

Scottish Left Review

Issue 89 September/October 2015 - £2.00

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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

Comment - Not such a silly season

August has not been the traditional silly summer season of politics this year. Jeremy Corbyn really has transformed the landscape of the political debate. He must know he is doing the right thing when not only do thousands attend his rallies but also Blair and his cronies berate him for all sorts of so-called fantasy politics. That Corbyn only just managed to get on the ballot paper shows how tightly Labour is controlled by its MPs - but once past this hurdle he has spoken to and for a huge constituency of existing members, new members and registered supporters. It's a great shame of the left affiliated unions that they did not make sure that John McDonnell - who campaigned for the very policies these unions themselves espoused - got on the ballot paper in 2007 and 2010 as he could have done the same sort of job - certainly of shifting the debate leftwards if not actually winning. But it's also a shame on the Labour left in Scotland that no one stood against Dugdale and Macintosh because having Neil Findlay as leader in Scotland would have been a good compliment to Corbyn as leader in Britain. Not having a left leader in Scotland will make Labour's job of competing with the SNP in the run up to next year's elections all that bit harder (especially now with fuller autonomy for Scottish Labour) while it will also be true

that if Corbyn wins the SNP's argument that it needs complete dominance in Holyrood to protect Scotland from the Tories will not be quite the attraction it once was. The SNP will no longer be able to so easily claim that it is the 'real' Labour alternative to 'new' Labour. Indeed, if Corbyn wins he might wish to work with some of those in the SNP against some in his own party as he may become a prisoner of the Parliamentary Labour Party. He intends to democratise Labour if he wins but those that have a vested interest inside Labour in preventing this are also in very powerful positions and will fight tooth and nail to stop the processes and structures being put in place which allow members to decide policy and action.

Corbynmania, of course, also presents a challenge to the radical left. Is the argument that Labour cannot be changed or reclaimed still as forceful as it once was? Not only will the result on 12 September give us the first bit of the answer but so will subsequent developments. And even if Corbyn loses, to have come so close must mean that the 'reclaim Labour' project will be given a new lease of life for some considerable time to come. So next May, the likes of Solidarity, the Scottish Trade Union and Socialist Coalition, and the new left alliance, RISE, standing

for Respect, Independence, Socialism and Environmentalism (and being the combination of the Scottish Left Project and Scottish Socialist Party) and the Greens will not only compete against each other in each list region but they may also have to do so in the context of a left party of labour if Corbyn wins. Here, if the SNP does as well as expected in the first-past-the-post constituency seats, Labour is likely to squeeze out the radical left in the list seats due to the top-up mechanism.

What all this could come to mean is that a divided opposition is not in a good position to successfully prosecute resistance to the ramped up austerity of the Tory Westminster government. Opposition to it - over welfare cuts to the *Trade Union Bill* - will not be helped by the demise of Syriza as the left model. We wait to see what Podemos can offer as a model of inspiration later in the year in Spain when a general election is held there (at the very latest by 20 December 2015). At around the same time, we look forward to welcoming Nicola Sturgeon to give the third annual Jimmy Reid Foundation lecture (on 24 November at Glasgow University) on workers' rights at human rights. The SNP has been good at saying what it is against but critics on the left rightly note that it is less good at saying what it is for and doing something about this. Workers' rights are a case in point - being against the *Trade Union Bill* is one thing but ending the deregulation of the labour market and repealing the anti-union laws is another. And, we and others would argue that the Scottish Government could use existing EU directives and the *Human Rights Act* to mitigate some of the Tory Governments attacks on worker's rights and health and safety. No doubt Nicola will be pressed on this issue.

Special thanks are due to Matthew Crighton and Eurig Scandrett for organising the articles for the theme of this edition on the transition to a socially and environmentally just economy. They provide an editorial to set the context for those articles. We would welcome suggestions from readers for other such guest editorships and its themes.

ScottishLeftReview

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Feedback: Remembering Jimmy Reid and his legacy

(Issue 88, July/August 2015)

Reid and the Coordinating Committee of Shop Stewards from all the yards never called for supporting strike action but asked for solidarity and financial support, and got it not only nationally but internationally across Europe, America and the Soviet Union. Such was the hegemony created by UCS that in the days of the two mass demonstrations, workers across the west of Scotland just walked out of their factories to join the demos and traffic just came to a standstill across the city. The only really major significant figure to consider alongside Reid is Mick McGahey of the Scottish miners. Both he and Reid were in the leadership of the Communist Party in Scotland. Apart from fostering left unity across the Scottish labour movement, McGahey moved the historic motion at the 1968 STUC calling for a Scottish Parliament. In the light of massive opposition from Labour, reflected in the leadership of many unions at Congress, McGahey remitted the motion to avoid defeat, so that it remained on the STUC agenda. In the early 1970s, his colleague, George Bolton, moved a motion for a proportional representation voting system at the elections, again at the STUC. Again this was vehemently opposed by the Labour and union leadership and again the miners' union remitted. These two motions were the basis years later for Campbell Christie and the broad left General Council of the STUC, creating the historic steering council committee of the STUC, which led to the Scottish Convention and ultimately the creation of a Scottish Parliament. To its credit, by that time Labour had joined the Convention, along with the Lib/Dems, Communist Party, the churches and many civic organisations. Despite being approached, the SNP would not participate and called it a 'Mickey Mouse Parliament'. Changed days indeed!

John Kay, ex-Industrial Organiser, Communist Party

Thanking Henry McCubbin



Henry McCubbin, longstanding member of our Editorial Committee, has stood down. He was one of the group, along with Jimmy Reid, which conceived the idea of the *Scottish Left Review* and served on its Editorial Committee since 1999, contributing articles, web and book reviews as well as involvement in editorial policy. A life-long left-winger, he worked as a TV cameraman where he was on the executive of his union and as Labour MEP for the North East of Scotland where he defended the fishing industry decimated by the Common Market's agricultural policy and campaigned for better health and safety on offshore oil installations. Our sincere thanks are to him for his written contributions and his sage advice and wisdom on the Committee. He is pictured at our stall at the STUC Congress in Ayr where he was presented with a book token – perhaps a hint that we will still be looking for the occasional book review!

Bob Thomson



Say NO to Tory cuts

For all public transport in public hands

For offshore safety

For trade-union rights

Mick Cash, General Secretary

Peter Pinkney, President

Can green and red unite to save our planet and change the world?

Matthew Crighton and Eurig Scandrett provide the guest editorial for this edition's themed articles

Can the Scottish left and the environment movement become close allies? Currently, they seem more like neighbours who have a polite relationship and some occasional chat but also mutual suspicion. There have been red-green alliances, debates, activists and thinkers throughout modern history and the contributions here show that foundations of that alliance are being laid in Scotland. But there's some way to go before we're organising street parties and joint community carnivals.

Some of those foundations are being laid in the environmental movement, which has started to think seriously about the economy. Since ecology and economy have the same root perhaps that should not be remarkable but we believe that it reflects a shift in the thinking of many environmental organisations.

In recent years in Scotland, there is perhaps as much creative thinking about a socially just and sustainable economy amongst environmentalists as on the left. For example, Friends of the Earth Scotland (FoE Scotland) led the conference last year on 'Reinventing Our Economy for People and the Planet', and now employs a sustainable finance worker. The umbrella body of the Scottish environment movement, Scottish Environment LINK (SEL), runs the Flourishing Scotland project and has started a discussion about how it orientates on questions of social inclusion (with member bodies like Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Wildlife Trust and World Wide Fund for Nature).

In SEL's draft 2016 manifesto, the leading demand is 'an urgent programme of investment in the infrastructure which is needed to ensure that emissions targets are met - and to build an economy which is environmentally sustainable and socially just'. This presents a very concrete opportunity for the labour movement and environmentalists to put their joint weight behind a policy proposal which meets immediate

priorities of both.

Can we say that the left in Scotland has laid the foundations for reaching out to the environmental movement? Union policy embraces 'Just Transition' but there is little progress in putting it into practice. The Scottish Hazards campaign has a long history of action on both occupational and environmental health. Unite, Unison and other unions joined the anti-fracking movement. But the labour movement is divided on fracking, nuclear power and other core environmental issues. There were no socialist banners on the People's Climate March and hardly a mention of climate change at the post-election anti-austerity rally in Glasgow.

Labour has some environmental policies to be proud of, not least the Westminster Climate Change Act. The SNP government ran the Climate Challenge Fund, has ambitious renewables targets and initiated the international Climate Justice Fund. The Scottish Greens' manifesto is firmly to the left of Labour's and the SNP's, to the extent that it has been criticised for being light on environmental policy. The SSP and other left parties without parliamentary representation have considerably strengthened their environmental policies. Red and green are certainly no longer strangers.

There is a long history to this relationship. The nineteenth century saw the joint miners' and peasants' struggle against Rio Tinto in Andalusia, the Russian Narodniks, William Morris and Marx's analysis of capitalism's impact on soil fertility and waste production. Scotland's Patrick Geddes is regarded as the father of human ecology, in which 'work, folk and place' guided his innovations in development planning to integrate economy, society and environment. In Britain, the New Economics Foundation has been a thinktank for left-green economics and monetary reform for 30 years, and the Campaign Against Climate Change launched the '1 Million Climate Jobs' campaign. Globally, unions, people's movements and environmentalists

have come together in the climate justice movement around initiatives such as the Cochabamba Declaration, and intellectuals such as Arundhati Roy, Waldon Bello and Naomi Klein have been leading the arguments for the inseparability of left and green contributions to economic change.

There have been historical challenges. In the 1970s, environmentalist claims that there are natural limits to growth was met with suspicion by a labour movement fighting for improved material conditions for workers. With our knowledge of climate change impact, we are now in a place where such barriers to the alliance are much diminished. Now we know uncontrolled industrial production will so pollute our world that the agricultural foundations for our economies and the natural processes which support human civilisation would be destroyed. We also know that solutions which protect the privileges of the elite create social catastrophe.

Stopping climate change is the most important challenge facing humanity. There are no jobs on a dead planet. And with two thirds of the total safe carbon budget already used up by the richest countries, the left should be firmly behind a radical reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. A left which does not embrace these truths is a left which is failing in its mission to map a prosperous and sustainable route forward for society.

Some leading environmentalists have been overly ready to blame industrialisation and population growth for environmental disaster. Yet the challenge of climate change and other natural limits is also producing major shifts in thinking within environmental movements. It is now helping to discredit the right-wing, pro-market 'green capitalist' current of thought. Most environmentalists now recognise setting targets in climate acts is not enough; and carbon markets, off-sets, market mechanisms, reliance on compliance of multinationals don't work.

Environmental objectives can't be achieved if economic forces continually undermine all the good intentions. Social and environmental justice outcomes are incompatible with markets that concentrate 'environmental goods' into the hands of the few whilst shifting environmental costs onto the politically weakest. Environmentalists increasingly recognise the need to manage, regulate, control or undermine those forces.

Increasingly, we are finding the left and the environmentalists are pushing in the same direction on big ticket questions: fracking and other forms of unconventional gas extraction risk workers' safety, communities' environment and damage the climate; the UN talks in Paris will put climate change at the top of the political agenda for a while at least; green new deal investment transitioning to a sustainable economy to create a different sort of prosperity; and analyses suggesting people in prosperous societies don't necessarily get happier the more they consume.

This edition's themed articles aim to set out the foundations for a strong alliance. Control of our shared economic destiny, promotion of well-being rather than just consumption,

solidarity with the exploited, environmental justice and the idea of sustainable development can all integrate into the regular narrative of those fighting for economic and social justice.

A theme that comes up in many articles is the need for a just transition, in which workers' unions, communities and environmental and other interest groups work together to plan how to move from our current unequal environmentally-damaging economy to a just and sustainable future, whilst protecting jobs, services and welfare. The left needs to commit to a green economy just as much as the environmentalists need to recognise that it will be produced by, not at the expense of workers. We can only realise that economic transition by popular democratic mobilisation and participation rather than by lobbying within the existing system.

Inevitably, there are many gaps which articles do not cover. A proper analysis of the global hydrocarbon economy from a green-left perspective needs more space than this edition can afford. And there are many practical actions at workplace and community level, which unions, green activists and left organisers are achieving, and deserve to be documented, not least the growth of workplace environmental

representatives.

Many younger anti-capitalist activists are drawn to action on environmental concerns and don't necessarily identify with the left – although this seems to be changing with the post-referendum surge in grassroots activism in Scotland, and Corbyn's success in campaigning for Labour leadership. Of course, there may be differences in how environmentalists and unions, for example, understand sustainability and social justice. But with serious engagement between the environmentalists and the left, we could make substantial progress. We hope that this collection of articles creates a foundation for that and invite readers to continue the dialogue. One way is to join the *Reinvent Our Economy* online forum, email mcrighton@foe-scotland.org.uk and see bit.ly/reinvent-scotland

Matthew Crighton is active within Friends of the Earth, Edinburgh World Justice Festival and Scottish Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. He is currently freelancing and was an officer of City of Edinburgh UNISON. Eurig Scandrett is chair of Friends of the Earth Scotland, convenor of Scottish Friends of Bhopal and an activist in University and College Union. He is a prospective Scottish Parliamentary candidate for the Scottish Green Party.



The Jimmy Reid Foundation

THIRD ANNUAL JIMMY REID MEMORIAL LECTURE

'WORKERS' RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS'

SPEAKER: Rt. Hon. Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland

Chair: Grahame Smith, General Secretary, STUC

Tuesday 24 November at 6.30pm Bute Hall, University of Glasgow

Doors open from 5.30pm, tea and coffee available. Free entry by ticket only, tickets will be available online at website shortly.

In honour of worker's leader, Jimmy Reid, Nicola Sturgeon will address the issue of why worker's rights are human rights and how this can be used in defence against the Tory Governments attacks on workers economic, political and social rights in Scotland.

The First Minister and guests will be welcomed by Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow, Professor Anton Muscatelli. Following the speech there will be a question and answer session. Our Director, Professor Gregor Gall, will make a short contribution on our work programme to conclude the event. The Foundation has just published a policy paper on the issue of workers' rights as human rights (which is available on our website).

Jimmy Reid was installed as elected Rector of the University in the Bute Hall in 1972 where he made his famous 'The rat race is for rats. We're not rats. We're human beings' speech. His archives are maintained by the University and some will be on display prior to the lecture. We are grateful to the University for their assistance in organising the lecture.

VISIT the WEBSITE at www.reidfoundation.org

Unions essential for socially and environmentally just economy

Richard Leonard argues unions will play their part in bringing about the needed change

Unions have always represented the industrial army of wage labourers. But, at their best, unions have also represented workers on broader questions like peace in the world and in the William Morris sense of how we live and how we might live. In other words, the idea that Scotland or Britain needs a pay rise may be a necessary demand but it is an insufficient one.

Unions need qualitative demands which have a social, cultural and environmental dimension. Arguably, the most important of all is the historic demand for economic emancipation and a decisive shift in power, from capital to labour, from landlord to tenant, and from men to women - from those who own the wealth to those who actually create it. Such a shift in ownership and control of the means of production should tackle other structural iniquities like wealth inequality, environmental injustice, and the class base of society itself.

Historically, unions have been part of a broader, worldwide movement for radical change, as well as self-help institutions for workplace organisation. And strong, vibrant unions are vital to creating a more egalitarian society by reducing working time, enforcing workers' rights including health and safety and environmental protection, securing industrial democracy and humanising work, and campaigning for comprehensive social security from the cradle to the grave and dignity in retirement.

That's precisely why in one of its first acts the Conservative government is planning to attack the union movement on both its industrial and political fronts. The *Trade Union Bill* seeks to deploy the apparatus of the state to crack down on democratic union activity. The Bill is not merely an attack on individual workers' rights - it is also an attack on the entire working class and its representative institutions. And it demands the unity and common purpose, not of a nation, but of a class to resist it.

It seeks not just to blunt union industrial action, recruitment and organisation inside the workplace but to silence union political interventions outside the workplace too. But those interventions are essential if unions are to inform and lead the public debate on the ecological impact of our jobs and economy, and to argue for just transition.

If we are to return to local and macro-economic planning, which we must, for the higher goals of social, environmental and economic transformation, and if we are to turn the tables so that the popular sovereignty replaces market sovereignty, we will need a recharged, environmentally conscious and politically educated labour movement.



Neither is it enough to denounce the current economic system nor be anti-capitalist: we need a movement which is for a credible democratic socialist alternative. We are not merely contemplating a revolt but a revolution by consent, where necessary challenging public opinion not merely following it, building up ideas and idealism, even running the risk of being utopian, but linking vision with action and organisation.

It means radically redefining what progress means, treating people as citizens - not just consumers - with a collective desire for social and ecological change rather than individual solutions to collective problems. We are looking for a green shift as well as a red shift. Not a Keynesian style reflation of the old economy in place of austerity, but the construction of a

radically new economy in its stead. This demands a decisive and permanent transformation of power relations between labour and capital.

We have to radically change the legal basis of property, corporate and commercial law as it currently exists. It means reforming the path of capital accumulation, socialising ownership, including land ownership and production decisions. It means looking to the local economy, local effort and grassroots initiative and planning. But it demands a macro-economic and social strategy too, including an industrial strategy for holding to account and putting within the reach of democracy the corporations who dominate the economy.

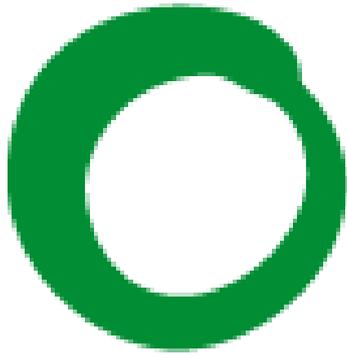
The oil industry is a case in point. The annual *Scottish Business Insider* survey of the Top 500 companies in Scotland measured by turnover and profit showed in 2015 almost a half of the Top 30 companies were either offshore supply companies or oil and gas exploration corporations. Nearly all were overseas owned. The collapse in the Brent crude price and the state of the international oil price cannot be ignored, and will undoubtedly alter rankings next year. But we should never accept the cost of this market crisis be passed on to workers with massive job cuts, closures, and erosion of terms and conditions. It's right to demand employment protection but we also need to formulate a view of what a post-oil Scottish economy would look like.

Challenging inequality and climate change, and vested interests, will not be easy but our efforts to do so build upon the legacy of those who went before us, those who chose not to bow down, but to stand firm against the odds and advance the common good. Success is not guaranteed, some of our attempts may end in failure, but transformation is not only possible it is absolutely necessary.

Richard Leonard is the GMB Scotland Political Officer

Transitions to a sustainable economy

Richard Dixon lays what needs to be done in energy generation and consumption



Friends of the Earth Scotland

As we build up to the Paris climate conference in December, big companies and governments are once again telling us what a great job they are doing on climate change and the environment more generally. Meanwhile, we are heading for a climate disaster, with the world on track for a 3 or 4 degree rise in temperature when even 2 degrees - we are halfway there - is too much for people and nature.

Climate change is the most acute sign of the many ways in which we are trashing our planet, and it is the one we need to fix if all our efforts on reducing poverty, creating fairer societies, stopping deforestation and protecting nature are not to be a waste of time.

We know that world leaders are not going to do enough when they come together in Paris. The recent G7 meeting in Bonn agreed to phase out fossil fuels by 2100. This got some positive coverage but a pledge by a bunch of leaders who will be long dead before then to give up something which will mostly have run out by then anyway is not really that impressive.

In Paris, they may talk a good game but the actual targets they are willing to sign up to are well short of what is needed. Unlike the similar Copenhagen conference in 2009, we know this in advance. Copenhagen could have produced a fair, ambitious and binding deal, but it didn't. What comes out of Paris will probably not be very fair, certainly will not be ambitious enough and not much of it will be binding.

It is still important to keep up pressure on world leaders, so that what comes out of Paris is as good as it can be in the circumstances. But it is just as important to work for a transition to

a more sustainable economy through our own efforts, despite the failings of world leaders.

What are the characteristics of a sustainable economy? On the energy side, it means getting out of fossil fuels. Globally, we know about five times as much fossil fuel exists as we can possibly afford to burn to avoid catastrophic climate change. Most of it has got to stay where it is if we are to prevent disaster. Fracking and the other unconventional coal and gas plans are the last thing we need.

In Paris, they may talk a good game but the actual targets they are willing to sign up to are well short of what is needed.

On electricity, we are doing pretty well, but we also need to get rid of fossil fuels for heating and transport fuels. We need to use materials much more efficiently - going beyond recycling and composting to a 'circular economy' where materials can end up being used many times over, instead of going from extraction through use and then straight to disposal. A recent study suggested Scotland could reduce its current climate emissions by 20% by moving to a more circular economy.

A more sustainable economy should be one with more jobs. A study by government, industry and academics concluded that going for offshore

renewable energy - wind, wave and tidal - would be as big as North Sea oil has been for the economy, and create 145,000 jobs. These jobs are only slowly being created, with the renewables industry currently employing 11,000 people.

As well as offshore there is plenty more to do in the onshore renewables, which also require engineering skills, and there are perhaps 150,000 jobs to be created in the massive investment we need to make in insulating people's homes to get them to a decent liveable standard. Across Britain, radical action to develop a circular economy could create more than 500,000 jobs.

And where does nuclear fit in this picture? It doesn't. Even if you didn't care about leaving a radio-active waste challenge for the next 1,000 generations, nuclear is pretty much the most expensive way to create electricity and almost nothing else creates fewer jobs per pound spent.

We need to have a plan to make the transition because our past failures have cost dear. We failed to have a planned transition when deep coal mining collapsed in the 1980s. We failed again in the 1990s with the closure of most of Scotland's heavy industries.

You could, of course, make the changes towards a more sustainable economy through big companies, financed by big banks. No doubt we will have to do some of that, but a genuine sustainable economy must also have a decent social dimension, supporting local jobs, community ownership and a fairer distribution of income, with a well-planned transition from where we are in the unsustainable economy to where we need to get to.

The Scottish election, with a revamped Labour and a likely strong showing by the Greens, could provide a good space to push sustainable economy ideas.

Dr Richard Dixon is Director of FoE Scotland. Join Friends of the Earth in Paris for the international mass mobilisations for climate justice: http://foes.do/Climate_Activists

Fighting capitalist climate change

Chris Baugh sets out the PCS union's green credentials

PCS has long recognised that climate change is a union issue, given the scale and threat it poses to workers' livelihoods and the communities they live in. Workers are on the frontline of climate change's impact. For example, emergency responders such as the fire and rescue service in the severe floods of 2013/14 or nurses in New Orleans dealing with the impact of Hurricane Sandy. Therefore, unions have a key role in lobbying, campaigning and negotiating on climate change. This includes advocating statutory rights for workplace environmental reps.

As a response to the economic and environmental crisis, PCS is supporting the 'One Million Climate Jobs' campaign. Its central idea is simple. By establishing a National Climate Service to create jobs that will tackle climate change, a million people will be put to work: building

wind turbines to replace power stations that burn coal and oil; retrofitting or insulating homes to make them more energy efficient; and investing in an integrated transport network run on clean fuel.

Key also is addressing the issue of ownership and control. As part of the 'Trade Unions for Energy Democracy' initiative, we believe that the transition to a low carbon economy requires a strong union presence in a new renewable energy sector under democratic public ownership. This is



the only way to ensure we deal with both workers interests but wider social justice issues such as energy poverty.

There is little optimism that the Paris climate talks in December will result in the level of commitment needed if we are to avoid climate catastrophe. Since the world financial system collapsed in 2007/2008, austerity politics has seen a redistribution of wealth upwards with the 'Big Six' energy company profits increasing tenfold. There is little sign of that abating. Therefore, in the absence of political leadership and policy actions to curb greenhouse gas emissions, the union movement needs to work collectively to frame a just transition to a fossil free future that both safeguards jobs and the planet.

Chris Baugh is the Assistant General Secretary of the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union

The SNP and INEOS *by Davy Brockett*

The SNP's general election manifesto this year had only one sentence dedicated to fracking: 'We will continue to support a moratorium on fracking.' Elsewhere in its manifesto, however, the SNP showed strong support for the oil and gas industry in underpinning the Scottish economy. Nicola Sturgeon's meeting with INEOS chair, Jim Ratcliffe, held on the same day as the announcement of the moratorium on fracking in January 2015, further clouds the SNP's overall position on fracking.

After this meeting, INEOS made a complete U-turn, saying it now supported the moratorium, despite having been against it prior to the meeting. Ratcliffe is determined to push for shale production in Britain, despite fears for the environment, insisting fracking must be promoted to keep the British economy competitive and not as dependent on the services sector. His company has pledged to invest £650m, and he feels shale has the potential to meet Britain's gas requirements, making energy cheaper and the nation no longer reliant on foreign suppliers.

Over the past few years, INEOS, which operates the Grangemouth refinery in Scotland, has borrowed heavily from the experience of those in the US, even going so far as to hire three shale specialists (Nick Steinsberger, Kent Bowker and Dan Steward). INEOS is a big importer of gas and has recently started buying it in huge amounts from the US, where gas is one-third cheaper.

The Scottish Government announced the moratorium amid growing environmental and safety concerns. It will be in place while a full public consultation is carried out alongside further research into the technique to look at planning, environmental regulation and the impact on public health.

Ratcliffe told the *Herald* on 14 July 2015: '[The Scottish Government] are being quite clear. What they've said to us is they're not against fracking. But what they do need to do is get comfortable with whether they're happy with the risks of fracking in Scotland. They want to spend a couple of years understanding it in more detail. I think that's a responsible thing for them to do and say. We don't need to do any fracking for the next couple of years. What we'd like to do is just drill a couple of holes, do the seismic, and just find out what's down there'. He said INEOS will also seek permission to begin test-drilling and seismic testing for fracking imminently, which he believes will not breach the moratorium.

Davy Brockett is an Executive Council member of Unite

How to achieve a healthy transition to sustainability

Gerry McCartney outlines the scenarios we face for human health and wellbeing and the choices we must make

All unsustainable systems become sustainable. The question is simply when and how that transition is made. The question is: how do we make sure that the transition to a sustainable economic system is good for the health of the population? David Holmgren has described four possible future scenarios in relation to two important sustainability challenges, namely, the dependence on fossil fuels as an energy source, and climate change. These scenarios can help us to imagine possible futures, and provoke thinking about necessary actions now if a successful transition is to be made.

In first scenario (termed 'green tech'), fossil fuel decline occurs slowly and climate change is relatively benign. This allows time to develop technological solutions to the sustainability challenges, competitive pressures are less which reduces the likelihood

climate change. As a result, there is little spare resource available to develop technological solutions and the level of consumption per person would decline rapidly. This would be a bit like twenty first century crofting, but without the shared resources to maintain mobile phone networks, support high technology medicine nor highly developed consumer goods such as cars or washing machines. The health consequences of this, particularly in high income countries such as Scotland, could be profound, but not necessarily catastrophic.

Economic growth in Scotland has been associated with massive rises in life expectancy and health since the 1850s and all of that would be endangered, but some populations at particular points in time have thrived under low or negative economic growth conditions. Cuba is the most

and shale gas, resulting in severe air pollution, rising sea levels and coastal inundation, crop failures, storms and droughts. The potential positives of increased active travel and improved food systems would be unlikely to occur because of the availability and dependence on cheap energy, and the consequences of catastrophic climate change would lead to mass migration, international tension, conflict and growing inequalities.

However, the most dystopian scenario ('lifeboats') combines destructive climate change with rapid fossil fuel decline, thereby depriving populations of the energy resources they would require to survive the climate change challenges they would face. Avoiding this scenario is really the only option to maintain a semblance of health for the population.

It can be disempowering and dispiriting when future scenarios are laid out in this way, but there is much that the left can do – and the positive scenarios are worth fighting for. First, sustainability (including climate change and fossil fuel depletion, but not exclusively so) are issues that only the left has solutions for. So, this is our issue and we must ensure it is prioritised in our political work, becoming the foremost issue for public and political attention.

Second, we must challenge the suggestion the market can solve sustainability crises (other than in a dystopian manner). Where the impacts of an economic activity are externalised (as with carbon emissions), the market cannot deliver and so regulation, public ownership, rationing of emissions (which will benefit the poorest more than the rich) are all required. Third, we must collaborate to develop innovative and engaging solutions that highlight the co-benefits, such as to health and inequalities, of solving the sustainability challenges, thereby engaging the public in a positive debate about what a future Scotland, and world, could look like.

Gerry McCartney is a member of the Scottish Socialist Party



of conflict and there is the potential to maintain standards of living. Here, there would be reduced meat consumption, more active travel and cleaner air, and potential for improved health. The extent to which this might reduce health inequalities and support improved health and increased standard of living amongst low income countries is, however, more dependent on the extent to which this is led by the market (in which there will inevitably be winners and losers) or through co-operation and shared responsibility for regulation (such as contraction and convergence of carbon emissions).

In the second scenario (termed 'earth steward'), there is a rapid decline in fossil fuels combined with benign

famous example, but Japan and wartime economies have also displayed such features. Once again, the key determinants of what will support a healthy transition in such a scenario are about the degree of co-operation, sharing and organisation that prevails – a dystopian scenario would be more likely if this was not achieved, and managing such a decline in economic activity would bring huge challenges for political leaders.

The third and fourth scenarios are more difficult to imagine delivering positive health outcomes, as both involve destructive climate change. The third ('brown tech') combines this with slow fossil fuel decline and imagines the mass use of coal-fired power stations

Thriving, sustainable societies need democratic and accountable banks

Gemma Bone and Ric Lander outline the how and why of democratic capital

If we want social change, we need to think about finance. To create a society that lives within natural limits, we need to fit together some proposals about how we can sustain people and their communities, what infrastructure we need to reform, remove or rebuild, and how we'll supply the resources we need. We also need to have some pretty bright ideas about how we instigate this change.

Banking and finance should provide the mechanism by which we move around resources in society to instigate such changes. However, neo-liberal reforms have created a 'financial industry' which serves itself and capital – not society. This industry is now the most significant barrier in the way of our efforts to create a sustainable society.

Divestment, the campaign for public investments to be withdrawn from fossil fuel companies, is a first step in challenging this system. It is a shock tactic. The finance and fossil fuel economy, defended by global financiers headquartered in the City of London, a creaking but towering political consensus at Holyrood and Westminster, and oil, gas and coal companies will not and cannot be redeployed to invest for the future by gentle persuasion and reasonable argument. So they must be undermined. Divestment allows our institutions and communities – places which are by their scale and nature more human, more responsive – to mark out their territory as moving apart from the fossil fuel power block and part of something new. In doing so, they create political and cultural pressure for new thinking.

However, this really is only a first step, or rather, one side of the coin. If divestment is the withdrawal of vast sums of money from businesses and organisations which are destroying our collective futures, then we are left with the problem of reinvestment, i.e., where can we channel divested funds to kickstart the radical change we really need. So, if we want a future where society thrives within ecological limits

we need a massive redeployment of resources, not just from small public pots, but from big finance too. Our self-serving 'financial industry' is not capable of thinking sustainably over the long-term. So banking and finance must be reimagined, redesigned, and rebuilt as democratic and accountable services.



But where do we start with what seems like a colossal challenge, finding alternatives to the neo-liberalised finance system? First, we remind ourselves that even in Britain, there are some already existing alternatives which are, in some way, 'better' than the mainstream. There are the 'disruptive innovators' seeking to create new business models which place environmental and social justice at the heart of their practice. The relatively new crowdfunding industry, for example, has the potential to circumvent some of the power relations of finance, enabling projects, businesses and renewable technologies to be funded by the 'crowd', crucial when bank loans are hard to come by.

the more we make finance accountable and democratically controlled, the more opportunities we create

Second, we look to other business models for inspiration including the quiet strengths of those local mutual and savings banks who have managed to hang on throughout the 'Big Bang' of 1980s regulatory reforms, and newer, more ethically focused financial businesses such as Triodos and Abundance which focus specifically

on channelling resources to renewable energy production. We also look to other countries' banking structures which put diversity and locality at the (regulated) heart of what they do, such as the Sparkassen in Germany, a network of publically owned and regionally accountable local banks.

What these examples show, coupled with the successes of the movement towards divestment, is there is a cultural push for systemic change in finance. We no longer expect or accept that the only duty of finance is to create profit *no matter what*. Divestment campaigners, disruptive innovators and mutual and co-operative supporters are showing other motivations and values are not secondary, and they can and should be at the heart of the purpose of banking and finance. They are challenging the sovereignty of the profit maximisation principle, showing finance is not free from the demands and responsibilities of social and environmental justice and instead can play a crucial role in creating a better society for us all.

This is a huge challenge, but the more we make finance accountable and democratically controlled, the more opportunities we create to invest for the long-term in a thriving sustainable future. We can start this journey by reforming the investment practices of public investors, and setting up community banks and other institutions which can take over and attract investment whilst creating and enabling the fulfilment of social and environmental needs. We need to stand against irresponsible and short-termist finance, take back our collective power and continue to take action on multiple fronts, as pension-holders, voters, consumers, opinion formers and most importantly, citizens.

Gemma Bone is a doctoral researcher at Newcastle University, currently working with FoE Scotland on alternative banking and finance models and Ric Lander is finance campaigner with FoE Scotland and co-editor of the Bright Green blog

‘Better not bigger’: building a greener economy beyond consumption

Katherine Trebeck argues there is another way to organise the economy

In many respects, rich economies are entering a period of diminishing marginal benefit – if not increasing harm – from the sort of growth currently sought by most political parties, ratings agencies, and mainstream media. In most advanced industrial countries real median wages have stagnated and we see inequality is increasing.

Not only are too many people hurting from inequality – in Scotland, we need to look no further than the huge gaps in life expectancy or the skewed results between rich and poor areas to surveys asking whether people feel they can influence decisions in their area. The sort of economic growth many countries have pursued also risks the sustainability of our planet.

As the Stockholm Resilience Centre report, we have exceeded four of nine planetary boundaries and, according to the UN, 83% of the world’s people live in countries using more resources than their countries can renew. Herman Daly describes the way we count expenditure to clean up what our economic model breaks or pollutes as an increase in GDP as ‘uneconomic growth’. Uneconomic growth is perhaps inevitable when we have an economic model which encourages planned obsolescence, advertising and consumerism.

Accentuated by inequality, our economy itself propels us to become frantic consumers and takes us away from what really makes us feel we’re living a life that is worthwhile. We are drawn away from collective activities towards activities as atomised (but status-attuned) consumers. We are working longer hours to fund the lifestyles of the ‘haves’ or, for the ‘haves not’, simply to make ends meet. And, perhaps, because of this our self-reported life satisfaction no longer rises in line with GDP growth.

To create an economy in which we grow what really matters and reduce the size and influence of toxic and

harmful pursuits, we need to shift our gaze away from narrow confines of economic development (so often distilled into incremental increases in GDP). We need to re-focus on broader, more humane and sustainable goals.

Not growth carte blanche, but neither unthinking ‘de-growth’. As Herman Daly has said: ‘[We need an] economics of maintenance, qualitative improvements, sharing, frugality, and adaptation to natural limits. It is an economy of better not bigger’.

This means a serious shift in how we do, see, use, and portray consumption. When you talk to folk – as Oxfam Scotland did to create its Humankind Index – they report that relationships, the environment, and security are what matters to them, not having more and more money or more and more stuff. But translating this recognition into actions requires nothing short of a new economic paradigm – new conceptions of the role of work, the role of businesses, and the role of the state.

Arguably, an easier part of this shift is changing how we use products: cherishing and repairing what we have and focusing on *experiences* rather than ownership of items. If we can break the perceived connection between consumption and wellbeing, then we can focus more on non-material dimensions of fulfilment via increased participation and consumption of (low resource) services instead of things. We can seek improvement in the *quality* rather than the quantity of what we do consume.

This also entails reducing the environmental impact of production processes (via, for example, the circular economy in which things are designed for repair and reuse). Simms and Potts propose a ‘new materialism’ which requires high labour input via re-use, recycling, and re-purposing. A labour intensive craft economy alongside high

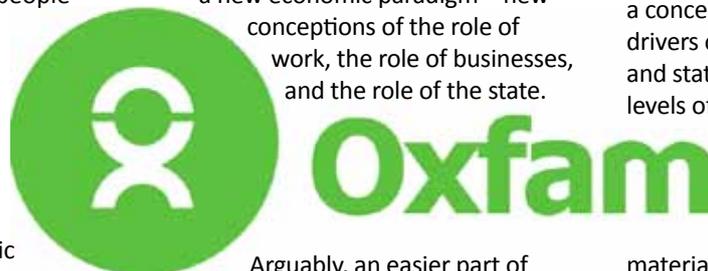
technology base can enable a shift from a consumer society to a producer society – but production that is done collaboratively and locally. To get there a range of changes are needed:

- Less materialistic options: non-work activities need to be appealing, accessible, and affordable. We need to foster events and spaces that build communities and provide alternatives to hedonistic consumerism (so dance halls rather than shopping malls). This requires safe cities; affordable public transport; clean parks; community facilities; and an end to over-work.
- Fewer, better, material goods: products need to be durable, repairable, have no inbuilt obsolescence, and be worth not just appreciating and repairing, but handing down to future generations.

Perhaps most importantly, we need a concerted effort to address wider drivers of consumption – the insecurity and status anxiety spawned by growing levels of inequality. Inequality (and associated polarisation of the labour market) pushes people away from activities that meet intrinsic needs and towards materialistic pursuits. Manfred Max-Neef would call them ‘false satisfiers’. Max-Neef’s use of the term ‘false’ is helpful as it underscores how extrinsic pursuits that will never succeed in really meeting our intrinsic needs.

Beyond basic needs what really provides fulfilment is not more stuff. What does provides fulfilment is spending time with friends, helping others, being in nature, decent and meaningful work, and having control over one’s life. While we might talk of decoupling our fulfilment from consumption, we need to acknowledge our true fulfilment is already decoupled from consumption; it is our efforts to deliver on this that are not and that it is the very nature of our economic model that creates this distortion.

Katherine Trebeck is Oxfam’s Global Research Policy Adviser



Rediscovering municipal socialism as the key to democratic energy transition

Andrew Cumbers says lesson can be learnt from Germany developments

During the recent Labour leadership campaign, Jeremy Corbyn extolled the virtues of Germany as the model for energy renationalisation in Britain. Much lauded by both Greens and the more forward thinking socialists, the German approach to energy transition, marked by the proliferation of new decentralised forms of public and community owned energy companies, has much to commend it. Whether this model can be transplanted so easily to Britain or Scotland, given Germany's different history and geography of energy policy is another matter.

In the energy sector, Germany has been at the heart of a massive remunicipalisation drive with over 100 city and regional electricity distribution networks coming back under public ownership since 2007, while 44 new municipal energy companies ('Stadtwerke') have also been established. There have been two drivers behind this process. First, growing public anger with the effects of privatisation in the gas, electricity and power generation sectors. In particular, the way that poor service delivery has gone hand-in-hand with providing healthy economic returns to privatised franchises has generated cross-party coalitions that combine conservatives, greens and leftists in rural and urban areas to take back public control. In consequence, Germany has been re-discovering an interesting mix between municipal socialism and rural mutualism.

The second has been the strong environmental agenda in Germany where the retreat from nuclear power and setting of strong national renewal energy objectives has led many policy makers and activists at the local level to question the power of the big four private utilities and their links to carbon based energy (specifically gas and coal). Fulfilling Germany's climate change obligations requires massive investment of somewhere between €25bn and €42bn in infrastructure renewal alone. The more progressive local politicians across political divides realise only renewal of public

ownership and investment can achieve this.

In Frankfurt, where the city council is a coalition between CDU and Greens, the local Stadtwerke, Mainova is investing €100m financed by the state owned regional investment bank ('Landesbank') to construct an integrated energy system that reduces waste and deals with storage and capacity issues arising from complex sourcing of different forms of power. Hamburg has recently held a referendum where the public voted to take its energy grid back into public control to achieve similar efficiencies in the shift to renewables.



The relevance of the German model for Scotland is limited in the current political conjuncture. Germany has a decentralised energy system and, even before the present retreat from privatisation, there was far more local control over energy policy and infrastructure and far more ownership diversity than here. Cooperatives and Stadtwerke led the way in the Germany renewables revolution where the share of renewable generated electricity has risen from 6% to 25% in 10 years and is forecast to hit 40% by 2020 while local individual and cooperative ownership of windfarms is over 50% of the total.

The potential for new municipal energy companies is massive

In contrast, Britain has a centralised system and Scotland has very little autonomy within this, with few powers over energy devolved. As the furore over closing Longannet power station shows, the lack of control over the grid, its centralised structure, and the ownership of most of power generation in private hands means there is no local strategic capacity to achieve a similar public energy revolution. Scotland

also lacks the German system of local and regional state cooperative banks, which have been so critical to funding renewable and energy modernisation projects.

We need public ownership and control of the electricity and power generation grids in Scotland to effect the post-carbon transition while also ensuring security of supply and getting to grips with the costing and pricing structure of the current energy 'market'. This requires much more fundamental political reform than is currently on offer with the existing Westminster government. However, there are still things that can be done at local and city level. Rural community ownership is, of course, on the policy agenda at Scottish Parliament level and this can be extended further.

But some of the more interesting initiatives from Germany could be adopted now in Scotland's cities with the right political will. The potential for new municipal energy companies is massive in the development of combined heat and power and district heating systems, which can start on a small scale and begin developing their own clean and efficient energy networks across the city. In England, the more progressive green cities such as Bristol are talking of the Hamburg model, where the local public electricity company, Hamburger Energie, set up in 2009, has over 100,000 customers. The potential for what are called ESCOs (not-for-profit local public energy supply companies) is enormous. Aberdeen City Council, for example, already has its own award winning heat and power company. Glasgow University is developing its own CHP system with some discussion about extension outwards across the city. But the missing piece of the jigsaw here would be the establishment of local public banks - in Germany 'Sparkassen' - to supply the finance to allow a new green municipal socialism to flourish.

Andrew Cumbers is professor of urban and regional political economy at the University of Glasgow

Engaging with established economics

Phoebe Cochrane reflects on what Scottish Environment LINK is thinking about the economy

Scottish Environment LINK, the umbrella body for environmental NGOs in Scotland, has become increasingly aware we need to understand economics and economic policy. In this article, I reflect on some of the recent work undertaken by its Economics Taskforce on GDP and the national performance framework, the circular economy and ways of accounting for the value of nature. Although the concept of sustainable development clearly situates economics as a means to human wellbeing albeit constrained by environmental limits, this is not generally reflected in the positioning or framing of policy areas. In Scotland, 'Scotland's Economic Strategy' sits above other strategies and policies and alongside the National Performance Framework (NPF). LINK is arguing for significant changes to its structure and content.

The NPF is a matrix that links the Scottish Government's aspirations to targets and indicators, being centred upon the government's desire to create 'a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth'. We believe GDP needs to be a less prominent indicator of success and important environmental and social indicators (like carbon footprint, air quality, biodiversity; quality of people's local environment, jobs and relationships) as well as additional economic indicators (like median household income, income and wealth inequality) should be elevated to play an increased role in assessing what is important in our society.

Despite seemingly widespread agreement of the need to move 'beyond GDP', mainstream media regularly presents GDP figures without qualification or questioning and 'success' remains largely synonymous with data which only measure the busyness of the economy, saying nothing about how the benefits and costs are distributed, nor the impact on the environment. LINK is beginning to get some media coverage, highlighting important indicators other than GDP and reminding people that the economy is a means to wellbeing, not

an end in itself, and that our society, economy and entire life support system are integral to a healthy environment.

From a different angle, the concept of the circular economy could also change the shape and environmental impact of our economy. A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life. This concept is popular with the Scottish Government which has set up the Scottish Institute of Remanufacture and has commissioned studies to examine how suitable various sectors might be to circular economy models and the carbon impact of the circular economy. Currently, the Scottish Government has a public consultation open and LINK is commissioning a study to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the concept and what opportunities it might offer to the environmental movement.

Another area of interest to LINK and environmental NGOs is developing concepts, mechanisms and methods that seek to bring environmental criteria into the economic decision-making. There is a tension here because while market economics is seen by many environmentalists as one of the main causes of environmental degradation, suggesting it should be abolished, there are attempts to 'fix' this model by recognising the importance of the services that the environment provides and enabling these to be taken into account in cost/benefit type decisions and business strategies.

Two related concepts, ecosystem services and natural capital, have been the subject of debate within the environmental movement. Discussion within LINK highlights both useful applications offered by these concepts and a range of concerns. Natural capital accounting enables organisations to take account of environmental impact and reliance on natural assets. An assessment of the status of it could guide investment decisions and be built into credit ratings. Quantification

of both concepts might provide a barometer for a nation's natural wealth and generate information to set the rates for taxes and subsidies.

However, they are also utilitarian concepts and economics as the main criterion in decision making is further elevated. Additionally they cannot capture the full value of nature, and there is danger that conservation related policy is driven by optimising them so that existing regulations and non-market mechanisms, such as protected areas and planning policy, will be deemed less important. Last is the concern that the pathway to commodification of nature and a market in nature is opened.

Increasingly studies and reports are presenting economic rationale for resource management decisions that include the use of these concepts coupled with environmental economics methodologies. We need to be able to assess the robustness of such work and make informed decisions about whether and how to use it.

LINK has also been thinking about how these and other environmental issues interact with working towards a more socially just society. We can discern different approaches to economic questions from different types of environmental organisation. Some are primarily concerned with conservation but understand that breaching climate change and other natural limits threatens those objectives. Others are focused on campaigning issues. Both recognise that integration of an environmental narrative into dominant social and political discourse is needed to achieve their objectives.

Phoebe Cochrane is Sustainable Economics Policy Officer at Scottish Environment LINK <http://www.scotlink.org/>. She works with the Economics Taskforce on developing the Flourishing Scotland report.



Being ambitious: rising to the challenge to transform our economy

Matthew Crighton calls for public investment to provide for a just transition

Calls for a big green infrastructure programme will feature strongly in Scottish Environment LINK's manifesto for 2016. Combined with a focused approach to securing all the potential social and economic benefits from such investment, this is something to which the labour movement should give wholehearted support. It sits comfortably with the STUC's 'Agenda for Collective Prosperity'. And, if there is a flowering of enthusiasm and popular support, it can be a game-changer in Scottish politics.

Within the environmental movement, such a push is being driven by the failure to meet the targets in Scotland's *Climate Change Act*, with the Scottish Government's plans for meeting those targets regarded by Stop Climate Change Scotland as insufficient. In particular, de-carbonisation of the transport system is a weakness and this is compounded by the absence from the budget of any substantial transport investments which will reduce carbon emissions.

Even where appropriate measures are more clearly set out in this plan, there is a large investment gap between what is required to shift our economy rapidly towards low greenhouse gas emissions and investment by public and private sectors. It doesn't seem there is a concerted approach by the Scottish Government to fill this gap.

Take home energy efficiency as an example - the SNP government has to be applauded for sustaining a publicly-funded programme at all, when in Britain this was abandoned. However estimates of what is required to bring all houses in Scotland up to a decent but not high standard of energy efficiency indicate that at least four times the current level of investment is needed. While it's welcome that the government has now made energy efficiency a National Infrastructure Priority that in itself doesn't fill the investment gap.

What's needed, therefore, is a green 'new deal' programme – large-scale, public-led investment in transforming our economy which should generate

new, well-paid productive jobs and reduce fuel poverty. We need to operationalise in Scotland the concept of a 'just transition' to a low-carbon economy.

Broadly speaking we do know how to do this. The technology already exists, as illustrated by Zero Carbon Britain, the 'One Million Climate Jobs' campaign and, indeed, the World Bank. In terms of raising the finance, one of the most inspiring suggestions is Green Infrastructure Quantitative Easing (GIQE) – deploying the powers to create money which saved the banks towards instead saving our environment. However, even without this the British government could and should borrow the funds needed, though doing so would require abandoning its ideological commitment to austerity.



We know that the Scottish Government can't undertake GIQE (though it can lend it support); and undoubtedly the failures by EU and British governments on climate change do make it harder to meet the Scottish targets but they could still be met by the right actions from a determined Scottish Government.

There's another major driver which is reviving interest in 'just transition', especially in the labour movement, namely, job losses in fossil fuel industries. Most starkly, closing Longannett's coal-fired power station and the lay-offs in the North Sea, both of which are devastating for the

workers and communities affected. An industrial strategy is needed to replace these jobs and it should be a green industrial strategy in which new employment opportunities are created to provide jobs for those moving out of the old industries. In particular, efforts should be made to bring new work to communities which have suffered the worst consequences of industrial decline, like the coalfields.

If we need evidence that how you make this transition matters, we only have to look at the tragically poor record in Scotland and Britain of job creation from on-shore wind. It's not that there are no new jobs - just that most of the high-quality engineering and manufacturing jobs are in other countries where the factories of Siemens, Vestas, Alstom etc are situated. Wave and tidal should be next but the failure of the two big Scottish wave energy companies indicates that we haven't yet learnt how to correct the mistakes of the past.

The conclusion is that to ensure just transition requires a change in the state's approach to management of the economy and to economic development, national and local; and to ownership - and to financing the transition as well.

In 2009, the STUC and Scottish Government signed a communiqué which stated 'the transition to a sustainable economy needs to be socially just so that all parts of society partake in the benefits of growth and responsibilities are shared fairly' but it is not clear what fruit this has borne. Now is the time to come together to make this happen in Scotland. Pushing for a just transition and a seriously large green infrastructure programme can transform Scotland's economy. We know what needs doing. What's stopping us?

Matthew Crighton is active within Friends of the Earth, Edinburgh World Justice Festival and Scottish Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. He is currently freelancing and was an officer of City of Edinburgh UNISON.

Green Question Time 1

We invited key people from the environmental NGOs to tell us 'Why do environmentalists need to understand economic alternatives?' Here, the challenge was taken up by Andy Myles from Scottish Environment LINK, Helen Todd of Ramblers Scotland and Liz Murray of Global Justice Now.

Andy Myles is Advocacy Officer, Scottish Environment LINK

Environmentalists need to understand that economics is neither a pure nor an observational science. Indeed, as a tool for pursuing the truth, economics is at best an intellectual inquiry, which may be considered an immature social science or a minor branch of mathematics.

Further, and sadly, it is a field which has often led to the establishment of dogmatism, with each wave arrogantly proclaiming that 'there is no alternative'. Think mercantilism, capitalism, Marxism, neo-liberalism or corporatism. This is patently nonsensical. Within such an ill-defined field, there must be myriad alternatives.

The need for environmentalists to understand the economic alternatives is quite simple. If we accept that economics is a primary driver in human society, alongside environmental and social development, all three need to be understood in order to prevent any single one emerging as the dominant factor in our decision-making. As things stand, economics has become dominant, and worse, is firmly rooted in the exploitation of both people and the environment.

The 'development' of human society is highly unlikely to be 'sustainable', and equally likely to be environmentally damaging, if things are left this way. After all, in a finite biosphere, after ten thousand years of civilisation, over-exploitation is why we face the disaster that is climate change.

Helen Todd works for Ramblers Scotland and is chair of Scottish Environment LINK

We live in a complex world. Remote, centralised governance structures mean decisions are not taken locally. So we have created decision making tools and processes which ensure a range of stakeholders are involved and social, economic and environmental aspects are considered. Add to this complexity a global market which affects our lives without our ability to influence it and, clearly, developing a new policy, project or strategy which considers all sides is a difficult task.

Too often economic arguments dominate. How do environmentalists respond to this? Firstly, NGOs have a trusted position in society which suggests a role to engage with the public, to raise awareness that the environment is the context for everything, for our very existence on the planet – and for our economy.

Secondly, we need to challenge the prevailing narrative with its overriding emphasis on economic growth. Everyone accepts GDP is a poor measure of what we really value in life and yet it still overshadows any alternative.

Finally, we need to influence the development of the actual mechanisms themselves. Yes, a monetary value can be calculated for some of our ecosystem services, but while a sitka spruce plantation and an ancient woodland may both score similarly in terms of carbon sequestration, the intrinsic, intangible values of nature somehow need to be captured too.

Liz Murray, Head of campaigns and policy (Scotland) for Global Justice Now

Environmentalism that fails to engage with the threats to the planet inherent in current economic orthodoxy is not worthy of the name. It is impossible to understand these dangers without reference to the perverse incentives that are core to the current economic system. But it is equally important to understand that some of the proposed 'solutions' to these problems can be just as dangerous as the problems they are supposed to address.

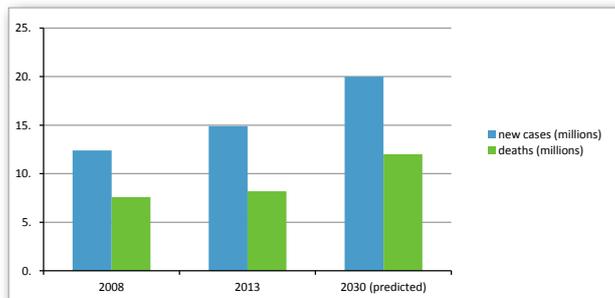
One such threat comes from those who seek to create new markets out of natural processes and resources. The drive to monetise activities such as the protection of endangered species threatens to subject the fate of whole species to the whims of the market. More broadly, monetising nature threatens to limit access to it, leading to a more unequal world in which only the rich have access to the fruits of 'natural capital', leaving the rest of humankind to live in a kind of perpetual 'green' austerity.

There is no simple solution to the problem of planetary limits. It is clear that better technology, intelligent policymaking and regulation are part of the answer. But unless we grapple with the necessity of radically reforming the underlying economic system, these are unlikely to be enough.

Toxic economy

Morag Parnell says the pursuit of profit is ruining our health

The global economy is toxic. The drive for constant innovation to produce new commodities to fix real or perceived problems across is having a toxic impact on the health of the population. According to the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer World Cancer Report, global cancer rates are increasing:



Scottish cancer rates are expected to rise by 8% every 5 years until 2020. We're told this is largely due to an ageing population but much research has shown methods of production on which our economy depends are exposing us to 100s of substances responsible for the above statistics and other diseases.

In the 1990s, the Women's Environmental Network conducted a Britain-wide project 'Putting Breast Cancer on the Map'. Gathering evidence from women with experience of breast cancer, it demonstrated cancer incidence follows a historical and geographical relationship to industrialisation. Subsequent work in Scotland and Canada identified clear breast cancer risk in relation to occupations with exposure to carcinogens and endocrine disruptors.

Climate science is clear: fossil fuels are hugely responsible for rising global temperatures. The ethane fraction of such fuels is used to produce a large range of consumer products which have serious health effects, including causing cancers and as endocrine disruptors. Over a thousand chemicals in regular use have been found to interfere with endocrine (hormone) systems. These are called Endocrine Disruption Chemicals (EDCs). Hormones are responsible for the normal function of body systems. EDCs can cause illness in healthy adults and are particularly dangerous to young children and developing fetuses. Health effects associated with EDCs include: immune system impairment; hormone dependent cancers; allergies; metabolic syndrome - obesity and type 2 diabetes;

developmental disorders in children (ADHD, autism spectrum, learning, coordination, behaviour difficulties) and possibly late neurological disorders (Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimers).

Some of these impacts have been found to be passed onto the third generation after exposure. Whilst some EDCs have

been withdrawn from use, these chemicals are present in the environment, in many consumer products (like food, especially canned food, clothing, storage containers, personal care products, cosmetics, vegetables, paints and glues) and may be released through waste management processes. And new EDCs continue to be introduced in industrial and agrochemical processes and in consumer products.

In a detailed study of chemicals used in unconventional gas activities, 75% affected skin and eyes and respiratory and digestive system; 40-50% the brain and nervous, immune, renal and cardiovascular systems; 37% the endocrine system; and 25% could cause mutations and cancer.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer estimate 7%-19% of all cancers worldwide are due to toxic environmental exposures. It collected monographs on 900 substances of which 400 are classified as carcinogens, including 75 kinds of dioxins and 135 furans. There is no threshold dose or 'safe exposure level' for a carcinogen and Europe is currently working to establish the same principle for EDCs.

Since the 1990s, the global chemicals market has grown by around 7% pa. In 2015, the top 10 chemical companies turned over \$350bn. Add the petrochemicals giants, which constitute around half of the Fortune 500 companies. Despite the growth, it has been predicted 30% of European chemicals jobs will be lost by 2030. And, it is not just chemical industries that expose workers to toxins: agriculture, food processing, micro-electronics and auto-plastics have been linked to high levels of occupational cancers.

The true cost of fossil fuels and other

environmental and occupational toxins must be properly accounted for: much of the cost is hidden or externalised and picked up by local authorities, social and health services and the people who are damaged by these activities and exposures.

The European Health and Environment Alliance estimate €31bn pa in EU health savings is possible from reducing exposures to hormone disrupting chemicals. However, the global chemical industry was worth around €2.4tn in 2010. Current political energy discourse is predominantly about the market and oil and gas prices, but this pales beside the need to consider the effects of our choices for protecting human health and a habitable planet.

Twentyfive years ago, as a result of pressure from environmentalists, Massachusetts passed a *Toxics Use Reduction Act* which helped companies plan to reduce their use and emissions of toxic materials. Although a voluntary scheme with limited cover, participating companies have reported nearly 50% toxins use reduction and over 90% emissions reduction. If such a limited scheme can produce these results, imagine what a regulatory regime could do. It is clear that toxic chemicals are unnecessary, dangerous and are perpetuated solely to meet the needs of industry shareholders.

Alongside phasing out toxins, it is important to develop safe alternatives. As Duncan MacQuarrie, of York University, put it: 'The Scottish Government should be very positive about green chemistry. Scotland has a phenomenal amount of natural resources - far more than the rest of the UK and more than the rest of Europe (other than Scandinavia perhaps) and they could reap massive benefits through their sustainable utilisation, particularly good for getting good jobs into the Highlands and stopping the drift away from these regions'.

This is where union demands for health and safety at work meet environmental campaigns against pollution. A toxic economy is in nobody's interests but those who profit from it. There are certainly opportunities in Scotland to phase out chemicals damaging the health of workers, communities and the environment and replace them with safe alternatives.

Morag Parnell is a retired general practitioner and co-founder of Women's Environmental Network Scotland

Green Question Time 2

The guest editors invited politicians from the three left parties in Holyrood to respond to the following question: 'What are the main barriers to an environmentally sustainable economy in Scotland and key steps to overcoming them?' Here are their responses (in alphabetical order of last names):

Sarah Boyack MSP, Scottish Labour Party

The barriers to a more environmentally sustainable Scotland aren't a lack of ideas and technology. The challenge is sustained political leadership and determination to carry through the path set out in our *Climate Change Act 2009* and the Scottish Government's 'Report on Policies and Programmes'. We need both public and private investment focused on services and infrastructure which will deliver transformation.

At the British level, the new Tory Government is setting off in completely the wrong direction but in Scotland there's still much more effort needed to breakdown silo thinking and determination needed to drive the transition right through all government departments. Change needs to be led in transport, energy, housing and agriculture. And we need finance and incentives to deliver across the public sector as the new public sector duty kicks in.

We also need to unlock the energy and knowledge of local communities and the capacity of local government to transform people's day-to-day lives. Warmer, energy efficient homes, high quality sustainable transport options, cooperative, community energy and heat projects, community greenspaces and gardens, need to be part of a wider programme of regeneration which tackles inequalities, but also creates a circular economy which creates new economic opportunities across Scotland.

Patrick Grady MSP, Scottish National Party

Tackling inequality, reducing poverty, and promoting environmental sustainability are perhaps the defining political challenges of our day. In many ways, Scotland is leading the way with ambitious goals for carbon emission reductions, an innovative global Climate Justice Fund, and an inspirational fresh focus on inequalities from First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. There is always more to be done, of course, and many of our ambitions would be easier to achieve with a more powerful Scottish Parliament, ultimately with the full responsibilities of an independent nation. Reversing recent Westminster Government cuts to onshore wind subsidies, and the bizarre application of the climate change levy to renewables, would be a good place to start. Better and faster investment in public transport infrastructure, including extending High Speed Two to Scotland, would also help. And I'm a big believer in active travel – walking and cycling – as one the best forms of recreation, transport and exercise. Making it easier, cheaper and healthier for people to go about their business or leisure activities will also be better and more sustainable for the environment in the longer term. An environmentally sustainable economy is achievable – what Scotland needs are the powers to match our political will to get there.

Alison Johnstone MSP, Scottish Green Party

Scotland can have a jobs-rich, low-carbon economy if we challenge both the British and Scottish Governments, and the belief that bigger is better. Conservative ministers are on an anti-Green crusade, doing everything from scrapping subsidies for renewables to privatising the Edinburgh-headquartered Green Investment Bank. Holyrood must unite in fighting this agenda.

SNP ministers have failed emissions targets four years running, so any policy that adds to the problem must be rejected. Let's use the opportunity of devolution of air passenger duty to get highly-profitable, heavily-polluting airlines to pay a fairer share of tax, and target the wealthy jet-set rather than families going on an annual holiday. Let's retrofit our housing stock to create thousands of jobs and cut fuel poverty. John Swinney agrees with me that this should be a national infrastructure priority. And, let's get workers and communities involved in a managed transition away from fossil fuels and towards clean energy, rather than waiting for the next crisis to set up a taskforce.

By spreading jobs to all regions, and encouraging entrepreneurs and SMEs, we can build resilience. Half of all Scottish businesses are based in the home so our focus should be on issues such as broadband rather than grants for tax-dodging multinationals whose profits escape us.

A balanced energy policy

Dave Watson argues sensible state planning in energy supply is essential to end market madness

Scotland's energy unions have long argued for a planned energy policy that provides safe, secure and sustainable generation, which contributes to the economic future of Scotland and eliminates fuel poverty. While unions have supported the growth in renewable energy, we remain sceptical about the Scottish Government's renewable energy target. The strategy has never set out targets for the different elements of energy generation and this has led to growing uncertainty about how to provide 'baseload' and 'dispatchable' (emergency top-up) power.

As Professor Colin McInnes, from Glasgow University says: 'We need to have an energy policy that is technically well-founded, we need a balanced energy mix. Instead of what should have been a simple matter of energy economics, we have seen the debate politicised by a 2020 target to achieve the 'equivalent' of all of Scotland's energy needs by renewable energy. Why would you want such a target? It's an arbitrary number thought up by spin doctors for a purely political purpose'.

This chart shows the different elements of Scotland's power generation. On the face of it, all looks fine. We have nearly 11GW of capacity against a peak demand of 5.4GW.

However, a closer look reveals two main problems. First, most of the conventional generation is due for

closure in the near future. Nuclear and coal are the backbone of Scotland's baseload and dispatchable energy. Second, we are heavily reliant on intermittent sources of energy, primarily onshore wind. While it may not feel like it, the wind doesn't always blow in Scotland and that means we are now importing energy from England for part of one day in five. Exporting good jobs south of the border may work for National Grid's planning and some environmental groups, but it's not going to win many votes from our members in the energy industry.

Renewables now generate almost half of Scotland's energy needs. However, this comes at a price. Economist, Tony Mackay, argues that the subsidies paid to onshore wind farms in Scotland are 'unnecessarily high' and have led to 'supernormal' profits for businesses and landowners. As a consequence electricity bills in Scotland are now around 7-10% higher than they would be without subsidies.

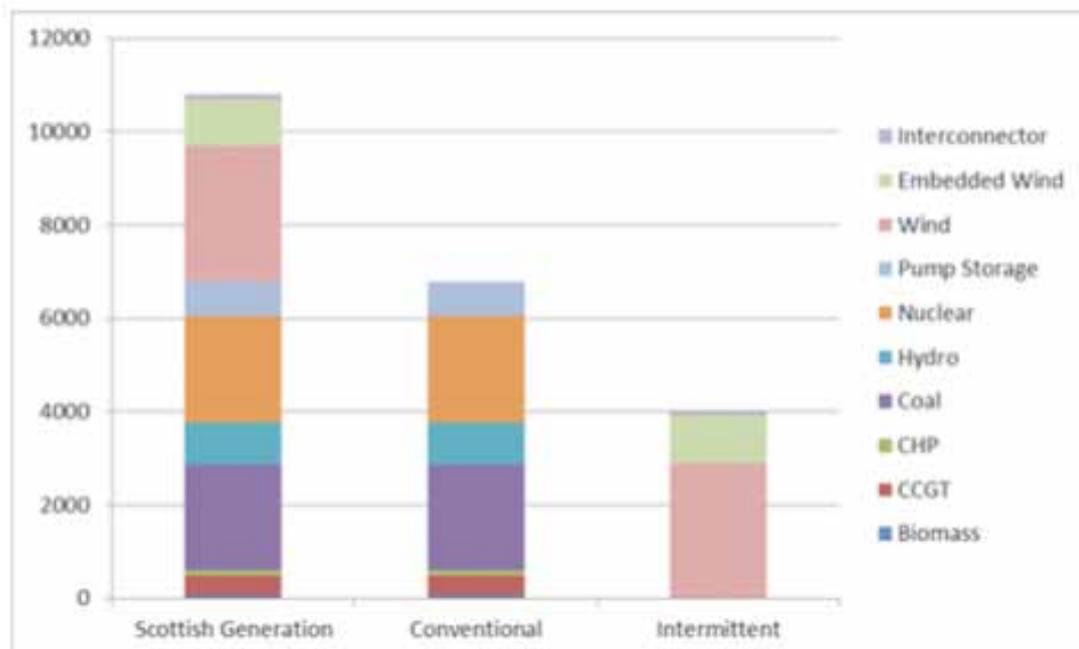
The promised economic and job benefits haven't fully materialised, as former energy minister, Brian Wilson, said: 'I find it bitterly disappointing that so little of the manufacturing associated with wind farms in Scotland has been carried out here. That is a major failure on the part of the Scottish Government and does no credit to the biggest developers, Scottish Power and SSE, who have had the benefits

of major planning consents and vast subsidies through the Renewables Obligation but failed to reciprocate by creating an industry worthy of the name'.

Renewables now generate almost half of Scotland's energy needs

A key debate in Scotland will be the use of unconventional gas (usually called fracking) to feed the INEOS plant at Grangemouth and potentially a gas fired power station to provide the dispatchable energy the system needs. Most unions support a moratorium on grounds of safety and doubt the need for new unabated fossil fuels. These concerns have been reinforced by the recent DEFRA full environmental assessment on fracking. Previously omitted sections show leakage of waste fluids from fracking processes has resulted in environmental damage in the US and the impact on water-resource availability, aquatic habitats and ecosystems, and water quality was 'uncertain'.

The Scottish Government moratorium appears not to cover testing and preparatory drilling, or Underground Coal Gasification (UCG), a technique many consider more dangerous than fracking that is technically offshore but requires onshore infrastructure. As Daniel Sanderson put it in the *Herald*: 'A moratorium that, five months on and with INEOS never planning to



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Can there be a moral economy on gas?

Gary Smith outlines the thinking guiding the GMB union on energy

Gas is absolutely integral to life in Scotland and the UK. The simple truth is that Scotland will be using gas for many decades to come. Over 80% of homes use gas - four times cheaper than electricity- for heating. Energy intensive industries need access to affordable and secure energy and gas has to be part of the mix.

Many thousands of jobs depend on gas. Scottish Gas training centre in Hamilton is full of apprentices and trainees for jobs for working class young people. The Scottish Gas call centres in Uddingston and Edinburgh employ over 1,000 workers. SGN who deal with gas mains and emergency services also provide well over 1,000 well paid skilled jobs.

The issue isn't therefore whether we will use gas or not. We will. The issue is where we will get our gas from, and who should take the moral responsibility for extracting and supplying the gas we use.

As both the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the independent UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) have recognised, gas has an important part to play in Britain

reducing our carbon emissions.

In fact, the future role of gas could be even more crucial in lowering CO2 emissions in Britain, through the development of micro combined heat and power units to produce heat and electricity for homes. Fuel cells which have zero carbon emissions will have a huge role to play in the future, and these will need gas too.

The debate about fracking must be based upon complete honesty about the economic realities of gas. A number of questions arise as follows:

- Is it acceptable for Britain to import gas from countries where the safety, environmental and regulatory standards are lower than in Britain?
- Should gas be imported from states where there is no civil society, no right to protest and where workers are denied basic trade union rights?
- Is it kinder to the environment for gas to be transported for thousands of miles across continents and oceans before we

use it here in Britain?

If exploratory drilling reveals a plentiful supply of UK shale gas reserves, is it not a moral duty for Britain to take responsibility for providing for our own gas needs from those supplies, rather than importing gas from elsewhere?

GMB's position on fracking must therefore be consistent with the need to organise the shale gas industry if it does develop, as well our duty to protect the future of the UK gas industry and the thousands of GMB members it currently employs.

If onshore fracking for shale gas develops from its current exploratory status into an industry which will be supplying a significant proportion of the gas that Britain needs, GMB will need all our organising expertise to safeguard the workers in the industry.

Anything less than protecting these workers from exploitation in a fledgling industry, as we did with gas workers 126 years ago, would be a betrayal of our history and moral responsibility

Gary Smith is the GMB National Secretary for Energy

continued from page 19

be engaged in full-scale fracking for several years anyway, is yet to have been shown to be anything other than an exercise in political misdirection'.

Despite recent reductions in energy prices, we should not forget fuel poverty remains a huge problem in Scotland. Earlier this year, an analysis from the House of Commons library showed the average household's annual energy bill is now £260 more than it was in 2010. Electricity and gas bills for the poorest households rose 53% in cash terms between 2010 and 2013. There is no prospect of achieving the legal obligation to eliminate fuel poverty next year.

Whether it is price or generating capacity, the energy market has dismally failed. At energy industry events, I often allow myself a wry smile when civil servants are quizzed

about Energy Market Reform (EMR) mechanisms, which are in effect state planning of energy, introduced by a Tory government. This was supposed to be a temporary process, but no one is predicting its imminent demise. In fact, governments across the world are getting more involved in energy planning. It's simply too important to leave to the market.

In the energy chapter of the 'Red Paper on Scotland 2014', I set out a different energy strategy for Scotland based on common ownership and a more diverse generation ownership model. Key features were:

- A strong political vision over the long term, with commensurate policy and planning provisions.
- Favourable feed-in tariffs to create the incentive for new generation using different business models.

- A state-owned grid that will usually connect up communities. The cost is repaid through a public service obligation payment in energy bills.
- A clear focus on energy efficiency with measures to tackle hard-to-heat homes.
- Strengthen the ability and willingness of local government to get involved.

In conclusion, energy unions are not arguing for new unabated fossil fuel generation and we support a strong renewable industry - although we would want to see greater employment benefits. However, onshore wind power alone is not the solution and we, therefore, need a balanced energy policy that ensures security of supply, builds a more diverse industry and eliminates fuel poverty.

Dave Watson is the head of campaigns at UNISON Scotland and editor of Utilities Scotland (www.utilitiesScotland.com)

United against fracking?

Davy Brockett puts the settled Unite union position

The Scottish Government have been accused of kicking the issue of fracking into the long grass and perhaps there is a strong case for doing so as the public opinion is divided. Gas extraction is a historically dangerous industry. Although worker safety hazards are known and understood, there is very limited data regarding occupational health hazards from exposure to the chemicals, and proppants and processes used in high volume hydro-fracking.

A TUC report recently stated it wants to ensure tight regulations across a range of health and safety at work issues, as the onset of any potentially high volume shale gas fracking across many parts of the country represents a new industrial, environmental, and land use development pattern with significant potential for impacts on public and employee health.

However, a major union has become the first to throw its weight behind the fracking revolution. The GMB says Britain has a 'moral duty' to exploit all of its own gas reserves, rather than importing it from dodgy regimes abroad. In a massive boost for the fracking industry, delegates at the union's annual conference in Dublin in June 2015 backed a call by the leadership to support shale gas exploration. Gary Smith, the GMB's national secretary for energy and utilities, said: 'Jumping on bandwagons is easy, but doing the easy thing does not mean you are doing the right thing. It would be easy to come out against fracking, but it would be wrong for the union, and for the country.'

This is in total contradiction to the decision taken by Unite at our own policy conference in June 2014 and brings two of the largest unions into conflicting positions in a key sector within the economy. At that Unite policy conference, the debate on energy - and particularly the union's position on fracking - was seen as one of the more controversial issues before conference and one eagerly awaited by the delegates.

The Executive sought to overturn Unite's existing policy against fracking. The Executive put forward to conference motion, ES2 Executive Council Statement, clearly setting the case of support within strict guidelines to organise members in the industry, working alongside local communities and be vigilant to any environmental concerns:

'The Executive Council does not support the extraction of any fuel source proven to cause long term environmental damage (including fracking) and will facilitate an informed debate on the extraction of shale gas, including its environmental impact, value to the UK economy, implications for Unite membership, and its part in a balanced energy policy. Where shale gas extraction occurs, the EC will campaign for rigorous regulation of the industry and work to ensure that workers are able to exercise their democratic right of trade union membership and representation by seeking recognition from the operators'.

Executive Council vice-chair, Mark Lyon, in his right to reply said that the Executive fully shared delegates concerns but 'fracking is coming to a town near you, Unite wants to be there protecting our members and communities'. However, the motion was defeated, Conference comfortably overturned the EC on passing Composite 6 instead, which strengthened UNITE's policy against fracking, and resolving to:

- make all members aware of the dangers of fracking
- actively oppose fracking, to use its influence to prevent fracking operations, advise members not to work on fracking sites nor deliver materials to such operations
- support and lobby for a moratorium on all 'fracking' activities across Britain

- encourage Labour and Labour controlled councils to take actions formally opposing the application of hydraulic fracturing technology within Britain
- request Unite Regional Committees support local anti-fracking groups' activities, including help with funding
- encourage members at all levels of the union to support campaigns against 'fracking' and to link up with local campaigners, and
- support calls for taking profit out of energy production and distribution and favour the public ownership and democratic control of the energy industry with the direct input of local communities and trade unions in decisions on creating a balanced and sustainable energy policy

Conference made clear that opposition to fracking does not mean UNITE will not seek to organise workers in the industry, just as we organise workers in many other industries where employers behave unethically.

Davy Brockett is an Executive Council member of Unite

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Environmental justice: uniting against a common enemy

Eurig Scandrett shows how unions and environmentalists can unite

The late Alan Dalton personified the potential for the left and the environmental movement to work together in a challenging and collaborative way. As a young chemist in the pharmaceutical industry, he became an active union agitator and during his 'career' as an activist, up until his untimely death in 2003, he took on the asbestos industry (sued by), the Health and Safety Executive (greylisted by), the Environment Agency (sacked from the board) and asked challenging and uncomfortable questions even to his comrades in the union and environmental movements.

Amongst his last public engagements was as keynote speaker for Friends of the Earth Scotland, talking about his community anti-toxics publication DIRT. One of my earlier memories of Alan was, when I was a Friends of the Earth employee and TGWU member and he was TGWU's health, safety and environment coordinator. He brought together TGWU members who *produced* pesticides, *applied* pesticides, campaigned *against* pesticides and self-help groups of workers *poisoned* by pesticides. What, he asked, should TGWU's policy on pesticides be in order to protect the jobs and the safety of workers at work, at home and in the wider world?

These are some of the hard questions that the left and the environmental movement need to ask themselves and each other. There have been activists working at the red-green interface for decades, but unless we address some of the hard questions we won't progress. Otherwise, we will link arms when we agree, ignore each other when we don't, and continue to have the stale jobs-versus-environment argument. And the only beneficiaries of this shallow tactical relationship will be the executives and investors and their class, who are making profits *out of* us and dumping the risks *onto* us.

The profit-maximising economy dumps its costs on the workers, communities and environments of least resistance. An environmental justice movement unites these diverse groups and multiplies the resistance. And, the more resistance we can provide, together, the more we can force the economy and its drivers onto a more sustainable path. In short, workers, our communities and our environment, both locally and across the globe, have the same common enemy in the logic that puts profit first, and the class that benefits from it.

In an insightful contribution to the *Bright Green* blog ('The fight against fossils: are we beginning to win?' 12 February 2015), Ric Lander argues there are emerging coalitions of activists throughout civil society on tackling the climate challenge. Unions are not listed amongst his emergent movement. This is not to say unions are doing nothing on climate – we are – but rather that what we are doing seems to be invisible to many environmentalists, who see instead where we side with corporations to defend the fossil industry.

Take INEOS, Grangemouth. Ten years ago, during the G8 summit, environmentalists demonstrated outside Scotland's biggest oil refinery. There were no union banners there and, indeed, unions disagreed with the protest. Not long after, INEOS was in dispute with its workforce over attempts to cut pensions: no environmentalist banners were seen at the pickets or no high profile ecologists spoke up for the workers. More recently of course, INEOS took on its unions and won by holding Scotland's carbon economy to ransom; slashed workers' wages and conditions and victimised union activists. And then, it concentrated on destroying the planet with new fossil sources. Now, at last, an alliance of unions, Friends of the Earth and mobilised communities

forced a moratorium on INEOS's plans for fracking and coalbed methane extraction. It is a partial, temporary and inadequate moratorium, but it's a start and with continued unity could lead to a ban. Fracking pollutes local communities, risks workers' safety and damages the climate. INEOS's owner, Jim Ratcliffe has made clear that his only interest is return on investment. It is his class against the rest of us.

In December 2014, a delegation of Scottish union activists visited Bhopal on 30th anniversary of the worst chemical disaster. It was an important act of solidarity with the Bhopal survivors who continue to struggle against the world's second largest chemical multinational, I Dow (which acquired Union Carbide in 2001). The Bhopal struggle has been supported by unions, environmentalists and human rights activists although justice has eluded the survivors as India follows the same neo-liberal path of clearing the way for exploitation by global capital. Following the solidarity visit, the delegates established *Trade Union Friends of Bhopal* and a programme of support for the survivors. The STUC adopted a resolution linking Bhopal with INEOS and calling for a thorough risk assessment of the Grangemouth complex.

Eurig Scandrett is chair of Friends of the Earth Scotland, convenor of Scottish Friends of Bhopal and an activist in University and College Union. He is a prospective Scottish Parliamentary candidate for the Scottish Green Party. For an obituary of Alan Dalton, see <http://www.hazards.org/alandalton/>

<http://sfobhopal.org>

Scottish Friends of Bhopal The Bhopal Medical Appeal

Keir Hardie: 100 years since his death

To mark the centenary of his death (26/9/1915), we publish two specially commissioned book reviews. Coming from Newhouse, North Lanarkshire, Hardie was one of the founders of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) as well as the Labour Party itself. He is widely seen as embodying the heart and soul of the Labour Party as a democratic socialist party. Hence, the oft-used phrase since the arrival of 'new' Labour in 1994 that 'Keir Hardie would be turning in his grave'.

What Would Keir Hardie Say?

Pauline Byran (ed.), Luath, Edinburgh, 2015, 9781910745151, £9.99

Reviewed by Ewan Gibbs

The release of this collection of essays on various aspects of Keir Hardie's politics and life is a timely occurrence. Not only does it concur with the centenary of the death of Labour's founding father, it also comes at a time when once more the purpose and ideology of Labour is being freshly debated by a new generation. The enthusiasm generated by Jeremy Corbyn's candidacy, and the vitriolic response he is receiving from the Labour establishment, demonstrates that many of the historical contentions addressed within *What Would Keir Hardie Say?* remain very much live issues.

The contributors include academics, and labour movement figures, largely from Scotland. Owen Smith, MP for Pontypridd, adjacent to Hardie's old constituency of Merthyr Tydfil, and Jeremy Corbyn add perspectives from elsewhere within the UK. Smith considers the power of Hardie as a mobiliser of 'emotional connection' with coalfield communities and union struggles. He emphasises how Hardie used parliament as a platform for industrial and social movements, 'carrying the cordite and sulphur stink of industrial conflict into the cloisters of Westminster'. Corbyn's chapter concerns Hardie as an international peace campaigner, arguing Hardie's brave stance against the First World War, which placed himself in an embattled minority within Labour, set trends which resurfaced in fissures between supporters and opponents of NATO and nuclear armaments. These were more recently visible in the movement against the war in Iraq, which shared Hardie's opposition to

imperialism and his internationalist perspective.

A key strength of this collection is its attention to historical details, which burst some influential myths about Hardie and Labour. The appendix includes Hardie's maiden Westminster speech in which he railed against the injustice of unemployment brought but also against Jewish migrants replacing British workers who had emigrated to Commonwealth countries. Elsewhere attention is given to Hardie's ideological development. Bob Holman considers Hardie's conversion to evangelical Christianity but also his often fraught relationship with religious bodies. Richard Leonard succinctly addresses the popular misconception that Hardie's ethical socialism was not enthused with class conscious politics. Dave Watson effectively challenges recent portrayals of Keir Hardie as a Scottish nationalist, situating his support for home rule within the legacy of Scottish radical liberalism and localism.

Perhaps most importantly this collection addresses arguments over the character of Labour. William Knox's chapter argues Hardie's key achievement, namely, 'the conscious coupling of the economic and political struggle of the working class', was far from historically inevitable. The party emerged as 'a broad alliance of middle class intellectuals of the Fabian Society, socialist societies and trade unions', rather than an overtly doctrinaire socialist organisation. Knox draws attention to its 'broad church' status, but also notes ideas around weakening the union link and a 'one nation' party are alien to this conception. At our present juncture, this book provides important historical context and comment on contemporary trends at a crucial time for Labour's future.

Ewan Gibbs is a PhD researcher studying Scottish labour history at the University of Glasgow with a focus on coalfield politics.

Keir Hardie: From Serfdom to Socialism

introduced and edited by John Callow, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 9781910448472, £12.99

Reviewed by Cathy Jamieson

This publication is timely not only in light of the centenary of Hardie's death but also with regard to the current debate on Labour's fundamental values and future direction. In his introduction, Callow paints a vivid picture of Hardie's political beliefs and activities, providing sharp analysis of the reception that *From Serfdom to Socialism* received at various points in history. As Callow says of Hardie's book: 'It was conceived of as a testament to principle, written to satisfy highly diverse alliance of labour interests - a heterogeneous federation of socialists, co-operators and trades unionists and sought to convey for them a coherent platform for socialism and the vision of what they could hope to achieve through their collective efforts'.

While Callow's introduction is a worthy read in its own right, he draws the reader in, encouraging consideration of Hardie's own words and beliefs. Originally published in 1907, *From Serfdom to Socialism* has been a seminal text, initially for Labour activists and then for Labour historians. Hardie wrote on a range of issues, from the basic principles of socialism, to his ideas on religion, women's rights and local government. He also provides an appendix of quotations from others, helping to define socialism, and commenting on development of society. This publication includes photographs of Hardie's life, many of which can be viewed in the Baird Institute in Cumnock, helping to bring a real sense of his life onto the pages. Everyone in Labour should read this, as a reminder of where we came from, and to help us take forward our values in principles in the future.

Cathy Jamieson is a former Labour Deputy Leader in the Scottish Parliament. She was MSP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley from 1997-2011, and MP for Kilmarnock and Loudoun from 2010-2015. She is President of the Keir Hardie Society.

From boxing to dancing? Time to take your partners



Grahame Smith contrast the Tories' Trade Union Bill to the SNP's social partnership approach

There is so much to say about the *Trade Union Bill* (TUB), about its ideology and its potential impact that it's difficult to know where to start. Perhaps, the first point to make is that to fully appreciate its depth of vindictiveness, extent to which it contravenes a range of international conventions on the right to strike and freedoms of association, expression and assembly, you do need to look behind the headline measures.

There's making a violation of the picketing code a criminal offence or extending picketing rules to cover social media or associated protests. Or, giving the Certification Officer power to investigate unions of its own volition (and not in response to a member's complaint) or to demand information from a union to an extent that constitutes an unprecedented level of state interference. To add insult to injury, unions will have to pay a levy to meet the cost of the enforcement of these new powers.

Added to that, there's the 14 days' notice requirement to give employers more time to organise an alternative workforce. This is likely to mean migrant and unemployed workers will be used as strikebreakers (with the unemployed under threat of benefit sanction). This will only will create massive resentment and conflict all round – hence the reason for the new restrictions on picketing and peaceful protest!

All of this should not really have come as any surprise. Tory ministers made clear their intentions after the INEOS dispute when they established the Carr Review, hoping it would provide the justification for their plans. We know the attacks are motivated by an ideological opposition to collectivism and a ruthlessness determination to crush political opposition in order to prevent organised resistance to the ability of the elite to wield its economic and political power unchallenged.

TUB also reveals Tory Ministers' total ignorance of what happens in the workplace, not just the impact

on productivity and economic performance but on wider social policy objectives and our civic and democratic wellbeing. TUB starts from the false premise unions are bad and need to be curtailed - that we are a barrier to employers' prerogative to do what they want in the workplace. This, of course, is not the norm in successful northern European economies such as Germany and Sweden, and is also not what we are trying to create here in Scotland.

It was no accident that when the Westminster government set up the Carr Review the STUC encouraged the Scottish Government to take a fundamentally different approach. We did this through the Working Together Review. The Review, initiated by the Government at our instigation, was conducted by a group drawn from unions, employers and academia and examined in detail the role unions play in the workplace and in wider economy and society.

The Review Group identified measures to optimise relationships that link unions, employers and government and embed progressive workplace practices to boost innovation and productivity, deliver successful, sustainable organisations, high-quality jobs and a more equitable society. It also provided independent evidence of the positive role unions play and the importance of collective bargaining as a demonstrable and effective form of workplace democracy, recognising the economic and social challenges and opportunities facing Scotland are more likely to be addressed successfully in an environment where unions play their full part.

It placed what happens in the workplace at the heart of public policy discourse in Scotland, something the STUC has been emphasising in its discussions with successive governments since devolution.

In creating the Fair Work Convention earlier this year, the central recommendation of the Review, and in the wide range of other actions

it intends to take in response to the Review, the Scottish Government demonstrated it appreciates industrial relations and workplace policy are as important in their influence on economic activity, performance, growth, and inequality, as macro-economic factors such as interest rates, exchange rates and levels of corporate taxation.

Through the Convention, unions, employers and government in Scotland have the opportunity to work together to establish a distinctive approach to industrial relations and fair employment practices, akin to the approach in the most successful European economies, and which stands in stark contrast to the philosophy underpinning TUB.

It is early days for the Convention as it embarks on the initial task it has been set, to establish a Fair Work Framework. While it has yet to reach any conclusions, its working definition, which draws on research on improving job quality, identifies fair work as work that provides opportunity, fulfilment, security, respect and effective voice. Of course, these themes are open to wide interpretation, particularly over the emphasis given to how they are applied in an individual and collective context.

The tendency for some Ministers to conflate payment of the Living Wage with fair work or some Government officials and agencies to refer to the Working Together Review without mentioning the role of unions (when it was explicitly about the role of unions), indicates that there still remains a job to be done to establish the centrality of unions and collective bargaining in achieving 'fair work'.

However, we can take encouragement from what the First Minister said in her address to the STUC Congress this year: 'This SNP Government will always champion and stand up for the positive role unions can play. We value highly the role of collective bargaining in ensuring decent pay and working conditions – something that is especially important in low

wage sectors'. And we can also take encouragement from the evidence base published by the Working Together Review and elsewhere on the importance of unions.

While we have significant evidence to draw on, the same cannot be said for TUB. It is a solution to problems that don't exist as we don't have a strike problem. Last year, there were only 151 strikes, less than 2% of workers participated in a strike. Days lost due to strikes were less than 3% of the 28.2m lost due to work related accidents and ill-health.

SCOTTISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

If the Tories really cared about dealing with workplace issues, they wouldn't be diluting health and safety laws and attacking the role of workplace union reps in the public sector (who play a vital role in ensuring that workers are not killed or injured at work). Even if we did have a 'strike problem', that would be no reason to trample over workers' civil and human rights.

The evidence base for the proposed restrictions on picketing is equally anaemic. The so-called 'evidence' the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published is drawn from Carr. A footnote in it is very revealing: 'Due to issues with the methodology of the Carr Review, all events mentioned remain alleged and it was limited in what it concluded'. It goes on to say that the Carr Review 'arrived at no judgment on either the extent or extremity of use of extreme tactics in industrial disputes nor the effectiveness of the existing legal framework'.

We all know what happened. Bruce Carr, the QC asked to conduct the review, and no particular friend of unions, abandoned it last August because unions and employers refused to provide evidence and Tory ministers prejudiced the outcome by announcing their intention to introduce ballot thresholds and the other restrictions on industrial action which are now in the Bill.

BIS's so called 'evidence' comes from the Association of Police Officers and not from employers or workers alleging intimidation. It included such damning evidence as the use of air horns in public in the proximity of small children; walking slowly in front of vehicles; using the internet to post intimidatory material (undefined) and blocking the access for shoppers at the doors to retail stores. It mentions that during the INEOS dispute secondary targeting occurred at a number of premises and suppliers who had links to Grangemouth. Unite put an inflatable Rat outside Jim Ratcliffe's house!

Of course, it depends very much what you define as intimidation. Is it intimidation if an employer, as was the case with INEOS, threatens to close a plant and take away workers' livelihoods? Is it intimidation for an employer to threaten to decimate a local community or threaten the stability of a national economy, if a union and its members do not agree to accept cuts in pay, terms and conditions and pensions?

It is also a form of intimidation for Westminster ministers to threaten public sector employers, including the Scottish government and Scottish Council's and Health Boards, with sanctions, possibly criminal sanctions, if they continue to offer check off facilities to union members or an amount of facility time to union reps that goes beyond what they decree.

It is totally unacceptable that these ministers should have the power to interfere directly in the industrial relations arrangements that public sector employers choose to have with the unions, particularly in areas where public services are devolved.

So we will have a situation where Ministers sitting in Westminster will be able to tell the Scottish government, Glasgow City Council or the NHS in Scotland (which has effective partnership arrangements with the unions including having workers representatives on health boards), how much they can invest in ensuring good and effective industrial relations with the recognised unions.

This is simply unacceptable and untenable. The Scottish Government and all Scottish public bodies should not only join us in opposing TUB and the ridiculous interference in our

industrial relations arrangements, but also refuse to implement any instructions issued from Westminster on facility time or check-off.

Westminster's use of its reserved powers over union and employment rights will significantly impeded our efforts to establish a positive industrial relations environment and positive role for unions in Scotland. This makes the case for these powers to be devolved at the earliest possible opportunity even more compelling.

In the meantime, all who value constructive workplace industrial relations should unite in condemning TUB, play their part in implementing the recommendations of the Working Together Review and in ensuring that the significant opportunities offered by the Fair Work Convention are realised.

Grahame Smith is general secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)

A call from the editor

Politics in Scotland and Britain enters ever more critical times with the Scottish parliament elections next year and the future of the Labour Party hanging in the balance while the Tories continue on the rampage with their 'age of austerity'. We would welcome suggestions for articles - and articles themselves - that address the ramifications of these issues from different left standpoints. We are here to facilitate debate and exchange. Please get in contact with the editor, Gregor Gall (g.gall@bradford.ac.uk) to make suggestions and proposals. The same applies if you'd like to propose a theme for the front half of forthcoming issues.

Notice of future publication

The third edition of our bestselling *Is there a Scottish road to socialism?* will be published in the run up to Christmas by Scottish Left Review Press. It will focus upon the implications of 2016 Scottish Parliament elections and whether indyref2 is imminent as well as whether Jeremy Corbyn has changed the face of politics in Britain.

Class, austerity & inequality in Scotland

Carlo Morelli and Gerry Mooney say solving workplace inequality is key to solving wider inequality

Welfare cuts and far-reaching reductions of the welfare state continue to be centrepieces of the Tory government's approach to debt reduction. This approach has already failed those facing poverty and failed to address government debt. If Greece tells us anything, it is that 'austerity' not only contracts government expenditure (at least for socially necessary services and outcomes) but also government income. So in Greece, imposition of cuts led to increasing not decreasing government debt and further welfare cuts.

Thus, our argument is that not only have anti-poverty measures failed but that they have failed because they are linked to the constraints and ideology of an approach to welfare which focuses upon regressive redistribution from above, namely, redistribution which is leading to rising income and wealth for the already affluent at the expense of the poorest.

Much has been written about poverty and how to address it. However, the class politics of poverty have often been neglected. Poverty is no accident but represents the inevitable outcome of a market driven society – and one in which particular class interests, which neoliberalism is its latest ideological formation, works to increase wealth accumulation by the rich.

How we approach the question of poverty and explain its origins is crucial to how it is understood and the policies that consequently result. Only an anti-poverty strategy that empowers the poorest to gain greater income and provides greater bargaining power to workers in the labour market can adequately address poverty. This means, primarily, increasing the ability of workers and unions to force employers to divert higher shares of profits to wages as opposed to dividends and high managerial salaries. Work can only be a route out of poverty if workers have the power to bargain for decent wages and conditions. The assault on unions and collective bargaining reflects the determination of the Westminster to further the share that goes to profit and dividends.

Poverty and inequality continue at historically high levels evident since the mid-1970s. Attacks on union rights with successive anti-union laws, as neo-

liberal policies were introduced, paved the way for the dramatic rise in poverty and income inequality. For example, before 1979 child poverty levels were below 15% before rising to its highest levels of over 33% by the late 1990s and subsequently falling back to levels of around 29% in 2009/10. Scotland's picture is not substantially different to that of the rest of Britain with Scottish Government statistics showing that 22% of children were living in poverty in 2014.

Poverty in Scotland is concentrated in urban centres such as Glasgow, Dundee and in other towns across the country. This is paralleled within English cities such as Manchester, Liverpool and equivalent population centres, and in places in London such as Tower Hamlets. Central to explaining this distribution is the collapse of higher paid patterns of work and its replacement with lower paid patterns of work since the 1970s. Alongside this sits higher income inequalities with Scotland again at the higher end of the spectrum evident within Britain. In general when it comes to poverty, income inequality or wealth inequality only London and the South East exceed that of Scotland.

The reason we should choose the mid-1970s as our comparison is that this is the era when economic and social policy changes, initiated by the Callaghan then ramped up under Thatcher, drove the attack on the labour movement and social welfare. Vital to these changes were an economic policy focused upon monetarist ideas, an assault on union influence in the workplace and an approach to social policy which penalised the poor through increasingly means-testing of welfare benefits. 'Choice' and the lifestyles of people who were disadvantaged and poor were identified as the main drivers of inequality. Blaming the victim became the order of the day and that remains so.

The linking of the increase in poverty and inequality with the undermining of unions and workers' rights is also of significance for understanding the persistence of high levels of poverty despite major changes in patterns of poverty. One of these most important changes during these years has been

the transition from poverty being a result of 'worklessness' to one in which 'in-work' poverty is now the dominant characteristic of those experiencing poverty today. The extent to which in-work poverty is the dominant feature of poor households indicates the failure of the 'work as a route out of poverty' approach by the successive governments since the 1990s. In Scotland, latest figures show 50% of working-age adults in poverty live in households where adults are working and 56% of children in poverty live in households where adults are working.

Britain, Scotland included, has the highest levels of labour force participation rates historically. Women and men are equally likely to be in employment and poor households are most likely to have adults in work. Poor workless households are now increasingly likely to be trapped in poverty for specific reasons, with adults who are pensioners, adults who are carers or with disabled adults yet they still remain subject to the nineteenth century language of moral failings and the absence of individual responsibility.

The explanation for why this matters to the left is that these high levels of poverty and inequality are testament to the failure of anti-poverty strategies adopted by successive British and Scottish governments and local authorities who continue to administer them. Within the realms of social policy, despite the language of tackling poverty, the reality has been the opposite; an extension of means-testing and the withdrawal of social security benefits has been the picture since the mid-1970s.

The ever increasingly draconian nature of repeated rounds of welfare 'reforms' - for which read 'cuts' - are a feature of the increasingly penalising nature of the current welfare system. The mainstream political consensus around the capping of annual benefits, sanctioning the unemployed and the removal of disability benefits are but the latest versions of this war on those who are disadvantaged and experiencing poverty. Underpinning this is a Malthusian ideology in which a distinction between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' has been utilised to abandon the use of taxation as a means to deliver redistributive outcomes,

at least progressive redistributive outcomes.

Neo-liberal hostility to progressive forms of redistribution from rich to poor have also ensured high levels of poverty have been accompanied by high levels of income inequality. Income growth for the highest paid 10% has continued to grow at a higher rate than for the lowest 10%. A recent study for the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion estimated between 1961-2012 incomes for the highest paid 10% grew by 130% while for the lowest paid 10% incomes grew by only 89%. In Scotland, the ratio between the highest paid 10% and the lowest paid 10% is at its highest level since the mid-1970s and the difference between the incomes of the top and bottom 1% is now over twenty times. Stirling-based economist, David Bell, noted: '... it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the major increases in inequality that have taken place over the last few decades were related to the industrial restructuring that took place during the 1980s'

Where labour has the ability to bargain for higher pay or greater employment the outcome is a rise in household income for the lowest in income distribution. This has to be encouraged at the expense of growing

income and wealth for employers and shareholders. In Scotland, we have seen two important strikes in the first half of 2015 which exhibit exactly these two features, namely, all-out strikes by Dundee hospital porters, members of Unite, and the Glasgow homeless caseworkers, members of UNISON. Both were against low pay, demonstrating the ability of low paid workers to redefine the bargaining environment. Importantly, both were won by members' determination in using industrial action. In Dundee, porters won their demand for a higher pay grade and an £1,800 back payment and overturned the drive to casualisation by winning a 10% increase in jobs through the NHS Trust having to employ the fixed term workers on permanent contracts. The Glasgow homeless caseworkers strike had a similar outcome.

If the SNP Scottish Government was serious about anti-poverty strategies, it would look at what limits the development of workers' power in the workplace. While the anti-union laws, and employment law more generally, remain reserved areas of legislation, there are still ample devolved areas where labour could be empowered. Procurement policy already permits the removal of contracts from anti-union

firms (such as blacklisting construction companies). Yet this is not an area in which the Scottish Government has enforced its own powers, even in construction projects controlled by SNP local authorities (such as the £1bn investment project at Dundee's Waterfront development). Government procurement policy can also require a Living Wage from contractors. Elsewhere in the public sector, the Scottish Government's development of Outcome Agreements with public bodies could ensure greater power to union representatives and union recognition.

We have argued inequalities in the workplace are central to understanding the inequalities in society. Resolving this requires recognising these linkages and seeking to ensure maximum solidarity between those in work and those out of work. We need a return to notions of social security for all. In this struggle, the labour and anti-austerity movements have a crucial role to play.

Carlo Morelli teaches at the University of Dundee and Gerry Mooney is at The Open University in Scotland. Both are members of the Socialist Workers Party in Scotland.

Danger! Shark infested waters

Allan Grogan predicts a (right wing) riot against Corbyn if he wins

The sharks are swimming around the pool, unaware that theirs is the only blood which is draining away. If the Progress wing of Labour has its way the crimson blood will be diluted permanently by the deep blue sea.

Not since the release of the YouGov poll which put the 'Yes' vote ahead one week before the referendum has the ground below Labour HQ devoured itself as much. News that Jeremy Corbyn is ahead in polls by some distance has sent shock waves through the Labour establishment, still unsure as to why the membership do not see things their way.

This Labour leadership contest has gotten ugly, already coups are being discussed by the Parliamentary Labour Party, and Chukka Umunna has urged Labour MPs to refuse any shadow cabinet positions offered by Corbyn. Then the big guns came out. Blair threw his tuppence worth into the ring, although judging by his previous

receipts, it will have cost more than that. Blair, ever the one for the pithy soundbite, sent a stark warning to all misbehaving members who are planning to vote for Corbyn: 'People who say their heart is with Corbyn - get a transplant'.

Of course, there is no need Tony, the job of removing the Labour's heart was done a long time ago by yourself and the rest of the New Labour hacks which decimated any standing this once proud party had, particularly in Scotland.

The venue of Blair's appearance shouldn't surprise either. To use Tony's own medical analogy, Progress has been to Labour the cancer which has destroyed everything that was good within it. This reception ironically for a former Labour leader is the only place he can actually attend without being drowned out by fellow members or placed under citizens' arrest for war crimes. Yet the most startling statement from Blair was his first. When jovially

asked where he would place Corbyn, 1st or 2nd. Blair responded: 'No that's actually the Tory preference... erm I'm a Labour leader' before remembering he no longer was.

This is the new directive for anti-Corbyn Blairites, implying this is a Tory coup to get an ultra-lefty to make Labour unelectable, rather than ... Well. that's where their theory breaks down. Rather than who? Another leader who refused to oppose a welfare budget which tears deeper than Thatcher into the social fabric of our society and sets in motion the next 5 years of destruction and decimation of the welfare state and NHS? I would imagine that Cameron and Osbourne would be very happy with either 3 of the red Tories, who leave the opposition to 56 MPs from 'up north'.

The truth is the Tories would be quivering at the prospect of a united opposition of real Labour, opposed to nuclear weapons, support rail renationalising, adopting a real living

wage, higher taxes on the wealthiest - all of which would be supported by the membership and the majority of the public, and working together with the SNP, Greens and others to hold this vile and wretched government to account.

The reality, however, is somewhat different. Even if Corbyn defies the odds and becomes leader, the sharks within his own party have already begun to circle. Liz Kendall has shown a remarkable contempt for the democratic process she hopes to be elected by implying she will join any coup against Corbyn. Can you imagine the reaction if this kind of talk came from the left? Rather than embrace

a movement which has increased membership and activism, there is now a witch hunt to remove new members who signed up to support Corbyn. The self-destruct button seems to be permanently glued into the hands of Labour HQ.

In Scotland, the situation is no different. Unable to understand their own incompetence, Labour continues to pursue the tactic of 'SNP bad', whilst forgetting the very reasons why so many (including myself) once voted for this party.

The challenges we face over the next five years of Tory rule will not be remedied by a Blair driven 'new'

Labour. Nor will any progressive opposition to the SNP come from Labour in Scotland. The only hope we have to maintain our progressive politics is for the people to hold to account those who think they know better than those who elected them. The SNP must have a credible opposition in Scotland and this must come from the left, be it a red, green or amalgamation. As long as Blair, his acolytes or Progress still have a stranglehold on Labour, it doesn't need a transplant. It needs the last rites.

Allan Grogan was a founder of Labour for Independence and is now an SSP Executive Committee member

Reflecting on what might have been a year ago

Joe Middleton finds reasons on the indie side why 'yes' did not win

Alex Salmond's *The Dream Will Never Die* is an enjoyable read, providing a moving and detailed account of the last 100 days of the referendum campaign. Salmond blames the infamous 'vow' ultimately for the loss. There's no doubt 'yes' fought a superb campaign from intensive grassroots campaigning through to extensive social media usage. I thought we'd done enough to win. I was shocked and dismayed at the result. Now time has passed, it's appropriate to look back and consider whether there were tactical mistakes which can be avoided in the future.

The main reason for achieving independence would be to give Scotland the chance to set out its own stall internationally. It would also be able to control tax and spending decisions and be able to set its own welfare and defence policy. The point we could cancel Trident and spend the money better elsewhere was made. So too was that we could not prevent future Tory governments and that a squeeze on spending on the NHS in England could adversely affect our block grant in Scotland.

No distinctive international policy was articulated. What we did say was that we would remain in NATO and contribute to its efforts around the world. This raises problems not least the fact that recent NATO actions have been unpopular in Scotland and one of the reasons for becoming independent would be presumably to avoid the quagmire of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Simultaneously the idea we could

join an international organisation under a nuclear umbrella while also taking a unilateral position on nuclear defence was a mixed at best. It may be technically possible but the political reality is that it is extremely unlikely. It also meant our policy internationally in terms of military intervention would be similar to the current British government policy. So, why become independent?



There was a disturbing tendency amongst senior pro-independence politicians when international questions came up to slip into 'British MP mode' - saying things like 'this country' when they mean the UK and talk as if the imperialist position is the only game in town. The UK is not a country and we need to point it out at every opportunity. The policy of world imperialism is not in Scotland's interests and it never has been yet it seems that people think it might be impolite to raise such an objection.

When Alan Cumming and Alex Neil said they were comfortable with Britishness and the British flag, they inadvertently handed the moral high ground to opponents who had to point out independence would actually end the British state.

At every Holyrood and Westminster debate, independence supporters need to point out Scotland is a separate country with separate

political objectives. If we don't do that then people will simply not see a requirement for independence even if the economic arguments are in our favour.

We should always mention the United Nations but more importantly we need to craft a defence policy and international policy which suits our status as a small country in the north of Europe.

While I understand that Alex Salmond is a supporter of the monarchy, I feel the rigidity of the 'yes' campaign on this and the EU potentially lost us more votes than it gained. My problem isn't with the personages of the royal family. It is with the fact republicanism is constitutionally barred from representation - it's morally wrong to start of any MP or MSP's career on a lie.

The EU obviously represents some level of threat to state sovereignty. Is it worth sacrificing some power to gain influence in the EU? Simply imagining all of Scotland is happy to join the EU doesn't recognise the diversity of opinion. We need to make grown up choices on the EU and the monarchy. We can only make them if we have a referendum on them post-independence. Not seriously considering these points will have a bearing on whether a future referendum can be won.

Joe Middleton is an SNP member, and former Scottish Republican Socialist Movement member. This article is abridged from his blog, <https://freescotlandnow.wordpress.com/author/freescotlandnow/>

Referendum double standards: Scotland and the EU



Peter Lomas argues the nature of the electorates can influence outcomes of referenda

Defining electoral franchises is always contentious. Under 'universal suffrage', universality does not mean that literally everyone has the right to vote, but simply every registered adult citizen. In national referenda, there is the additional question of identity. 'Who is Scottish?' (for the purpose of the consultation) was asked in September 2014. 'Who is British?' will be asked in the 'in-out' referendum on the EU, sometime by late 2017.

In the first, the franchise was broadly defined, including non-British EU citizens resident in Scotland, as well as Irish and Commonwealth ones. In the second, the franchise will be narrower. Apart from the Irish and Commonwealth citizens, UK residents who are not UK nationals will not have a vote. Since effectively the same Conservative-led government legislated for both referenda from the UK side, this is surely a case of political double standards.

Here we might ask what precisely the EU is. What do potential 'no' voters in the EU referendum want to be 'out' of - or in what kind of polity do potential 'yes' voters want to remain? Is the EU a convention of democracies, or a potential United States of Europe?

In the Scottish referendum, the definition meant voters could conceive their identity broadly, and in this respect the EU received the benefit of the doubt - which was right in a sense because the referendum prefigured Scotland as a new state in the world, as the EU itself might one day become.

But it was also wrong, in a deeper historical sense. In particular, how could other Europeans with their own history and culture, temporarily resident in Scotland for work or study, help to define Scottish national identity? How could they, probably uncommitted to a lifetime in Scotland, decide the future lives of Scots? Independence is forever, not till next year or the next recession.

Casting the Scottish franchise broadly in 2014 was also controversial in a legal sense. On the one hand, as pointed out by the international lawyer, David

Edward, there is now an EU citizenship which potentially supersedes citizenship rights assured under member states. Since the Treaty of Union of 1993, it has been illegal to discriminate against citizens in the EU on grounds of their (member state) nationality, especially in matters of fundamental human rights. But in what sense was it a matter of fundamental human rights for Poles or Romanians (or for that matter Nigerians and Canadians) to be able to decide whether Scots should be part of the United Kingdom state in future? This is an even more specific issue, and more directly concerned with identity than whether Poles and Romanians in Scotland should have a say on whether the UK should continue as part of the EU.

One way to make sense of common EU citizenship is to consider whether rights enjoyed in one country are concretely reciprocated in another, through established law. So in the test-case cited by David Edward, a French university student living in Belgium claimed a right to subsistence in the shape of state benefits. The student had fallen on hard financial times and was no longer able to support himself and complete his degree. The Belgian authorities rejected his claim. But the European Court of Justice, defining him as a worker exercising his right of free movement within the EU, adjudged that this was wrong, and ordered the Belgian government to pay the benefits - decreeing that, in effect, reciprocity should prevail in this matter between French and Belgian society.

By analogy there should, in 2014, have been reciprocity between EU societies on their willingness to allow some of their number to secede democratically and form separate member states - as had been agreed in principle between the UK and Scottish governments in the Edinburgh Agreement.

But in the rest of the EU this possibility was barely explored. The President of the European Commission, along with other European leaders, expressed outright hostility to the idea, and in at least one member state it was

outlawed in advance. In Spain, the Rajoy government not only refused to consider referenda on Basque or Catalan secession but went to the Spanish Supreme Court to procure a ban. Those Spanish politicians also - the circumstances were not coincidental - stated their intention to veto any independent Scottish application to join the European Union.

The upshot of this was that no Scot living in Bilbao or Barcelona in 2014 would have been able to vote on Basque or Catalan independence, while Spanish citizens resident in Scotland could vote in the independence referendum. In a case known to me, a Spaniard voted 'no' to independence out of her objection to the secession movements in Spain!

Some would argue the same potential for injustice existed in Scotland in 2014 with regard to another set of voters. Thus, 72% of 'British born in the rest of the UK', amounting to some 6% of the electorate, voted 'no' in the independence referendum, effectively swinging the result, since the difference between the two sides was 10%. Meanwhile, according to the same analysis, 53% of Scots 'born in Scotland' voted 'yes'.

These considerations, and that expatriate Scots were denied a vote altogether in 2014 (while most expatriate Britons will be eligible to vote in the EU referendum) should give us all pause for thought.

The first referendum result was a guddle; the second could be the same. Not an unsatisfactory outcome for English Conservatives, or European financiers who are happy to lend Greeks the money to pay Greek debts to the IMF.

In my view, Scottish independence is the bottom rung of the ladder to political reform at home and to the redefinition of political Europe, and beyond them, to the transformation of international relations. Without independence, we are not even on the ladder.

Peter Lomas is a contributor to Common Weal

Book Reviews

Anent Hamish Henderson: essays, poems, interviews,

Eberhart Bort (ed.),

Grace-note Publications, 97819083739916, £15

Reviewed by David Hamilton

As I remember him from the 1960s, Hamish Henderson (1919-2002) was an international scholar of French, German and Italian literature, a prize-winning poet, a go-to archive of Scots songs and, not least, a tall but shuffling figure around the howfs, ceilidhs and watering holes of central Edinburgh. He was widely regarded as a guid man - in the dictionary sense that he was 'distinguished in social standing ... worthy, respectable'. Yet, I also found Hamish a modest, private and hesitant man. At the time, many of us puzzled over his biography and his implied legendary status; yet the best we could do was to exchange scattered fragments of gossip. There was no great work to be consulted, examined and reported. The oral tradition ruled in the collective memory.

All this began to change after Hamish's formal retirement from the School of Scottish Studies in 1987. He allowed samples of his work to be anthologised and published in a 'long-awaited' volume, with Hamish borrowing from James Joyce for the self-denying title *Alias McAlias* (1992). A steady stream of reminiscences has followed, often written by those indebted to the influence he exerted on their lives. The essays, poems and interviews here augment this flow of information, extending a growing body of critical writing about Hamish, his life and influence. Through these reminiscences, obituaries and commentaries, however, the oral tradition has become a text. It is represented not only in Timothy Neat's two-volume biography (2009), but also in three previous volumes also prepared and edited by Eberhart Bort. In turn, this stream of critical writing has begun to feed on itself, with later contributors rejecting the mythologies embodied in earlier narratives. Indeed, the critical literature has begun to echo the flyting or wrangling over poetry and folk music that engaged Hamish Henderson and Hugh MacDiarmid in the 1950s and 1960s - and discussed in this volume by Raymond Ross.

But what about prospective readers who never knew Hamish or, indeed, have no personal knowledge of those who wrote the essays, composed the poems or compiled the interviews? There is also great value in reading *Anent Hamish Henderson* as not so much about the man as about his times. It can be read as an alternative or, if you prefer, a subaltern or Gramscian account

of Scottish life and culture in the latter half of the twentieth century. It serves as a chronicle of a Scottish vernacular renaissance which extends from Hamish's contribution to the Edinburgh People's Festival Ceilidhs (1951-1953) to beyond the cultural animation that suffused the 2014 referendum campaign.

But the most significant change in Scottish Cultural Studies between the 1950s and the present day is that the oral and literate traditions have come together as a multimedia tradition, a 'carrying stream' of sources in the form of visual and audio derivatives (e.g. documentaries), Celtic connections (e.g. the cross-fertilisation of international sack-pipers) and, not least, the *Kist o' Riches*, a website containing over 34,000 oral recordings made in Scotland and further afield, from the 1930s onwards. In short, *Anent Hamish Henderson* is an equally worthy and respectable contribution to this tradition.

David Hamilton was President of Edinburgh University Folk Song Society in 1963-1964.

Stuart McHardy Scotland's Future

History, Luath,
9781910021415, £7.99

Reviewed by Donald McCormick

According to the publisher, *Scotland's Future History* 'unlocks a vision that is free from the kinds of distortion, bias and error that have plagued our understanding for centuries'. Ah, the sweet smell of conspiracy. True, it is a scandal that Scottish history - distorted or otherwise - is not a syllabus requirement after the age of thirteen, unlike Religious Education. Given the book's title, I was hoping that redefining our history might be along more expansive lines of works such as Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel* or even Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*.

But what we get is a further dose of the narrow 'Wha's like us?' revisions of events in our wee bit of hill and glen most likely to appeal to those various types of Little Scotlanders. These are the people who keep assuring me that the 'establishment' keeps a tight control of taught history because the 'truth' would reveal that Scots were inherent racists/Marxists/collectivist/jugglers/kill-in-the-blank and yes, I kid you not, real National Socialists. McHardy lets us know, repeatedly, that he is against the Great Satan - aka, received opinion. Of

course, reappraise 'facts' based on research but be equally aware of the many agendas which want to replace received opinion with a more 'correct' version of it. I fear that is what McHardy is aiming for.

He asks 'What if prehistoric Scotland was not some dark, remote land peopled by barbarians but was actually home to a highly sophisticated civilisation? What if the Scots never came from Ireland? What if Scots never fought any 'Wars of Independence'? What if Culloden wasn't the end of the Jacobites? So what's the problem? Yes, research, publish and add to the wonderful debate that is history.

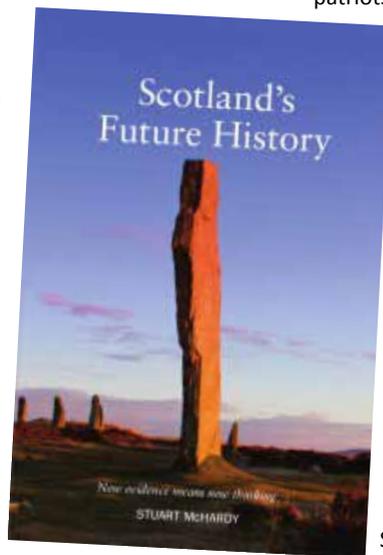
However, the tone of the book suggests that these issues are suppressed by some, presumably pro-union, cabal to prevent Scots having a more positive view of themselves. Ancient Scotland's portrayal as uncivilised is hardly unique - all of northern non-Roman Europe got the same treatment though research has given us a more accurate picture even while discounting the Nazis' stalwart attempts at inventing an improved received opinion.

So what if the Scots did not originate in Ireland? Interesting but does anyone really think that this has a bearing on the here-and-now? The fact is that ALL of us came from Africa so there's a piece of received opinion that will no doubt upset the 'patriots' who march behind the big drum at this time of year. So the Bruces and others of the medieval Scottish toff-aucracy were not of Norman descent despite holding lands in England? If true, an interesting footnote but does it really matter in our understanding of the 'Wars of Independence' that apparently hadn't happened.

Here McHardy's protest is one of semantics - how about the 'Wars of Continuing Independence'? Does that sound snappier or is the author denying that something was up between 1286 and 1328? Culloden certainly was not the end of the Jacobites: the late David Niven told us that on giving the loyal toast in the officers' mess, Scots would surreptitiously toast the King Over the Water indicating that Jacobite sedition was alive and fun in 1942.

Besides, name me an untenable cause that simply ends just like that. I don't regret that a Stuart victory might have left Scotland in 2015 as the last country in Europe with a ruler insisting on the divine right of kings defended by a bunch of noble claymore wielding clan warriors, the latter much admired by the author. Did you know that the murder rate of the Southern states of the USA is so much higher than the Northern ones because the South saw a large influx of Highland Scots who introduced their noble clan warrior culture of 'honour' violence? There's a wee nugget for a future history.

Donald McCormick is a retired history teacher, anti-ideologue and a grumpy optimist



Kick up the Tabloids

I'm writing this column two days after the end of the Edinburgh Fringe. After a month of a frantic gig schedule of three shows a day every single day in August, my life is returning to something approaching normality, as is the city itself. Just when any kind of normality will return to the Labour Party is anyone's guess.

At least in Scotland, it now has a leader. Kezia Dugdale, in her acceptance speech said the party had to rid itself of 'the baggage of the past' - which, in my humble opinion, is a very disrespectful way to talk about Johann Lamont.

I did a daily political panel show at The Assembly Rooms at the Fringe, along with Mark Nelson and Keir McAllister. Kezia Dugdale was in the audience one day and didn't crack a smile once. Gordon Strachan came to the show a few days later and was falling about laughing. Things have come to a bizarre point when the manager of the Scotland football team has a better understand of left-wing satirical comedy than the leader of the Scottish Labour Party!

So how will Kezia face following that toughest of acts to follow (in the figure of one Jim Murphy)? Let's face it, in terms of publicised buffoonery, Murphy set the bar pretty high, from the referendum Irn Bru crate to the pre-election claim that he'd sniffed glue as a kid. The remarkable thing about Jim Murphy is that he is a teetotaler. Nothing unusual about that until the realisation dawns that when he was talking all that utter bollocks over the last few months, he was stone-cold sober all the time. At least, Nigel Farage has a ready-made excuse.

Jim Murphy went from national hero to national joke in a remarkably short period of time. In November 2013, he was at the scene of the Clutha disaster and helped carry survivors out of the pub, widely seen as an act of bravery. Just before Christmas last year, he turned up at the scene of the Glasgow bin lorry crash, which a lot of people thought was a rather weird co-incidence. He then became leader of the Scottish Labour Party, at which

point most people were thinking, 'Is there not a single fucking disaster this guy won't get involved with?'

Meanwhile, down in London, Labour is tearing itself apart, as those on the right-wing of the party are appalled at the idea they could end up with a vaguely-socialist leader.

Both Neil Kinnock and Gordon Brown have come out the woodwork to warn party members against voting Corbyn. Both claimed that it would be a disaster were Labour to have a leader who was 'unelectable'. Of course, when it comes to unelectability, these are two men who know what they are talking about, having lost a total of three general elections between them.

We then had Tony Blair warning his party that it could risk 'annihilation' under Corbyn. While we all may be used to Tony Blair lying through his teeth, when he talks about annihilation, it is wise to take him seriously. Is he threatening to bomb the Labour Party? We're probably only days away from Alastair Campbell claiming that Jeremy Corbyn has weapons of mass destruction.

If Corbyn is elected, there may finally be a proper Labour opposition at Westminster, as thus far the SNP has on many measures been the sole party voting against the Tories. Indeed, this has at times sparked controversy in Parliament, most notably when the Nationalists threatened to vote against Cameron's bill to re-introduce fox hunting into England. He accused them of holding the country to ransom and

claimed they had no right to vote on a bill that did not affect Scotland.

Firstly, what does it say of this government's vision for the future of the UK when it proposes turning back the clock to re-legalise a barbaric sport, which is almost exclusively the pursuit of the privileged few? This is nearly as retrograde a measure as bringing back the stocks, or re-introducing slavery. What next? Suggesting Sunday afternoon trips to the mental asylum to laugh at the inmates? After all, it was a very popular form of entertainment in Victorian times.

Secondly, Cameron is wrong to say that the English fox-hunting bill did not affect Scotland. It certainly would have affected Scotland. We are all aware that foxes are very intelligent and cunning animals. If the bill had changed and foxes in England found that their lives were endangered and that Scotland could provide a safe haven for them, then that certainly would have had consequences north of the Border.

You would have foxes crowding into the railway station in Berwick-on-Tweed, foxes jumping on the backs of lorries at Carlisle, and boatloads of foxes crossing over the Solway Firth. As most people know, the infrastructure of Dumfries and Galloway is not able to cope with any more foxes. It's already reached saturation point.

Vladimir McTavish's 2015 Edinburgh Fringe show 'Scotland: 45 Events that shaped a Nation' will be available on DVD this autumn. Just in time for Christmas!

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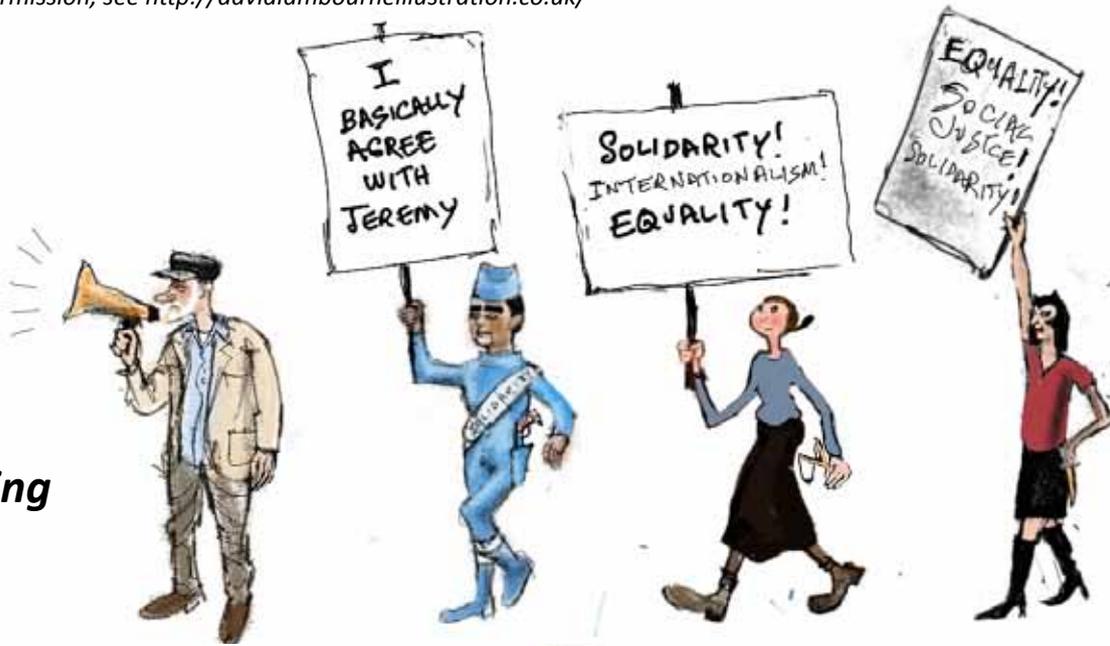
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marching in step



walking dead

The old order changeth, giving place to new....



celtic hounds