash

www.rmt.org.uk

President Sean Hoyle



COURAGE

PERSEVERANCE

CONFLICT

From all the branches - professional and A.F.B. over £200 had been received in contributions in that period.

The Organisation possessed assets totalling £4,349. 6.11

The General Secretary stated that the staff of the Union had reacted in a wonderful fashion to the bombing attacks and the destruction of Head Office. Even in the present difficult circumstances they had laid the foundations of a new system of organisation. In the future all accounts were to be kept in triplicate.

The General Secretary reported the opening of three temporary area offices of the Union in the Metropolitan area, namely, at 15 Park Avenue, Barking, at 101 Broadhurst Gardens, Hampstead and at 50 Spring Way, Chingford. The first two

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