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INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



WE DANCED THE DANCES OF ALL COUNTRIES

EDWARD ARDIZZONE
(And Long May We Continue To Do So)

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT CONFERENCE REPORTS

BREXIT

ARDIZZONE IN LONDON.

EVENTS

7th November LIBG Executive, NLC

11th-13th November 197th Executive Committee meeting of LI, Marrakech, Morocco.

12th November Scottish Liberal Democrats Conference. Vine Venue, Dunfermline.

28th November LIBG Forum: The future of Kashmir. NLC

9 January 2017 LIBG Executive, NLC

6 March 2017 LIBG Executive, NLC

17th-19th March 2017 Liberal Democrat Spring Conference, York.

18th-21st May 2017 61st Congress of Liberal International, Andorra. The Congress will mark the 70th anniversary of LI.

For bookings & other information please contact the Treasurer below.

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Photographs: Stewart Rayment, Liberal Democrats
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What kind of Brexit will we get?

Phil Bennion

In debates during the referendum campaign participants were usually asked about the likely scenario if the country voted Leave and if Parliament would overturn the vote. I always answered that given that party leaders had indicated that they would respect the referendum outcome, it was likely that enough Remain MPs would abstain to allow Article 50 to be invoked. Not once did one of my opponents disagree and not once did they suggest that Parliament would or should not get a vote. I also said that I thought it unlikely that we would remain in the Single Market after Brexit for two reasons. Firstly, it would make leaving absurd, as we would simply lose our seat at the table in drafting laws that we would have subsequently to follow and secondly due to the emphasis on freedom of movement of large factions of the Leave campaign. With so many voting Leave primarily to end Freedom of Movement it would make leaving the EU whilst retaining it politically difficult.

When Mrs May took over as PM there was some optimism that she would favour Soft Brexit as close to the Single Market as possible. It seems that one thing she has in common with the Brexiteers is a lack of understanding of the rules-based nature of the EU and its Single Market, as all seemed to assume that we can have unfettered access without Freedom of Movement. The slow dawning of the reality now makes a hard Brexit the most likely outcome.

This does not mean that the Liberal Democrats are wrong to propose that we stay in the Single Market. Although an unlikely outcome, it is the most effective position to take in exposing the senselessness of leaving the EU at all.

The government are hopelessly split on what kind of Brexit they want so the PM has a difficult task in coming forward with a clear plan. The large faction of Tory MPs who follow the Minford doctrine of unilateral free trade make any form of orderly Brexit difficult. Added to this is the PM's attachment to ending Freedom of Movement. The only currently available formula that can deliver on this is to remain in the Customs Union rather than the Single Market. But this would require the UK to submit to the European Court of Justice in such matters and also require us to get EU approval for any treaties we sign. Such a significant loss of sovereignty would be anathema to the Eurosceptics in the government so we can almost rule it out.

This leaves the likelihood of Mrs May pursuing a Canada type trade deal with the EU despite the length of time it will take. Expect her also to try to maintain interim access to the Single Market, probably without much success. With so many in her government favouring hard Brexit and a recast of our economy towards an Asian Tiger model, the odds are against her. In short her twin aspirations to end freedom of movement and retain full access to the Single Market are incompatible. Overall, not leaving at all is less unlikely. If public opinion turns should inflation take hold alongside stagnant wages, the British public may start asking questions, but Hard Brexit now looks difficult to avoid.

Phil Bennion is chair of LIBG and a former MEP for the West Midlands

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The National Liberal Club will be running an American-themed evening on the day of the US Presidential election (November 8th). On the following day, there will be a large TV screen in the Smoking Room where you can watch as results come in. The NLC has kindly opened these events to LIBG members who are not members of the Club, but please notify them if you would like to attend. Club dress code applies. RSVP's should be directed to Louisa Pooley (louisa@nlc.org.uk)

All other issues have been off HMG's radar since Brexit.

FCO, DfID & Defence Q&A



Tom Brake:

In Parliament, we are prioritising Human Rights in Foreign Policy as a starting point. HMG increasingly focuses on international trade at the expense of human rights. Syria is the biggest issue aside from Brexit. We've focused on airdrops to civilians under siege.

On the subject of the Jungle, we wrote to the Mayor of Calais offering to cooperate but unfortunately received no reply.

Libya – the question of oversight of extra-judicial killings and the deployment of special forces. The Americans and Australians are much more open about the deployment of their forces, without compromising them. Also the use of drones, which lacks Parliamentary oversight.

Saudi Arabia – the use of UK supplied weapons in Yemen – international law broken, only the UK doesn't admit to this, although acknowledges that Parliament has been 'misled'. If I could do anything it would be to secure the dismissal of Tobias Elwood as minister responsible.

Over Brexit, we are trying to ensure that towards the end of the Article 50 negotiations, the Government's proposed new trade arrangements which the EU are ratified by a vote – this would give the public the chance to vote on our 'destination'. Syria and all other issues have been off HMG's radar since Brexit.

Lindsay Northover

There is a Brexit theme in everything, but the commitment to 0.7% GNI that the Liberal Democrats fought for in the Coalition is in place. Priti Patel, the new Secretary of State, has said in the past that she wanted to abolish DfID, but now emphasises that she sees its purpose. HMG would find it difficult to repeal the 0.7% commitment. They might get it through the Commons, but not through the Lords. It was signed into place on the last day of the Coalition government.

There are rules on how it is used. OECD rules say that aid cannot be tanks for example. A growing proportion of overseas aid is outside of DfID, where the criteria are less stringent, but still has to answer to OECD rules. We all agree that Departments

should work together. The lessons of Iraq made that clear. Hilary Benn introduced this and it remains – so the working together of the Ministry of Defence, Foreign & Commonwealth Office and DfID on conflict and stability.



The downside of Brexit in terms of development includes the decline of the UK's influence in the EU. Britain acted as a lever beyond our contribution in terms of the EU's focus. The EU is the largest contributor to aid worldwide. Priti Patel emphasises that aid must be used in Britain's interest. This has been welcomed by the Daily Mail, who thought her appointment was 'Priti Good' and campaigns against DfID. But we all recognise that development is in Britain's and the world's interest.

DfID focuses on sustainable development goals (SDGs) which were agreed globally last year at the United Nations – to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, while leaving no one behind. This focus was put in place under the Coalition, especially focusing on women and girls, who are poorer worldwide and therefore often less able to support their families and access education and healthcare. The elderly become more isolated with the move to cities. LBGT individuals are forced to hide their identity or suffer for it. But Brexit is overarching.



Judith Jolly – Defence

There are other deterrents as well as nuclear. Julie Smith had spent 15 days talking to members of the armed forces. There was anxiety that they don't have the personnel to do what is needed of them. Engineers are desperately lacking. Under the 2010 and 2015 Defence Reviews Hammond had cut costs. 2015 had been more strategic, underpinned budget on kit. Regular forces less seen. Russia geared up – they have more planes than NATO. Baltic states are uncomfortable about this. NATO's Warsaw Summit saw a commitment to the Eastern front as a form of deterrent. China is becoming more muscular in the Horn of Africa and South China Seas. The world is becoming more insecure.

Questions:

Jonathan Brown: Chichester. Syria has a ceasefire, but the conflict is likely to be unresolved. What can we do?

Tom Brake confirmed huge difficulties over being able to supply assistance to Syria, & shared concerns regarding the cessation of hostilities – what was in it for Assad and Russia? He thought there might be air drops in certain areas, but not those Assad hopes to regain. Convoys had been blocked within hours of the last agreement. Assad simply seeks to extract the most advantage for himself.

John Innes: Carmarthen. China's military & commercial expansion – how does it affect the UK? On China, Tom thought that Hinckley Point C would be an issue. Energy prices have crashed since the deal was first negotiated, but the costs to the UK have gone up from £6 billion to potentially up to £30 billion. There should be more focus on human rights, but this would become more difficult out of the EU. The French had said 'Good luck dealing with the Chinese'.

Lindsay said that Tom was right regarding greater vulnerability. China is much involved in developing countries, though now more aware than they used to be about their reputation. She thought there was some hope of working together.

John Kelly: Warwick & Leamington. Yemen. 1) HMG appears to have gone back on Coalition commitments. Vince Cable had approved arms sales to Saudi Arabia, but with guarantees which have not been enforced by the British side. [ie: British arms used by Saudis in Yemen]. 2) Nick Clegg changed rules whereby British police could interview representatives of foreign governments. This didn't apply with regards to Tzipi Livni, former Israeli Prime Minister, over Gaza in 2008. [Tzipi Livni was summoned by

UK police for questioning over alleged war crimes, but this was cancelled after talks between the two governments. An arrest warrant for Ms Livni was issued in the UK in 2009, triggering a diplomatic row between the two countries. Ms Livni cancelled her visit.]

Tom said that UK personnel are embedded with the Saudis, but were not looking at violations in international law. Lindsay added that Vince Cable had responsibility for the arms trade treaty and had been outstanding by comparison to his predecessors. The Conservatives would not have signed up to an arms limitation treaty by themselves.

On Israel, Tom didn't know enough about the legality of the issue. The same thing might, for example, apply to Tony Blair, which urged caution. Lindsay added that the International Criminal Court and a body of law may seem to have developed glacially, but at least it was there and Liberal Democrats had played a key part in moving them forward, especially Willie Goodhart and Anthony Lester.

Rosalyn St.Pierre: Lewes. Before becoming a councillor in East Sussex County Council, I had an extensive career in education projects for the emerging economies in South America, East and Central Asia and throughout Africa. My view on aid projects is pragmatic based on my first experience in Cameroon in the 1960s where donors included the government of Taiwan and mainland China, both running farm projects and looking to boost rice yields; British projects primarily focussing on university sector support; a large diplomatic presence of both the USA and USSR and of course the French maintaining their colonial base. I am not concerned that the current huge investment in infrastructure in East and Central Africa because good infrastructure outcomes last longer than governments. A good solid road or railway that joins up regions has more long-term value than most.

Research and anecdotal observations concur on one thing, if a girl completes the basic cycle of education successfully, then the economic outcomes are hugely improved. Women who are literate will benefit the small businesses and farms they usually work on. Being literate means they do not fall prey to unscrupulous middle men who take the bulk of their monetary wealth; women who are literate teach and support their children to be literate and this can lead to breaking the poverty cycle.

The role of the British Council is now under attack from Conservatives. I have always thought that their programmes in supporting education is good work. While their expertise was also in English Language teaching with a focus on empowerment rather than on an undercover colonial policy, I am sad to see that much of some recent projects has been helping those in the private sector and the wealthier students.

Lindsay replied that indeed aid projects need to be joined up. DfID had been doing this, in the Coalition period especially through the work on individual countries strengths and weaknesses by their chief economist. Now waiting for multi/bilateral reviews on how DfID moves forward. On the British Council – I don't know. Secretary of State may be more favourable – doesn't like NGOs. There is a grant for the support of higher education in Africa for the next six years.

Tom added that the Liberal Democrats had supported the BBC World Service. He added that in Algeria, Tunisia etc. youths talk about radicalisation – wanted formal teaching of Islam in schools, as they were unable to respond to what radicalisers told them, and could get caught up in the excitement.

Judith added on the British Council that the new CEO was good at looking at things and lobbying.

Matthew Palmer: North Devon. Raised questions on the US Elections 1) The hacking of the Democrats computer by outside forces, 2) Trump's rhetoric on NATO – pulling out.

Tom said that he had tabled a question on the preparations of the government; NATO was a real problem. Hacking was covered in the Defence Review with more focus on cyber defence.

Judith was not optimistic about Trump, and questioned who was briefing him.

Elaine Drage: Carshalton. India – the Coalition had stopped aid. What of the problems of women – tribal & killings.

Lindsay said there were cut backs in aid to India in Coalition times, but aid that remained was focused on Dalits, women and those most likely to be excluded.

Andrew Nicolaides: Sevenoaks. What support from the UK Government on the reunification of Cyprus? Resolving a 50-year problem.

Lindsay said that Merel Ece had recently mentioned some encouraging discussions on this extremely difficult issue.

Tom said the government supported developments, but not much happening at the UK level. There is a reasonable chance of it going through, but Brexit drives the UK government off course.

Neil McCulloch: Oxfordshire. Asked Lindsay about attempts to merge DfID with the International Trade Department.

Lindsay thought that Priti Patel wouldn't want to dissolve her own department and give way to Liam Fox, but they are working together. Africa is trying to build up trade blocks. There is a place for trade. She had been a Trade Envoy to Angola for the Foreign Office & UKTI, where they need to diversify out of oil as prices drop. Get more into agriculture which benefits the less well off. British expertise could help.

Tom added that DfID & International Trade were under the biggest egos in government. They would fight.

Woman: Mole Valley. Is British tax payers' money wasted on projects of poverty eradication?

Lindsay said that 'wasted money' was a phrase Priti Patel and the Daily Mail use. It was just a phrase. DfID is one of the most transparent departments in government and the world. In 2010 Andrew Mitchell set up ICAI, which independently assesses everything DfID does as well. Challenging to work in fragile states, but essential that we do that.

Gabriel Barton Singer: Putney. Support for Kurds in Syria?

Lindsay said she was concerned about the plight of women – horrendous accounts – not safe when in camps, for example.

Tom said there was support for the Kurds in Syria, and also Iraq and Turkey, but there were concerns about the Kurds also.

Aaron D: East Berks? Use of SAS in Libya & Syria – was this mission creep? Did it have Parliamentary approval?

Judith said that the SAS had been used in blitzes in the past, but was acting in a training role now. The Secretary of State approves actions, but there are questions. How much did this happen in the past?

Tom said that he had met Paddy Ashdown about the SAS. HMG was not transparent in all cases, but could be more so.

Judith added that Kishwer Falkner had a House of Lords Private Members Bill that had reached its second reading on what circumstances should use be brought before Parliament on overseas actions. There was also a second reading on a House of Lords Private Members Bill that sought to regulate arms brokers.

Liam?: Streatham. Executions are now at their highest level. Have we dropped abolition of capital punishment as a strategy?

Tom said this was worrying, especially in Iran. HMG questions the use of British equipment – weapons and medication, in executions.



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LOCAL COMMUNITIES WELCOMING REFUGEES

Liberal Democrat conference policy motion September 2016

There is always a choice of what to debate as an emergency motion at a Lib Dem conference, and we all get a vote as to which we debate first thing on the last morning. The motion, *Local Communities welcoming refugees* (below) came out top of the ballot.

The motion noted the disturbing progression of the refugee crisis, with the facts that 88,245 unaccompanied migrant children applied for asylum in 2015 and there are an estimated 10,000 missing unaccompanied migrant children in the EU. It restated that the UK must welcome its fair share of refugees to ease this crisis including unaccompanied refugee children; That Government should make additional funding available to local authorities to help with this and to build capacity. It also noted that refugees contribute a huge amount to local communities throughout the UK.

It called for much more co-ordination around foster care, between central and local government, and between the UK and French Governments. Councils were called on to play their part. Think about the



Suzanne Fletcher of LD4SoS and Paddy Beck admiring an earlier edition of interLib espousing their cause!

children with ties in the UK here quickly, as well as others that are alone and defenceless. Councils need sufficient money and resources to plan for, and support, both the children and Syrians under the VPRS scheme.

She went on to say that of course housing needed to be provided but not to forget that we also have many destitute asylum seekers, who cannot go back to their own countries, but have no income and we do not allow them to work. They need housing too. Of course, Syrians arriving here need English lessons, but so do asylum seekers already here, and ability to pick up life skills for the UK too. She called on us all to keep up the pressure on Government for us to take our fair share and for our communities

to play their part in making these refugees truly welcome.

Jacquie Bell (34 minutes in) noted how the extent of community concerns following the drowning of Adan Kurdi have sometimes been lost in the post-Brexit Crisis. However, people are still drowning in the Mediterranean and Syria still burns.

She spoke of the mismatch between the willingness of some local authorities and voluntary groups to help and the slow response/negative attitude of the UK Government with particular reference to work by East Lothian Council and East Lothian volunteers. She referred to Theresa May's speech to the UN and the start of wall building in Calais when many in the UK would like to do more with particular concerns for lone children.

Bradley Hillier-Smith followed (38 minutes in) with "There are hundreds of children in Calais alone with a right to safety here in the UK and the Government must act on its legal and moral obligations to save them"

“We have the capacity and the resources to save lives. There is no excuse. If we have millions to spend building a wall in Calais, then for goodness sake we have the resources to offer safety and hope for refugees.”

“We must pressure Theresa May and her government to welcome refugees and to provide the support necessary to do so. Then when we say refugees are welcome here, we mean what we say and we can make our words a reality”.

Baroness Shas Sheehan (46 minutes in) summed up. She quoted Edmund Burke “The only way that evil will triumph is for good men to do nothing”. Continuing she said that instead of leadership with humanitarian vision from our Government, we have paralysis, xenophobia, fenced borders going up between Schengen countries and dodgy deals with Turkey. Instead, we must meet our responsibility to international law.

She foresaw that the Calais camps would close soon, and reminded us that last time this happened, 150 children went missing. She spoke passionately and with the knowledge that she had from visiting the camps about the conditions there, especially for the children, leading to dangerous and sometimes fatal attempts to get to the UK. Safe and legal means are needed for those children, many of who have families already in the UK. Councils are cash strapped but Government should give proper and long term support, and enable the outpouring of deep concern in communities to become real support.

She ended with reminding us that politics is the art of the possible and urged us to get on with it and agree this motion overwhelmingly.

We did; there was not one vote against, so this is now official Lib Dem policy.

The debate can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9XP4V4dm9w&feature=youtu.be>

F35 Emergency motion: Local Communities Welcoming Refugees

Conference notes:

- i. The refugee crisis over the summer including refugees from Syria but also from other countries; the publication of a House of Lords report on unaccompanied migrant children in July 2016 and the visit by a delegation of senior local government figures to the Calais jungle migrant camp in August 2016.
- ii. That 88,245 unaccompanied migrant children applied for asylum in 2015.
- iii. That there are an estimated 10,000 missing unaccompanied migrant children in the EU.

Conference believes:

- a. The UK must welcome its fair share of refugees to ease this crisis including unaccompanied refugee children.
- b. That Government should make additional funding available to local authorities to help with this and to build capacity.
- c. That refugees contribute a huge amount to local communities throughout the UK.

Conference calls for:

1. National co-ordination which is essential to share intelligence around foster care capacity across the country.
2. Central government to work closely with local government to ensure councils have the funding and support they need to help refugees.



Shas Sheehan

3. UK and French governments to work together to ensure that unaccompanied children are reunited with their families or otherwise given long-term security including access to education.
4. Councils to support measures such as the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) and request that Syrian refugees are encouraged to settle in their area.
5. Suitable housing to be made available to refugees in need.
6. Councils to provide a contact point for newly arrived refugees to register their skills and qualifications and given assistance to find work.
7. Improved provision for English language teaching for those who need it.

THE PROTECTION GAP.

Liberal Democrats For Seekers of Sanctuary Fringe Meeting

A packed room was there to hear our speakers, and we were especially pleased to introduce Princess Adenike Lawson from the Protection Gap Advocates. Not because she was a Princess! But because she could speak from the heart and with experience.

She spoke on the issues facing women in particular, telling us that one third of people seeking asylum are doing so in their own right and not as a partner. We must never forget why they are here. They are fleeing in terror from one sort of violence or another. They often have childcare problems and a lack of information about the process of applying for asylum. The five big issues facing women were explained to us.

She said “It is so important that there is a female interviewer. Women from most countries that are fleeing here are not able to tell things to men. They need a female interpreter especially if such as rape is needed to be talked about as a reason for being here. It is so much easier to open up then”.

The issues about being interviewed with children being present creates a big problem. They have often witnessed brutality, and it is traumatic to hear it again. If they have not witnessed horrors such as sexual crimes, then they must not have to hear about them.

Not only was there a need for the interviewers to be female, but the Princess made it very clear about the need for them to be trained in properly understanding about sexual violence, and interpreters need to be trained in how to interpret what we would call delicate terms to describe what has happened. She said that the Home Office had agreed that female interpreters need to be trained to deal with those so traumatised

It was also shocking to hear that there is no counselling offered by UKVI. Women not only need to be able to make proper claims for asylum, there also needs to be understanding and support. The right of information for women is so important. There is a danger of wrong information being given at initial interviews, a woman may forget something or not include it in their statement. If they then amend it later, they are not believed. Not only do women



Princess Adenike Lawson

have the right to have this information about procedures, they need the environment of being able to put their case properly. Surely not too much to ask?

Debora Singer, policy and research manager of Asylum Aid outlined the 5 measures of childcare being demanded through Asylum Aid's Protection Gap campaign; always having female interviewers and interpreters; them being trained in sexual violence and trauma issues; counselling and support for women who have experienced gender based harm and proper information about the asylum process, rights and entitlements specific to women seeking asylum.

The fact that more women than men win their appeals against the right to remain illustrates how there are many faults in the process of applying for asylum for them. They have the difficulty of being able to provide corroborative evidence especially for gender based violence rather politically based claims. The issues of memory, trauma and shame are so much more difficult to overcome and all the more reason for the five principles to be applied.

Women have the same chance as men of having asylum but more women than men win on Appeal. Surely an indication that initial decisions are wrong.

There had been success on some issues that have been taken up by the Home Office. But disappointment that Theresa May had tried to create two classes of refugees – the “deserving” and “not deserving”, which is very discriminatory. There is no doubt that the Protection Gap¹ must be closed, and there are a lot more details on the web link.

Alistair Carmichael MP, and Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Home Affairs in the House of Commons said “taking the road to travel we have, might not be easy but it is the right thing to do and is our Lib Dem approach. We must stick to first principles of helping those who need it.” He told us about the dysfunctionality of the Home Office. They have a target of 6 months to make decisions but as we know this is just not being met. Even more important, one third of decision appeals are won, showing how wrong so many decisions are. He is angry at how the Home Office are looking for reasons to refuse rather than give fair consideration to cases. He also cited problems of the level of financial support to asylum seekers being cut without them having the right to work.

A lively discussion followed.

The question as to why are the Home Office always so negative and cynical is not for us to be able to answer, it is what we want to know too. There should not be such a culture of disbelief, and arbitrary immigration targets are not helping. Debora pointed out that the Police and Crown Prosecution Service have a policy of believing rape survivors as a way of gathering best evidence. We were heartened by an attendee telling us about him hosting an Iranian family in his home. It meant they understood and shared the problems, but what a positive experience it was.

What can we do? was the big question posed. Hosting was talked about. Information leaflets (hosting is in the housing leaflet) available on the LD4SOS stall were pointed out and they are now on our website. It is important we keep up the pressure on the problems we already know about, spread the word on issues we had just learned more about on the Protection Gap, so we can campaign for those very basic 5 principles to be enacted.

<http://d2t68d2r9artlv.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/The-Protection-Gap-briefing.pdf>

The Protection Gap. Fringe Meeting hosted by Liberal Democrats For Seekers of Sanctuary at the Liberal Democrat Autumn Federal Conference with Asylum Aid and Alistair Carmichael MP.

Brexit and the Middle East

Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel Conference Fringe Event

Given the shattering enormity of Brexit and its all-consuming potential for politics (everywhere except the Labour Party conference), the Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel chose this year to hold a more speculative and wide-ranging fringe discussion than is usual. The panel, consisting of Lord Johnny Oates, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Tom Brake MP and Christian Cantor, political advisor to the Israeli Embassy to the UK, gave a series of talks and a Q&A on the possible impacts of Brexit on Israel and the Middle East, with three particular key themes picked out: trade, the peace process, and anti-Semitism. The Hilton conference suite was well attended and LDFI Chair Gavin Stollar began the proceedings by paying tribute and noting the best wishes of all present to the ailing (now sadly deceased) former Israeli President, peacemaker and icon Shimon Peres.

Tom Brake spoke first, setting out the bleak realities of the Brexit situation domestically, and the consequent impacts for our relationship abroad. He argued that, with Brexit relegating other current issues to second place, and severe limits on available money, the Government will have to relegate the development of new relationships and fall back on established ones. This may benefit Israel as there is already a good working relationship between both countries on issues like counter-terror and cyber-security, though deals on areas like agriculture could be a long way away. However, the relationship UK-Israel is not a priority for Her Majesty's Government as their focus shall be more on developing trade agreements with big countries. There is potential for stronger relationship in this situation, but from Israel's point of view there are also risks, as Brexit means that Israel is losing an ally within the EU, where it has spoken up for Israel. The biggest issue of all is that a less engaged Britain will be less committed to ensuring the continuation of the peace process. This is of huge importance to the world, and we should not want Israel and Britain's relationship to be strengthened at the expense of this..



*Christian Cantor, Counsellor, Political Affairs,
Embassy of Israel*

The next speaker, Christian Cantor from the Embassy, attached a disclaimer to his remarks that Israel has no stated position regarding Brexit, and wishes the new Prime Minister well. The Embassy of Israel has recently conducted an assessment of its exposure to the consequences of Brexit, and believes that the consequences will be low and Israel doesn't foresee any repercussion to its trade.

Regarding the Middle East, three major trends were identified in the survey:

- Britain will likely fall back on established and high value bilateral relations in the Middle East, particularly the Gulf States and Israel,
- Germany will take a more prominent role driving EU foreign relations, which may result in a friendlier approach to Russia,
- The UK, driven by necessity, will find itself supporting the Sunni side of the Middle East divide.
-

The UK government will probably pay less attention to the Middle East peace process- it will likely remain nominally involved but reduce commitment and resource. It is not clear what the internal dynamics within the post-Brexit EU will be, but there does not seem to be, at present, any sign of the EU becoming more

pro-active on the peace process as a result of Brexit. Largely, he was in agreement with Tom Brake that Israel won't be on the top of the list for trade negotiations, but there are specific sectors where Israel will add value to the UK – science, pharmaceuticals, technology especially. It will benefit Britain to consider quality as well as quantity in trade relations, and Israel may be a high-value partner.

Lord Oates, Nick Clegg's former chief of Staff, agreed that Anglo-Israel relations shall be strong and keep going forward, and issued thanks to LDFI for inviting him on a visit to Israel and the West Bank a few years ago. He noted that the Israeli press is similarly split to the British on the issue of the impact of Brexit, with the right-wing Jerusalem Post hailing Brexit and the liberal Haaretz forecasting disaster. There is no doubt that, whatever Brexit means, Britain and Israel will maintain strong ties, and Lord Oates would wish to maintain that.

Brexit, he said, comes at an already dangerous time of crisis; the issue of the refugee crisis and the rise of beggar-my-neighbour trade nationalism are already severe threats to peace and stability. The relationship between the UK and Israel is successful and he expressed hope it will continue in or outside the EU. If anyone should think that it is a good thing that the EU and the UK will be distracted away from the conflict and less likely to undermine Israel, they are mistaken. We should all hope for peace and an end to the conflict and the occupation. Peace is best for everyone.

The final speaker was Baroness Ludford, an honorary officer of LDFI. She argued passionately that Brexit will do little good for Israel by weakening the EU. The EU has not always been most friendly to Israel, but a critical friend is useful. It is in Israel's interest to have a friendly EU, even if it provides disagreement. She related her experience of how British liberal influence in the EU and within ALDE helped to achieve mutual recognition of pharmaceuticals with Israel in 2012, as some countries used their view of the conflict to block agreement and the UK's influence helped to iron out differences and allow progress. This is an example of how the British view and the British liberal view may be sorely missed by Israel. Even if, as expected, bilateral commercial relations between Britain and Israel will continue to prosper, the UK outside the Single Market and custom union will face more trade barriers and regulations will add bureaucracy. The purpose of the EU, contrary to popular view, is to simplify, not to complicate- Brexit will create barriers for Israeli investment as the EU simplifies trade by unifying rules.

Baroness Ludford spoke briefly about boycotts, arguing that she disagreed with cultural and academic boycotts. She said we should look forward to the day when peace is achieved and Israel is celebrated as part of the collective Middle East and for its cultural, technological and technological contribution to the world. There followed a very brief round of questions, on domestic anti-Semitism, the place of Russia in the Middle East, and on boycotts. Notably, the upcoming commemorations for the State of Israel were mentioned: the Centenary of the Balfour Declaration next year, and the 50-year anniversary of the Six Day War. Lord Oates, in his response, added the anniversary of the Wolfenden Report in the UK– Israel, he said, is the only country in the Middle East where gay people can live in freedom. It is important to applaud Israel for its stance on rights for homosexuals.

The Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel fringe meeting BREXIT and the Middle East - Consequences for Anglo-Israel relations? was held on Sunday 18th September.



It's time to do the “hard thing” on Israel and Palestine

Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine Fringe Event

Ghada Karmi is a Palestinian doctor of medicine, author and academic. She is a fellow and lecturer at the Institute of Arab & Islamic studies at Exeter University, and writes frequently on Palestinian issues in newspapers and magazines, including *The Guardian*, *the Nation* and *the Journal of Palestine Studies*. She is also author of two autobiographical works: *In Search of Fatima* and *Return*.

On Monday 19th September, 2016, she gave a stimulating talk at a Lib Dem conference fringe event in Brighton, at the invitation of the Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine (LDFP). Jonathan Fryer was in the Chair and there was a panel of three discussants: Miranda Pinch, John McHugo and John Kelly. While LDFP does not necessarily endorse everything Dr Karmi said, we feel her talk was a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate about how to achieve equality and justice for the Palestinians.

Ghada Karmi started by reminding us how, in 1948, Israel had expelled and made refugees of most of the indigenous Palestinian inhabitants, and then prevented them from returning to their homes. During the years that followed, those left behind were at times subject to strict Israeli military rule. The rest of Palestine was occupied in 1967, creating another wave of refugees, and after this Israel began to establish a large number of illegal settlements for its own inhabitants within the self-same occupied territories. Subsequently it has subjected Gaza to a siege requiring its inhabitants to survive on UN aid, and periodic wars have allowed Israel to use it as a laboratory for testing its weaponry on live subjects. She went on to say that Israel had broken nearly all aspects of international law, and the much vaunted “two-state solution” had proved a complete failure.

Palestinians had resisted in every possible way¹, but none of these had been to any avail. Israel is far from alone in committing gross human rights abuses, but it has enjoyed unprecedented impunity and

“red carpet” treatment that the international community has not accorded to other nations (Ghada did not provide an example of this, but the sanctions against Russia for, its invasion of the Crimea and treatment of Ukraine spring immediately to mind).

Seeking to explain the persistence of this appalling state of affairs, she pointed to an asymmetry, or inconsistency, within our own country and other Western nations. There was on the one hand a lot of solidarity activity at civil society level, but this had not been mirrored at the official level, where Israel had continued enjoying overwhelming support – notwithstanding some “small moves in the right direction” like the EU’s denial of trade preferences for goods from Israel’s illegal settlements.

The explanation for this asymmetry could be found in the pro-Israel lobby, an “army of apologists” that was funding political parties, wooing MPs, threatening careers, shutting down free debate in the UK, and smearing people as “anti-Semitic”. As regards careers, two Liberal Democrats, Jenny Tonge and David Ward, had already paid the price for this. As regards shutting down debate, heavy lobbying had caused the cancellation of the Southampton University Law Department conference about the legitimacy of the Israeli State, and had also undermined collaboration between the *Lancet* and Birzeit University in Ramallah that would have helped more researchers to publish and gain international recognition.



Ghada Karmi

Smearing was the most powerful tool, and the Lobby had sought to advance it by working with the EU to extend the traditional meaning of anti-Semitism – that of hostility towards Jews – to criticisms of Israel and Zionism, and engaging in Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS). The practical application was evident in the Labour Party, where there had been a veritable witch-hunt, even though most denunciations only related to comments about the State of Israel, and in the campaign against the President of the NUS. This was an unacceptable form of “intellectual terrorism” whereby the Lobby not only censored critics of Israel, but caused others to engage in self-censorship.

The speaker concluded that nothing would change without a change in the approach of western nations. “Something needs to be done about Israel”, she told us. Palestinians didn’t need charity or the “cardigan syndrome” but “Israel needs to be taken off their necks”. She characterised much British behaviour towards Israel and Palestine as doing the “lazy thing”, which involves making visits, professing love and providing charity. The “hard thing” is to think hard about Israel, and to find ways of countering Israeli influence on this country’s politics.

She also volunteered an opinion about the Lib Dems’ approach, saying she felt Tim Farron had yet to visit Israel and the Occupied Territories, and needed to be more engaged with the topic. She recommended that concerned Lib Dems discuss the matter frankly with Tim, and ask him some searching questions and what he plans to do about Israel’s behaviour and its influence on UK’s politics.

Comments by discussants

As daughter of a Jewish refugee from Czechoslovakia, but a non-practising Jew, Miranda Pinch made the point that she enjoyed the “right of return” to Israel, whereas Palestinians who had been forced to flee were not allowed to return. She also commented on some “not very political” Palestinian women friends who are afraid to use social media for fear of expressing ideas that Israel might arrest them. Some were also afraid of driving locally to work or to meet friends since Israeli soldiers have shot to kill Palestinians on little evidence of intention, let alone of any action, putting them in danger.

John McHugo, a distinguished historian and author of *A Concise History of the Arabs*, pointed to the devastating impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on relations between Arabs/Muslims and the West, and said that it had caused anti-Semitism in the Arab world. A solution to the conflict would by contrast help improve the situation across the Middle-East.

John Kelly spoke of the time-consuming and humiliating treatment of Palestinians at borders and check-points, about very unpleasant behaviour of settlers in Hebron, and the great difficulties Palestinian universities experience in recruiting foreign students and faculty members. The uneven playing field that this creates between Israeli and Palestinian universities justified an academic boycott.

Summing up

There were nine comments from the floor, after which Ghada Karmi made a few further points. Firstly, she spoke warmly of Jewish opponents of the Israeli Government whom she considers both brave and her friends.

In terms of prescriptions, she urged British people to support BDS, describing it as the one thing that gives hope to the Palestinian people. Its importance could be gauged by the fact that Israel had set up a special unit to fight it, and sent out emissaries to bully westerners into closing it down. At the same time, it was necessary to face down the “anti-Semitic” smearing described above.

Ghada opposes the “two state solution” because it helps preserve an Israel of a kind she disapproves. By contrast she wants a shared land where Jews, Palestinians and refugees can live together in peace.

A few comments by Liberal Democratic Friends of Palestine (LDFP)

Ghada Karmi surprised us somewhat with the forthright nature of her comments, but they were far from unwelcome. Most of what she said is very close to LDFP’s thinking as expressed in its Position Paper on www.ldfp.eu, and in line with bold LibDem policies enunciated during the first decade of this century,

notably the Party's call in 2008 for the suspension of the EU-Israel Association agreement.

We thank her for pointing out the need to eschew the path of least resistance, avoid anodyne statements and do the "hard thing". Indeed, the University Fees debacle teaches us that getting the Party's thinking clear at the outset will save a lot of pain later in the day.

LDFP is in discussions with Tim Farron over a trip for him to visit the Occupied Territories in early 2017. We also thank Ghada Karmi for her words about Jenny Tonge and David Ward. They may not always have chosen the best words to express themselves (who does?), but we reject all "anti-Semitic" smears against them, from people who cannot claim to know the inner workings of their minds, and feel that they deserve the Party's support.

We are agnostic on the matter of the two-state or one-state solution, and feel that Israelis and Palestinians should negotiate the solution that best suits them. The main role of the UK and other Western Powers should be to apply the necessary diplomatic and financial pressure to persuade the stronger party (Israel) to negotiate in good faith and respect legitimate Palestinian rights, while the weaker party (Palestine) can negotiate freely without the duress inherent in occupation. The most immediate and obvious form of pressure is to assert unequivocally the illegality of settlements and to ban all trade with them.



Miranda Pinch, Ghada Karmi, Jonathan Fryer, John McHugo & John Kelly

The Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine fringe meeting 'How Can Justice for the Palestinians Be Achieved?' was held on Monday 19th September.

¹ Diplomatic and legal steps, non-violent protest, violent resistance etc.

Unaccompanied Refugee Children.

Lord Roger Roberts, the newly re-elected President of Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary treated us to an inspiring address at our recent AGM held on Saturday 17th September.

Roger told us of his continuing efforts to press the Home Office Immigration Minister at regular intervals for updates on the number of children who have actually come to the United Kingdom, He will be continuing his campaign when the House of Lords returns on the 10th October. *(Events will have moved on by then, but whatever the situation with Calais, we can be sure of very strong and informed voices from Roger and*

other Lib Dem Peers about the need for urgent action, and that justice be done.)

Roger also told us of the new initiative he had launched on 15th September for the Children of the United Kingdom to welcome refugee children to the United Kingdom. He hopes that coach firms and Eurostar will help collect 387 children from Calais and Dunkirk and bring them to safety in the UK where there are already families who are ready to welcome them.

A scheme that will enable people to sponsor a child refugee has also been launched and information on this is available from ALDC or us. Individual faith communities are making great efforts to help people.



Lord Roger Roberts

International Abstracts

Journal of Liberal History Issue 91/Summer 2016

David Cloke reports of the Group's meeting *Europe: The Liberal Commitment*. Andrew Connell's article on Sir James Whitehead, Lord Mayor of London & MP for Leicester, refers to his vice-presidency of the International Arbitration & Peace Association, but does not expand on this. Dick Newby writes on the legacy of the SDP to the Liberal Democrats, and Seth Thevoz on the Cambridge University Liberal Club 1886-1916. Andrew Connell also reviews Boris Johnson's book *The Churchill Factor (2014)*, which we chose to ignore, but may have some resonance now that the buffoon is Foreign Secretary – the one great office of state that Churchill didn't hold.

Liberator 279

Liberator remained preoccupied with the EU Referendum, with contributions by Kiron Reid, Graham Watson, Julie Smith, Jane McBennett, Trevor Smith, Roger Hayes plus various vox pops and oddments in Radical Bulletin. Lord Bonkers wrote from Hotel Splendide, Antibes, that *The British people, egged on by liars, charlatans and a buffoon in an ill-fitting Donald Trump fright wig, may have voted to pull out of Europe, but I'll be damned if I am going to*. Jonathan Calder wrote on the Chilcot Report.

Liberator 280

Rebecca Tinsley writes again on South Sudan – Two Tribes go to war. Christine & Dennis Graf write on Trump & the US Presidential election – A Sociopath in the White House? Brexit commentary comes, rather hopefully from Nick Hopkinson – Playing a long game & David Thorpe – Loose Talk

AdLib. Issue 29 September 2016.

The cost of liberalism in Zambia, and Al Ghaff reports on Hillary Clinton's campaign for Democratic Party candidacy in the US Presidential election.

American elections

To what extent can we associate Trump supporters with Brexiteers and other marginalised groups across the EU? How does Liberalism – commonly elitist and from privileged backgrounds, address this? Those of who have worked amongst such communities will recognise the traits.

Parsing, what makes a Trump supporter tick? By Declan Walsh. New York Times 28th September 2016

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/29/world/americas/parsing-what-makes-a-donald-trump-supporter-tick.html?ref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fus&action=click&contentCollection=us&ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=7&pgtype=sectionfront

Finally someone who thinks like me, by Stephanie McCrummen. Washington Post 1st October 2016
Portrait of a Trump supporter, and the problems in her life that have brought her to that position. Goes on a bit - you may have met them at your councillor's surgery.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/finally-someone-who-thinks-like-me/2016/10/01/c9b6f334-7f68-11e6-907>

Putin's close friend [Sergei Roldugin]: Donald Trump will be the next president. Daily Star, Lebanon. 22nd September 2016

Hillary Clinton and the Populist Revolt, by George Packer. The New Yorker 31st October 2016
The sub-head runs The Democrats lost the white working class. The Republicans exploited them. Can Clinton win them back? Which pretty much says it all. Added bonus of The New Yorker's wonderful cartoons throughout..

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/31/hillary-clinton-and-the-populist-revolt>

Brexit

The Death of British Business, by Simon Head. New York Review of Books 18th October 2016

http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/10/18/brexit-death-of-british-business/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NYR%20Hillarys%20library%20Brexit%20Henry%20Green&utm_content=NYR%20Hillarys%20library%20Brexit%20Henry%20Green+CID_4102111b906188414580af2c9b7bb8c3&utm_source=Newsletter&utm_term=The%20Death%20of%20British%20Business

Why they're wrong. Globalisation's critics say it benefits only the elite. In fact, a less open world would hurt the poor most of all. The Economist 1st-7th October 2016.

A chunky little issue, also has incisive articles on the state of play in Syria at the time and on Columbia.



LIBG Forum



The future of Kashmir

28th November : 7.00pm

Speakers: Jay Iqbal (JKLF), Qurban Hussain (House of Lords), Shazad Iqbal (All Parties Kashmir Coordinating Committee and Chair, Ladywood Lib Dems), Phil Bennion (former MEP and ALDE spokesperson on relations with South Asian nations). Chair Jonathan Fryer.

Farzana Yaqoob may take part if we can do a Skype link. Former Minister of Women's Affairs, Azad Kashmir and daughter of President Yaqoob of the same.

National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE
Underground: Embankment

reviews

Liberalism, The Life of an Idea, by Edmund Fawcett.
Princeton University Press, 2014, pbk 2015 \$24.95
isbn 9780691168395

This is a brilliant book; if you have one book on Liberalism in your library, for the time being, this should be it. I apologise for not reviewing it earlier – I read it ages ago; a number of books on the subject came out around the same time – all awaiting review – I suppose I feel the need to write something more serious about them, which constantly gets shelved.

What is so good about this book? First of all, it is Fawcett's enthusiasm for his subject. Second is his honesty – it is a history of Liberalism, warts and all. We all tend to gloss over those bits of a favoured subject that we don't like, or make excuses for them. Fawcett faces most of these head on. In particular, he tackles the problem between Liberalism and liberal democracy – a political philosophy, and the out-turn of its shared strivings, some of which Liberals might not always recognise as 'liberal'.

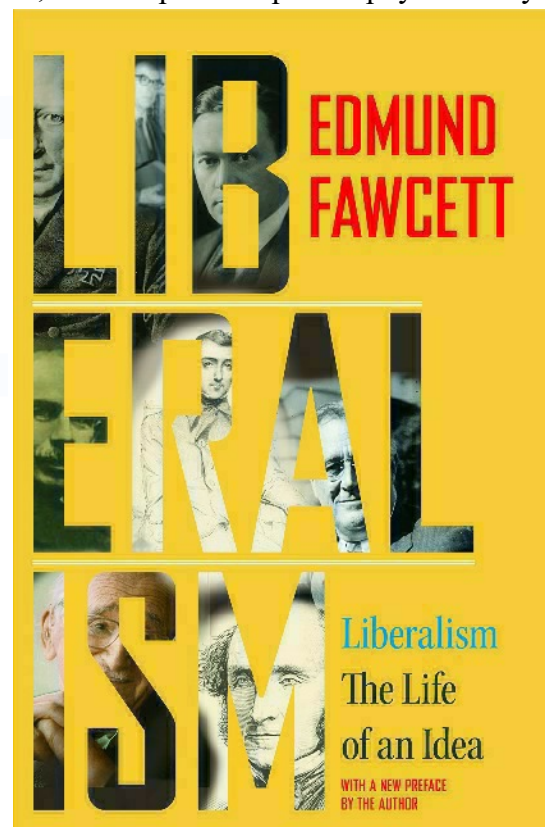
The book has generally been well received, and since I concur with much of its analysis, I'll cite what it is from the preface, which opens *This is a book about a god that succeeded, though a rather neurotic god that frets...*

Fawcett does not think of Liberalism before 1815, in a Euro-Atlantic context. There are proto-Liberals, indeed some of the canons of Liberal thought will have been written, but as a political philosophy it mainly post-dates the French Revolution & Napoleonic Wars. I broadly agree with this, whatever the inconsistencies. Fawcett's story of Liberalism is then divided into four phases. 1830-1880 *a time of youthful self-definition, rise to power and large successes*. 1880-1945 during which *Liberalism matured and struck a historic compromise with democracy*. 1945-1989 – after near collapse a period of *achievement and vindication*, – triumph, with the failure of Soviet Communism, but post-1989 *a return to self-doubt*. Let's not quibble with these – though I think there is near failure 1914-1945. Insofar as I am a working Liberal politician, I would say there is always self-doubt. Liberalism has never claimed a monopoly of political wisdom, indeed I take this as strength, and necessary to the compromise with democracy. If nothing else, the recent referendum on EU membership reminds us that we are not necessarily democrats.

Given his four periods, Fawcett also gives us four ideas, having said in the preface to the paperback edition that his story did not start with Liberty. Instead we have acknowledgement of the inescapable ethical and material conflict within society, distrust of power, faith in human progress and respect for people whatever they think and whoever they are. This last, Fawcett underlines as a democratic seed in an otherwise

undemocratic creed. He thus, neatly encapsulates Liberalism as a search for an ethically acceptable order of human progress among civic equals without recourse to undue power.

A final four – in space as well as time, Fawcett seeks to define his Liberalism amongst the political thought and deed of France and Germany, as well as the Anglo-Saxon world, thus introducing to a richer inheritance. You have to draw a line somewhere, so again, let's not quibble. The central difficulty that Fawcett doesn't quite grasp is that whatever its appearance as the dominant ideology of the West, liberal democracy



does not mean Liberals empowered to achieve their goals. It is interacting with other ideologies, Conservatism, Socialism, in the main, and they will determine much of the political agenda. Neoliberalism is a case in point; one does not dispute the Liberal credentials of Hayek or Friedman, nor that Keynesian orthodoxy had run its course (beyond, probably, as Keynes might have envisaged it), but their ideas came to fruit in illiberal hands. Margaret Thatcher may have been an economic liberal, but she was a political Conservative. That incoherence would, in turn, cause Neoliberalism to run its course, though short-term political minds may not have fully woken up to that as yet. However, that Fawcett dirties Liberalism with liberal democracy greatly enhance our understanding of both and the interplay between them. Incidentally, in his preface to the paperback edition, Fawcett tells us that it was Neoliberals calling foul for his treatment of them. Neoliberalism is Liberal ideas in Conservative hands – often pretty nasty ones at that.

Returning to the construct of liberal democracy, there is a dialogue in a healthy body politic, the sum total of political wisdom does not rest in any one part of it, but whilst there have been, and are liberals across, at least the mainstream political parties, there is a need for political Liberalism to be a strong part of that dialogue. This has been absent, or at best muted in the UK for more than the last century, and the results have finally come home to roost in a populism that has to be understood and dealt with. The Reverend D. Wayne Love thought there was ‘no need for Castaneda’ in his ‘frontline library’. There is certainly room for Fawcett in yours. Read, learn and take the fight forward.

Stewart Rayment.

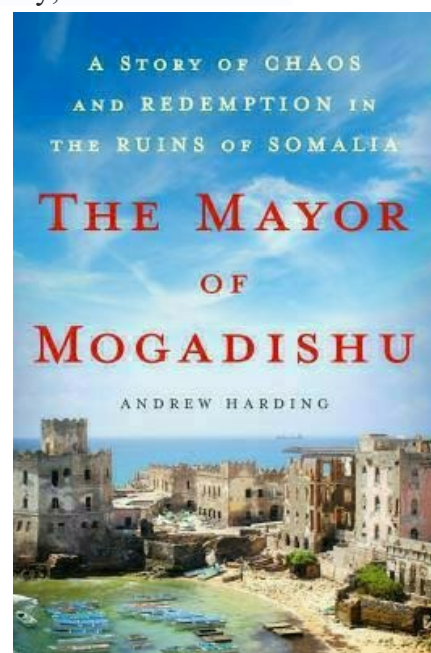
The Mayor of Mogadishu, by Andrew Harding
Hurst 2016 £20.00
isbn 9781849046787

For two decades following the ousting of President Siad Barre, Somalia was written off by the West as a failed state. Yet somehow parts of the capital Mogadishu survived and braver members of the large Somali diaspora in Europe and North America returned, to set up businesses or attempt to reconstruct a shattered country, despite all the corruption and ongoing feuds between clans. Among them was Mohamud ‘Tarzan’ Nur (most Somalis acquire nicknames, his own reflecting his toughness and adventurous spirit since his childhood in a Mogadishu orphanage). Nur succeeded in becoming Mayor of the city, before being unceremoniously sacked by a president who maybe feared (not unjustly) that Nur was after his own job. Tarzan’s wife, Shamis, is a strong woman in her own right, from a more affluent background but like many who have spent years outside her native land ending up making ends meet, whether raising six children off Queen’s Crescent in Camden, or setting up a dress shop in Dubai.

So although Andrew Harding’s book *The Mayor of Mogadishu* is at face value a biography of an extraordinary individual, it is much more — bringing in other members of Nur’s family, friends and other individuals whose experiences make this such a graphic and disquieting portrait of a society trying to rise phoenix-like from the ruins, despite the lingering presence off-stage of the fanatical Al Shabab Islamist militants.

Harding is one of the BBC’s most distinguished foreign correspondents, covering large swaths of Africa out of Johannesburg and he has been flying in and out of Somalia since 2000, often at considerable risk. But parallel to his day job as a reporter has been this quest for the truth about Mohamud Nur: a hero, or a man tainted by corruption or the brief trappings of power? That quest itself gives the story much of its potency, and at the end the reader is as unsure as the author is exactly what to make of Tarzan, despite a deep affection that has grown up between them over the years. For all its dangers and shortcomings Somalia has also obviously got under Andrew Harding’s skin. If you only ever read one book about Somalia, let it be this.

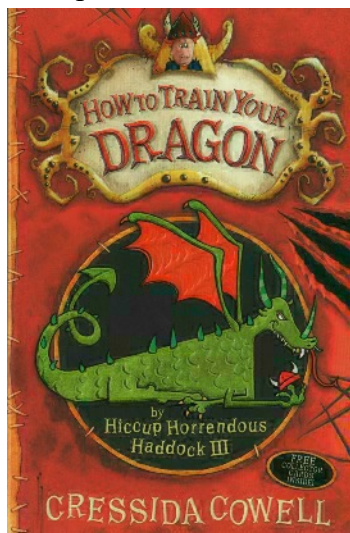
Jonathan Fryer



**How to Train Your Dragon, by Cressida Cowell.
Hodder & Stoughton 2003-2016**

Having had some success with Judy Hayman's *Dragon Tales* series, and awaiting publication of the next, I took up Cressida Cowell's *How to Train Your Dragon* as a follow on. Twelve in all, the last *How to Fight a Dragon's Fury*, was published in paperback a few months ago. The first thing to say, it that the books share little in common with the Dreamworks animated film & television series of the same name, names of characters aside. One hopes that this won't cause problems when somebody wants to film the series properly, because whatever the merits of Dreamworks' animation, the real story is much better.

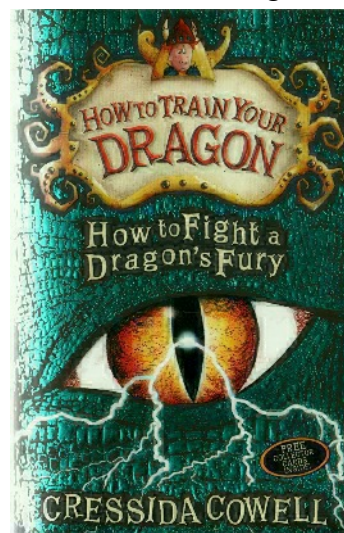
Why should the books be of interest to us? Well it is always helpful to share knowledge of any books that interest 8-9-year-old boys, and get them interested in reading. That aside, the books chart the progress of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III from ungainly boy to Viking hero and King of the Wilderwest. I forget in



which book Hiccup decides that slavery is a bad thing and from there develops the idea that all humans and dragons should be free creatures, but we get there, if somewhat uncertainly in the end (and you only have to look around you to realise that, around a millennium after the Viking age).

It would be a spoiler to relate the twists and turns as to Hiccup gets there, but the last recorded dragon sighting in England was at Henham in 1669; though one regrets the demise of its name-sake – the late Essex Serpent, in King Street, Covent Garden – though to my mind it was never the same once the pub company tarted it up.

Stewart Rayment



**Dull Disasters – How Planning Ahead Will Make A Difference,
by Daniel J Clarke & Stefan Dercon.
Oxford 2016**

This very readable book challenges policy makers to make more effective use of economics, psychology and science to prevent extreme natural shocks turning into major disasters. The authors argue that afflicted countries seeking funding for a predictable disaster post event does not work as it leads to delayed response is delayed. Furthermore, funding is rarely available with the timeliness and in the quantity required, and the responsibility for managing the risk is ambiguous.

The authors suggest that, instead of the “begging bowl” approach, governments must provide the leadership to bring experts together to predict and plan for disasters, and create a consensus about what will and will not be protected. Pre-agreed financial arrangements, based on insurance model type partnerships between public (including international donor agencies) and private sector would clarify who was funding what. This would reduce the confusion that follows a disaster and ensure donors will follow through on pledges whilst also enabling them to propose risk reduction measures are incorporated in the plan. Leaders are exhorted to think as if they were an insurance company (this suggestion may be questionable) and focus on financing the outcomes set out in the pre disaster plan. Of course disasters rarely occur to plan but this countered by the argument that this is precisely what leadership is critical to implement fast evidence based decision-making processes. The challenge that politicians are willing to invest in disaster.

The book draws on a wide range of research which is helpfully summarised. The proposals are timely - the World Bank has recently talked developing an insurance system to combat the (still unknown) impact of Zika virus. A few examples are provided of communities and countries that have identified and pre funded

disasters. Its format, however, does not, however, allow for detailed modelling. It would have been interesting to have seen what a pre-agreed plan for the widely predicted Nepal earthquakes would have looked like or what a plan for Haiti would have added up to. Inevitably the complex social and political challenges have been minimised in order to keep the argument simple. In most of the countries where disaster response

has been particularly ineffective, governments have been distrusted, infrastructure weak, communities disempowered and legislation did not support a co-ordinated, rapid recovery programme. The political challenges both of agreeing what might be acceptable trade-offs and incentivising politicians to invest in future disasters may have been under-estimated. At the end of the book the authors make a statement which is powerful by its simplicity - in order for this to work “politicians will have to care – for their people, for the poor”. Creating this political cadre supported by skilled disaster planners is the real challenge if disasters are to be “dulled”.

There needs to be skilled political leadership to ensure that credible, evidence based plans are developed and to secure the appropriate agreements with partners agree which means funding will be available if required.

Early identification of risk, establishing co-coordinated post disaster plans based on outcomes and having pre-agreed financing arrangements could result in “dulling” disasters both in terms of their impact and the political adrenaline that usually follows them.

The book does give examples of where pre-planning and financing of disasters has worked. But those countries may just have the right combination of political leadership, governance and commitment to investment in the nation’s infrastructure. It is harder to see how the governments of, say, Haiti or Nepal would provide the required leadership.

Donors should think (but not act?) like an insurance company – don’t finance the need but finance the plan

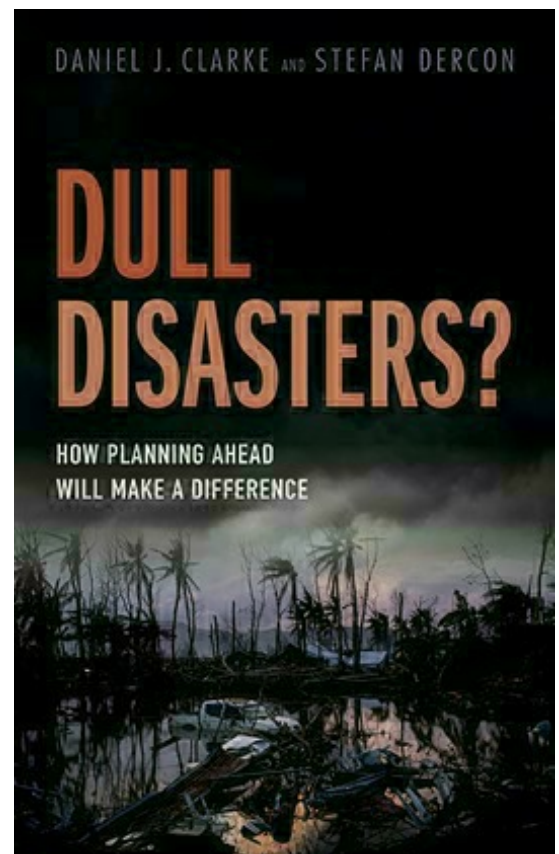
- Will it cover the whole risk
- Can not afford to protect everyone
-

Helpful to have some modelling of likely costs v impact

- Important to communicate the risks
- Politicians will have to act as leaders, doing what is best for their country’s citizens and the economy
- Need to create incentives to change behaviour and need to keep it simple
- Use and expand existing systems
-

Some problems with indexes which may miss individuals or disasters but could possibly be, the authors’ argue that the current situation where funding for a predictable disaster is sought by disaster afflicted countries, “begging bowl in hand,” after the event needs to change. Failure to plan for natural shocks means the impact is greater than it might otherwise have been and funding is unsystematic, ambiguous and usually not available with the timeliness and in the quantity needed.

Margaret Lally.



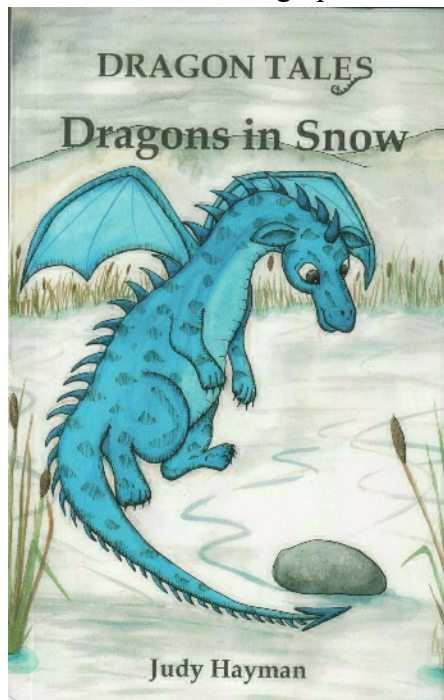
Dragon Tales: Dragons in Snow, by Judy Hayman.

Practical Inspiration 2016 £5.99

isbn 9781910056424. isbn ebook 9781910056431

Judy Hayman's dragons have reappeared for their fifth adventure; well most of them have fled south for the winter, leaving the original family to forage and frolic with the otters. How will those that remain face up to a savage winter? Will they? This is the most gripping of Hayman's Dragon Tales yet, so much so that the chief critic demanded that it read again when finished. More so than any of the earlier books, there is a growing strength in Hayman's writing.

Judy has stood in the Liberal interest on a number of occasions, notably achieving a second place in East Lothian before ending up as Convenor of the Scottish Liberal Democrats.



Email Judy at judy@haymana.plus.com to obtain copies and put in a reservation in your public library (use them or lose them – it's all part of the fight).

The previous books in the series are:

Dragon Tales - Quest for a Cave. 2014 isbn 9781910056080;

Dragon Tales - Quest for a Friend. 2014 isbn 9781910056158;

Dragon Tales - Quest for Adventure. 2015 isbn 9781910056226

Dragon Tales - The Runaway. 2015 isbn 9781910056288

So that's some of your Christmas present problems solved.

Stewart Rayment

Politics Between the Extremes, by Nick Clegg

The Bodley Head 2016 £ 20.00

In this memoir Nick Clegg tells of his experience as deputy prime minister during the Tory/Liberal Democrat Coalition that governed the UK from 2010 to 2015. He also endeavours to explain why the party which he had led for eight years was all but obliterated from the Westminster scene in the subsequent general election, which saw its number of MPs reduced from 57 to eight. As with all such tomes it is a mixture of self-exculpation, criticism of others, the importunity of adverse advents and a reassertion that fortunes will be reversed for the better in due course. Admissions of personal blame are minimised, while the actions of opponents, particularly those from within the Coalition partners are accentuated. No change there then from the usual manner of such ponderings.

The book has been extensively reviewed across the media. I believe this coverage is due to the volatile nature of contemporary politics which was heralded by the formation of the first peace-time Coalition for three-quarters of a century. The situation has become even more frenetic. The media are anxious to seize on any clues as to both the causes and effects of post-2005 politics. There are any number of tantalising quandaries that require answering. Among them, for example, is the meaning of Theresa May's claim that "Brexit means Brexit". Perhaps, it was hoped, Clegg's account might help to illuminate their enquiries - such expectations will be dashed.

Clegg reiterates the apparent reasons for the present state of public affairs both in Britain and among the western democracies in general. As is now commonplace he recites the litany of globalisation, party fragmentation, migration, growing inequalities of gender, ethnicity, region and in wealth - all of which have fed the rise of populisms from both the ultra-Right and ultra-Left that have burst forth in the UK. But he adds little that is new.

The book is very repetitious, verbose (on page 218 I counted two consecutive sentences of 116 and 113 words each) and mere assertion. For the most part it records what befell Clegg and his Lib Dem ministers in

the Coalition. The Tories ran rings round them and George Osborne in particular. They allowed the Conservatives to claim credit for Lib Dem originated policies that proved popular, usually got the smaller share of policy trade-offs, and were allowed to sink by themselves when they attempted to usher in voting reform. Clegg records one notable victory over the then Education Secretary, Michael Gove, over the introduction of free school meals.

The fundamental problem was that Clegg concentrated too much on being DPM and too little on being Leader of the Lib Dems. He focused his energies on immediate and short-term issues and failed utterly to develop any wider strategy that would address both making the best of staying in Coalition and in preparing for the next Election. In 2012 I identified the problem in *Liberator* describing Clegg as “a cork bobbing on the waves”, being battered and buffeted as he himself here shows all too clearly was the case. Given the obvious lack of strategy, I urged consideration of withdrawing from Coalition in the year before the Election due in 2015, supporting a minority Tory administration to see out the parliamentary term on a “confidence and maintenance” basis, and developing distinctive Lib Dem policies for its manifesto. I also predicted this would not happen which was all too easy to make. As the precedents of both Callaghan and Brown show, risking the certainty of present power – however weak- for the uncertainty of a better, stronger future is a gamble those in office are very disinclined to make. Clegg was no exception.

There is a now new factor for such reluctance, namely the enormous rise in the army of Whitehall SPADs (ministerial advisers). They have no incentive whatsoever to put their, hugely overpaid, jobs at risk and would have fiercely opposed any such prospect. The growth of SPADs was phenomenal (although Cameron had earlier promised to reduce them) and a glaring feature of the Coalition. Clegg also increased his staff of SPADs as the going got tougher that only exacerbated his underlying problem. As it was, preparing the Election campaign was delegated to Paddy Ashdown and Ryan Coatsworth that led to the disaster which ensued.

What lessons can be drawn about Coalition-making in the future? First, more time should be taken in drawing-up the inter-party agreement as to how the government will go about its business and what are its main policies. This is common practice in other multi-party states in Europe. Secondly, consideration should be given to the much ‘sniffed-at’ Coalition power-sharing practice in the devolved Assembly in Northern Ireland. At Stormont, the formula divides up power between ministries, so that each one is exclusively run by a single party. At least that way the public knows which party is responsible for the conduct of policy in each sector.

Clegg’s wishful and concluding assertion that the Centre will triumphantly reassert itself is not convincing. Merely to espouse moderation means that your position is dictated by the extremes. Clegg’s election mantra in 2015 was “A strong economy and a fair society” – a real tub thumper to get the blood racing! He also appealed for the electorate to vote “Coalition” which was not an option on the ballot paper. Clegg says little of interest about international affairs: globalisation in general terms plus Brussels tittle-tattle about Brexit. The banality explicit in the book’s title says it all.

Trevor Smith

Liberator Books

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Ardizzone: A Retrospective. House of Illustration
Edward Ardizzone: The Human Comedy. Chris Beetles Gallery
Edward Ardizzone: Artist and Illustrator, by Alan Power.
Lund Humphries 2016 isbn 9871848221826

Edward Ardizzone is a gentle artist. I wondered to what extent children still read his books; is simply because parents, grandparents etc. read the books to them? But then I find that such children read them in turn to their children, so it goes on. Yet, could Little Tim's adventures take place now? It doesn't really matter; but how would Mr. Grimes fare? That, I fear, might be somewhat sadder.

Ardizzone's work spread way beyond his own stories of course, numerous other books, children's and otherwise; his advertising work, notably for Guinness and Shell. Long forgotten relationships with Punch and the Radio Times, and as a war artist. His illustrations to many of Trollope's books for Oxford University Press depict the Liberals and Tories of those days up to their high jinks. And the other children's books that he



illustrated – The Otterbury Incident, Stig of the Dump, The Land of Green Ginger... one could go on and on.

Ardizzone's London is primarily Maida Vale, it's pubs in particular, but as a war artist his East End captured the devastation. Osbert Lancaster, reviewing a 1941 exhibition said that Ardizzone displayed 'a personal and true, if limited vision'. He recanted, saying later said of Ardizzone' depiction of the grief of war 'by its economy and avoidance of over emphasis [it] says all that can, in the circumstances, be said'. Capturing them in more routine moments – a cuppa in between burying comrades of example, soldiers often found

they could relate to Ardizzone's work more than much of the other official art of the war. That said, he was not in isolation; in its review of the 1941 exhibition, the New York Times featured his *Priest begging for a lift in Louvain* – clearly a refugee situation, and redolent of Goya. It is possible that the lack of facial detail, which typifies much of Ardizzone's work, makes his subjects Everyman, too whom we can all have a personal acquaintance.

The House of Illustration, which is just north of King's Cross, London, on the Regent's Canal, provides a fine retrospective of Ardizzone's career – I read that, you'll say to yourself, going back to a youth when you paid scant regard to who had actually illustrated your books. We range from small book and magazine illustrations to the *Treasure Island* mural that Ardizzone painted for the SS. Canberra in 1961. Wit is always present in his work, but my particular favourites probably never appear anywhere else, his illustrated letters – to Behrens for example, the love of a good bottle.

Chris Beetles has a much smaller range of work, but it is for sale. Taken from, for example, Ardizzone's illustrations to Eleanor Farjeon's *Italian Peepshow* (OUP, 1960) or *Ardizzone's English Fairy Tales* (Andre Deutsch, 1980). There is also the poster version of his *Shelter Scene, Tilbury* part of his 1940 war work – touching on the surreal in its emptiness. Prices range from £850.00 upwards and most of the work can found on the website below.

Alan Power, who curated the House of Illustration exhibition, provides us with an excellent commentary in his *Edward Ardizzone: Artist and Illustrator*, which is likely to be the definitive guide to the oeuvre for some time.



Ardizzone: A Retrospective, runs at the House of Illustration, 2 Granary Square, London N1C 4BH until 15th January 2017. Admission £7.70. Quentin Blake's illustrations to the recently found *The Tale of Kitty-in-Boots*, which Beatrix Potter never got around to completing, and was published by Frederick Warne earlier this year.

Edward Ardizzone: The Human Comedy, runs Chris Beetles Gallery, 8 & 10 Ryder Street, London, SW1Y 6QB over the same period.

<http://www.chrisbeetles.com/artists/ardizzone-edward-cbe-ra-arws-rdi-1900-1979.html>



The current Foreign Minister might learn something from this story!

Illustrations:

On the Road to Tripoli: A Cup of Tea for the Burial Party. 1943.

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Illustration from *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain.*

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'The Foreign Minister, reading the note through, swore by his wig, why this would never do' and 'The Frontier Minister, reading the piece through, swore by his pigtail: This would never do!' both illustrations to Robert Graves, *Ann at Highwood Hall: Poems for Children*, London: Cassell, 1964, 'George II and the Chinese Emperor' from Chris Beetles exhibition. £2,750.00 & £1,450.00 respectively

Cover: 'We Danced the Dances of all Countries' - Illustration from Eleanor Farjeon's *Italian Peepshow*, London: Oxford University Press, 1960, 'The Birthday Carnival' – from Chris Beetles exhibition - £2,450.00

Delacroix and the Rise of Modern Art, by Patrick Noon & Christopher Riopelle.

National Gallery, London 2015 isbn 9781857095753

Delacroix and his Forgotten World, the origins of Romantic Painting, by Margaret MacNamidhe.

IB.Tauris 2015 isbn 9781780769370

I was an early admirer of Delacroix, along with reading Byron; Romanticism belongs to youth. Grubby old Victorian encyclopaedias illustrated with his historical and mythical subjects first drew the artist to my attention. But as the companion works in the exhibition that was the subject of Noon & Riopelle's catalogue show, I was soon seduced away by Moreau and Redon. Many years later, I was disappointed by the murals of St. Sulpice, Paris (on seeing images of them at the exhibition I would apologise – do not visit them on a grey day, I now concur with Renoir, the chapel is only a pretext for creating Art). To be fair, I'd previously renewed my acquaintance with the divine Nikki St. Phalle, so a grey church on a wet grey day faced serious competition.

So, the National Gallery's exhibition provided my first opportunity to see a large body of Delacroix's work in its full glory, enhanced by the work of those who followed him – colour being all important. The travails of elections and that accursed referendum made it impossible to publish a review whilst the exhibition was running, but the catalogue is still with us and a great advance on the grubby encyclopaedias of youth.

Missing from the exhibition was Delacroix's great icon of Liberal Revolution *Liberty Guiding the People*. I think we can assume that the National Gallery was not bowing to Cameronian sensitivities, though the painting has frequently been withdrawn from the conservative eye. Capturing the 1830 revolution, the painting was exhibited in the Salon of 1831 and bought by the new king, Louis Philippe, though it was not, again, exhibited until the days of the 1848 revolution, whence after a month or two it disappeared from the public gaze. Here we see the bourgeois (possibly Delacroix's friend Etienne Arago, a staunch republican) in his top hat, fighting alongside the masses, lead on by Liberty (possibly inspired by the actions of Marie Deschamps). Whatever, Delacroix's Liberty is at one with the people, stained by the battle, if not by daily life. Critical opinion at the time found the image ignoble, but it now stands amongst the best-known paintings in the world.

Orientalism is important to Noon and Riopelle, providing the sunlight that later artists would follow. Delacroix visited Algeria in 1832 shortly after the French invasion. This gives his orientalism the edge of experience, and also, whatever the Imperialist milieu, an empathy with his subject matter, seeing it in the context of another civilisation rather than inferior peoples. As the authors point out, the household of the *Women of Algiers* (1834) was viewed as 'Like the age of Homer'. Edward Said did not look deeply enough into this in his *Orientalism*. Styling Delacroix's *Les Convulsionnaires de Tanger* [*Convulsionists of Tangier*] (1838) as *Fanatics of Tangier* makes pre-judgement in itself when taken out of its time. In fact, it is a depiction of ecstatic religious practices, which Said may approve or disapprove of – the Aïssaouas Sufi sect, but the painting itself is not perjorative. In this, unlike, say Elizabeth DeVito¹, writing from a feminist Lacanian perspective, I don't see why Delacroix and Baudelaire (as a first-hand source) should not be taken at their word. Delacroix was primarily a studio artist, some of his best-known Algerian works were painting a considerable while after his visit. As a studio artist, the advent of photography would open a new tool for him and he used it – in Paris. In general Delacroix's work stands aside from that of Gerome or Ingres. An artist has to make a living, will paint to a client's instructions, but so far as he is his own man Delacroix is far more in sympathy with his subject.



Les Convulsionnaires de Tanger - Eugène Delacroix - *Convulsionists of Tangier*, 1837-8; Oil on canvas. © The Minneapolis Institute of Art
Bequest of J. Jerome Hill 73.42.3

Margaret MacNamidhe's book commences that whilst the first decade or so of Delacroix's work is famous – *The Death of Sardanapalus* (1827), *Liberty Leading the People* (1830), his later work is less known. How true is this of the many of the artists who manage to shine in the public eye, if briefly? The media are fickle, only interested in the new or sensational. That said, she makes much of the early *Scenes from the Massacres at Chios* (1824), whilst showing what I would take to be an on-going interplay with other artists from that period. Noon & Riopelle present the later work more accessibly, but have the advantage of an exhibition around which to hang their arguments.

We have two beautiful books here, well written, if you get past the pictures in art books, both of which will enhance your understanding of Nineteenth century Art – French in particular.

Stewart Rayment

¹ Orientalism and the Photographs of Eugène Delacroix. Elizabeth J. DeVito, thesis College of Fine Arts of Ohio University. June 2011.