

2025-05 September



INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



Liberal Democrat conference briefings

Hong Kong - Sudan

Canada - Somalia - Turkey

EVENTS

0-23 September 2025 Liberal Democrats
Autumn Conference, Bournemouth

6 October LIBG Forum: The Arctic &
European Security. With LI Vice Presidents Astrid
Thors of Finland and Henrik Bach Mortensen of
Denmark. Zoom details:
[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/
87391589013?pwd=l6FpF1t63UPXeuQqCiaH0U
mSOiwtAD.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87391589013?pwd=l6FpF1t63UPXeuQqCiaH0UmSOiwtAD.1)
Meeting ID: 873 9158 9013
Passcode: 264710

10-12 October Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol
Cymru/Welsh Liberal Democrats Conference,
Wrexham.

18 October 2025 Scottish Liberal Democrats
Conference, Radisson Blu, Glasgow.

25 October 2025 Isaiah Berlin Lecture: Prof.
John Gray on Liberalism, Populism and the
Sense of Reality. National Liberal Club & online

21-23 November 2025, 209th LI Executive
Committee, The Hague, The Netherlands

*For bookings & other information please contact
LIBG at*

Liberal International British Group
1 Brook Gardens, Barnes, London SW13 0LY

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*Comments and articles can be sent to
Lockhart & Hastings, Intellectual Properties
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TN34 2EN, email lockhart.hastings@outlook.com*

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Cover image: Waging Peace, From children's
drawings collected by Anna Schmitt during a
fact finding mission amongst Dafari refugees &
displaced Chadians in Chad, 2007 showing an
attack on a village in the area of Aishbarra,
Darfur, in 2003 by the Sudanese Government
forces and Janjaweed militia.



LIBG at Bournemouth



"On the Brink; Wake up and smell the Cordite"

The object of the meeting is to dispel any doubts delegates might have about how dangerous and unstable the world is, and the real threat to the long peace we in mainland Britain have enjoyed.

Speakers; Calum Miller MP, Edward Lucas (on Russia), Rebecca Tinsley (on USA). Defence spokesperson Helen Maguire and former defence minister Sir Nick Harvey have been invited to contribute.

**Saturday 20th September,
1.00pm – 2.30pm
BIC Bayview Suite 2**

LIBG will be at stall 62 of the Exhibition

Watson's World View

The age of western liberal democracy which has shaped today's Liberal Democrats appears to be ending. President Trump of the USA is not merely in office but clearly in power; and in some instances the democratic checks and balances designed to restrain his arbitrary abuse of power are failing. In Europe, one in five of the Council of Europe's 46 member states - committed to promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law - no longer honour the Council's principles.

In Latin America, Africa and Asia there are now fewer democracies than at the turn of this century. The world's most populous country, India, has shown considerably less respect for the courtesies of democracy under Narendra Modi; and China has moved to restrict further the freedoms of its people under its current leadership.



In the democracies which remain, populist anti-democratic forces are growing in strength. While the EU continues to uphold Liberal values, following recent elections to the federal parliament of its most populous member state, Germany, its traditional Liberal party is no longer represented; and it is by no means inconceivable that the United Kingdom and France will soon be led by populist autocrats elected by popular suffrage.

Moreover, the world's most egregious conflicts - in Ukraine, Palestine and East Africa - seem unlikely to be resolved without significant further death and destruction and could yet escalate into wider regional conflicts.

Liberal democratic values appear no longer to enjoy the support of a majority of citizens in what are commonly described as 'free' countries. Even the idea of a 'silent majority' determined to vote for parties committed to such values is highly questionable. Why is this? And where will it lead? Has democracy failed so badly that people view alternatives as preferable?

The Liberal International - the world union of liberal parties - makes valiant efforts to promote Liberal values and to defend the victims of those who trash them. Together with forces of the moderate right and left, it works across borders and within supranational institutions to uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Yet these principles are honoured too often in the breach: in some cases - regarding migration notably - increasingly.

It is therefore a relief to see that the UK Liberal Democrats' federal conference programme this year has so many debates on its agenda about global issues. There are at least six motions for resolution, covering Ukraine, Sudan, Kong Kong, Womens Rights, Climate Change and UK-EU relations, which deal directly with them; many others treat international issues tangentially. The British Group of Liberal International (BGLI) will do its bit at the conference in hosting a fringe meeting - on 20 September at 1pm in the Bayview Suite of the Bournemouth International Conference Centre - on the increasing tensions between the world's superpowers. Speakers include the Party's foreign affairs team leader Calum Miller MP, Edward Lucas and Rebecca Tinsley.

One area of particular concern to the UK and to the wider security of western Europe is the Arctic. Superpower ambitions for military superiority and access to rare earths are causing its tectonic plates to grind more audibly. LIBG therefore welcomes to an online conference on the evening of 6 October LI Vice Presidents Astrid Thors of Finland and Henrik Bach Mortensen of Denmark to discuss the challenges this poses to Liberals. Please join us if you can.

Graham Watson,
Chair LIBG.

The Liberal Democrats Federal Conference always has an active international fringe but this the conference itself is packed with motions, Hong Kong, Sudan and Ukraine stand alone alongside broader issues of Climate Change and Women's Rights. Briefings on the issues follow, those that don't arrive in time for the print edition will be found online at www.libg.uk alongside the full international agenda.

HONG KONG

LD conference motion F34 Monday 22nd 14.10

How the Labour Government's "soft" approach to Challenging Regimes Allowed Transnational Repression from the Chinese government

How had the Rules-based International Order ('RBIO') influenced UK-China affairs on Hong Kong? A good example would The Handover. Britain transferred sovereignty to the People's Republic of China ('PRC') under the Sino-British declaration 1984 which promised a high autonomy to Hong Kongers with ever progressive democracy in Hong Kong. The transfer of sovereignty occurred as promised regardless of the human rights turmoil between the signing of the treaty and the TianAnMen massacre.

Yet, do challenging regimes like China followed international treaties to the letter? No. First, China under the Chinese Communist Party ('CCP') imposed Chinese laws into Hong Kong and threw out the promise of high autonomy. Then, the CCP imposed its will through transnational repression in total contempt of UK law.

Even the Conservatives recognised China's flagrant breach of the Joint Declaration and dusted out rescue plans for Hong Kongers – the BN(O) visa scheme. Yet the Labour Government seems to be soft on China. And in the case of the Chinese Embassy Complex development plan, they tried turning a blind eye. A firm China strategy is urgently needed if we are to halt China's movement in destroying the RBIO.

Transnational Repression of the Chinese Government

Chinese authorities are sending secret police to the UK carrying out acts of harassment and intimidation over pro-democracy campaigners. The 2023 Intelligence and Security Committee's ('ISC') report on China highlighted that the remits of China's Intelligence Services ('ChiS') are far larger in the UK. More worryingly, ChiS practices, including kidnappings, have far greater remits compared with the intelligence operations of many other countries. Moreover, the reports of China's action against our parliamentary democracy and secret Chinese police operations are mentioned by the ISC investigation.

The role of the ChiS is our fundamental opposition to a new mega Chinese Embassy at the Old Royal Mint.

Former Minister of State for Security Tom Hugendhat once criticised the Chinese government as follows:

*'The Chinese authorities regularly criticise others for what they see as interference in their internal affairs. Yet, they felt able to open unattributed sites without consulting the UK Government. It is alleged that this was a pattern repeated around the world.'*¹

China's transnational repression extended to Hong Kongers living in the United Kingdom. For example, the Hong Kong authority issued bounties for information provided on the dissidents with view on kidnapping them to the Chinese embassy. Some pro-Beijing Hong Kongers, such as Innes Tang, established a network to report on pro-democracy activists within Hong Kong. It led to the political arrests of over 100 people. Tang openly planned to establish a similar network overseas.² A prominent repression was the arrest warrant issued against Carmen Lau, the pro-democracy activist who fled to the UK in 2021.³

Chinese consulate staff in the UK also had a history of ignoring UK laws. In October 2022, Chinese diplomats dragged a protester into its consulate in Manchester and assaulted him.⁴

Yet Labour ignored the warnings signs. The Chinese Embassy Complex development plan shows Labour would focus on trade talks; more promises made by promise-breaker Beijing.

The shortcomings of Labour's (lack of) China Strategy

The mega Chinese embassy plans had been on ice through political ambiguity under the Conservatives. Then, Starmer decided to “call in” China’s application during trade talks which claims to have secured £600 million in Chinese investment commitments. Further, Foreign Secretary David Lammy and Home Secretary Yvette Cooper had also expressed support for the embassy plan and sent a favourable joint letter to the Planning Inspectorate.⁵

The proposed complex was gigantic: The 20,000 m² site included a large basement with unclear purposes (Redacted area). China could also design parts of the building to optimise for intelligence collection, such as multi-storey buildings optimised for line-of-sight signals intelligence (SIGINT) collection. It could house additional floors, including sensitive communications and collection equipment.⁶

CHiS apparatus and branches like the secretive Chinese Overseas Police Force will be facilitated by the size of the diplomatic mission. The redacted area of this mega Chinese embassy complex could provide the Chinese overseas police and secret agents a base of operations with little oversight available to British authorities although entirely within the UK.

Indeed, Beijing refused to provide further explanations on these redacted areas. On 6th August 2025, after facing strong opposition, Rayner issued a statement by giving China 14 days to explain why Chinese building plans were redacted and ‘why requests from Home Secretary Yvette Cooper and Foreign Secretary David Lammy had been ignored’. About 2 weeks after, Labour decided to delay the planning decision from 5th September to 21st October due to public pressure.⁷

Unfortunately, the plan was only once again postponed. Politicians who see a China-shaped hole of broken promises and yet are not determined on a China Strategy are major shortcomings in facilitating China’s will to breach the RBIO.

Liberals must fill the void in political shortcomings

Building on Paddy Ashdown’s foundation⁸ on protecting the right of Hong Kongers has become ever more important. With new dealings with China, we are once again at the crossroads of an urgent need for a firm China Strategy.

In the autumn conference this year, we the Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong will table a policy motion on Hong Kong (F34), which will cover the area of tackling transnational repression of China, and call for rejecting the Chinese Embassy Complex. Please join us at 14:10 pm on 22nd September for the debate!

Larry Ngan

(For the full version of the article, please refer to the online version)

‘Update on Chinese ‘Overseas Police Service Stations’ - Statement made on 6 June 2023’, *House of Parliament*, 6th June 2023.

² Bridget Wing & Georgina Lam, ‘Hong Kong pro-China informer: ‘Why I’ve reported dozens of people to police’, *BBC News*, 9th May 2025.

³ Damian Grammaticas, ‘Hackers, secret cables and security fears: The explosive fight over China’s new embassy in the UK’, *BBC News*, 4th August 2025.

⁴ Lok Lee and Elsa Maishman, ‘Hong Kong protester dragged into Manchester Chinese consulate grounds and beaten up’, *BBC News*, 17th October 2022.

⁵ Aosheng Pusztaszeri, ‘Is China’s New London “Super Embassy” a Risk to National Security?’, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 13th June 2025

⁶ Aosheng Pusztaszeri, ‘Is China’s New London “Super Embassy” a Risk to National Security?’, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 13th June 2025

⁷ Sammy Gecsoyler, ‘Ministers delay planning decision on Chinese ‘super-embassy’ in London, *Guardian*, 23rd August 2025

⁸ Kris Cheng, ‘Give Hong Kong’s BN(O) passport holders right of abode in the UK if situation worsens, says Lord Ashdown’, *Hong Kong Free Press*, 29th November 2017.

SUDAN

LD conference motion F43 Tuesday September 23rd 10.45am

War has raged in Sudan since April 2023. Despite suffering and destruction on a massive scale, it commands little media or diplomatic attention. However, the fighting between the two rival militias should concern UK politicians because the conflict is creating massive waves of migration. Sudanese refugees favour the UK thanks to Britain's colonial links and because many Sudanese learn English in school. MSF estimates 60% of the migrants waiting in Calais are from Sudan.

The “war without end,” as Sudanese describe it, should also concern Britain because Russia will be awarded a Red Sea naval base by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) who are likely to end up holding the east of the country. Putin could create havoc by threatening access to the Suez Canal. The SAF are also being supported by Iran, their ideological brothers who want a bridgehead in Africa.

No one doubts Foreign Secretary, David Lammy, and the Africa minister, Lord Collins, regret the conflict in which the Army is fighting the Rapid Support Forces/Janjaweed for control of the Sudan's resources. Yet, action does not follow Labour's platitudes about urging all parties to abide by international humanitarian law, etc. It matters a great deal to Britain's large Sudanese Diaspora that the Lib Dems are discussing the conflict at Bournemouth.

Background: Sudan has been ruled by increasingly Islamist military juntas since independence. The elite self-identify as Arab and Muslim, weaponising ethnic and religious differences to impose an Arab and Muslim culture on a highly diverse society. In the process, they concentrated wealth and power in Khartoum, marginalising and persecuting the Black African populations in the south and west. At least two and a half million Black Africans have been killed, prompting the creation of South Sudan, which is largely Black African and non-Muslim.

In 2018-9 a popular revolution overthrew Field Marshall Bashir's Islamist regime. It was replaced by a technocratic civilian transitional government which promised a secular, pluralist democracy, an end to the Islamists' eye-watering corruption, and justice for the survivors of decades of human rights abuses. The SAF and RSF/Janjaweed together overthrew the civilian government in 2021, but then in April 2023 they turned on each other, fighting for control of Sudan's lucrative gold, gum Arabic and livestock.

The motion before LD conference acknowledges the diplomatic neglect of Sudan's devastating conflict despite the massive scale of the suffering: 14 million displaced out of a population of 45m; 7 million facing catastrophic food shortages; an epidemic of rape; cholera sweeping the IDP and refugee camps; both warring militias deliberately targeting civil society efforts to provide humanitarian aid; the failure of international efforts to stop outside countries from interfering in the war and profiting from gold smuggling; and the impact of UK and US aid cuts.

The motion urges the UK to push for a diplomatic path to peace, particularly as the UK is UN penholder on Sudan. It calls for the UN Darfur arms embargo to be widened to cover all of Sudan – a move which is resisted by Russia (which is on the side of the Sudanese Army) and China (which objects in principle to “interfering” in the internal politics of member states because of the precedent it would set).

The motion emphasises the importance of withholding legitimacy from either of the militias fighting for control of Sudan, or more accurately, its resources, since both sides have demonstrated that they are indifferent to the suffering of its people. Both the Sudanese Armed Forces (comprised of Islamist retreads from the regime of Field Marshall Bashir, indicted for genocide by the ICC) and the Rapid Support Forces (the former Janjaweed responsible for the Darfur genocide 2003-6) have no interest in forming a government that would be responsible for the welfare of its people. Their track records prove the opposite. Hence Liberal Democrats are clear that only civil leadership in a future government is acceptable.

The motion emphasises applying pressure to ensure unfettered international humanitarian access to Sudan's starving civilians. It suggests that the FCDO should back the conventional aid route through a DEC appeal for funds for the big international aid groups. However, Sudanese would argue that a much more effective method of reaching civilians in need is by sending support directly to the remarkable network of hundreds of Emergency Response Rooms, run by brave volunteers across the country. The

UK government has held back from doing this, since they tend to choose the most conservative (small 'c') approach to aid.

Sudanese diaspora is also disappointed that the Liberal Democrats are not calling for the UK to apply pressure on the countries – Egypt, the Saudis, the UAE and Turkiye - supplying weapons to both sides in Sudan, thereby prolonging the fighting. The Labour government avoids sanctioning them because the City of London launders money for wealthy individuals in the UAE and Saudi, and both countries have significant assets in the UK. Despite President Trump's fondness for Gulf dictators, his administration has taken a much stronger line on Sudan, sanctioning individuals on both sides and using the word genocide to describe what is happening in Darfur. Labour continues the Conservative traditional of avoiding a determination of genocide for fear that there might be a moral obligation to do more than offer platitudes about upholding international humanitarian law.

Rebecca Tinsley,

Rebecca Tinsley is founder of www.WagingPeace.info



The boy who drew this was 9 when his village in the area of Aishbarra, Darfur, was attacked in 2003 by the Sudanese Government forces and Janjaweed militia. The drawing shows houses burning, villagers being shot and limbs being amputated.

The villagers that are attacked are coloured in black, while the attackers have lighter (orange) skin – showing the ethnic character of the attacks (ie: Arabs attacking 'black Africans' – in this case Massalit).

In the bottom right of the drawing are two young men, attached by the neck, led away by a Janjaweed fighter. These boys could be taken into slavery or may become child soldiers.

[The Childrens Drawings - Waging Peace](http://www.WagingPeace.info)

Canada Forum

Following Canada's general election on 28 April 2025, the Liberal Party were returned to power for a fourth successive term with a new leader in Mark Carney. LIBG hosted a panel event to look at the impacts. Chaired by Sir Graham Watson, speakers included: Mario Canseco, Vancouver based President of Research Co; Emerson Csorba, an Albertan based in Montréal and Board Member of Canadian Ditchley; and Dr Christine Cheng, Senior Lecturer in War Studies at King's College London.

The Election

A key dynamic of the election was the resurgence of the Liberal Party under Mark Carney's leadership. In the first week of January, before Justin Trudeau announced he was stepping down, support for the Conservatives was enormous. They were going to get majority of votes and seats, including in places like Ontario and British Columbia, and dominating in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba as usual. Many thought it barely possible the Liberals would be re-elected, even as a minority government.

This turnaround was heavily predicated on the response to the election of President Trump. The election was fought on local issues too - 18- to 34-year-olds were concerned about housing, and the over 55s about healthcare etc. - but the question of Canada US relations became the number one concern, something that had rarely been registering at 1%. A key element was Canadian identity and not wanting to be American, with Carney being seen as the 'most capable candidate to protect [them]'.

Politically the Liberals and Tories used to fight for the centre ground with the NDP to the left; but the Liberals sat in the centre, with the Conservatives definitely on the right. The Conservatives now need to get away from culture wars and bring in a small 'c' conservative leader who can appeal to Canadians. Poilievre may have 'hit his ceiling'.



Mario Canseco



Emerson Csorba



Dr Christine Cheng

State of the Nation

Despite the US and foreign policy being the focus of the election, it could be internal issues that swamp the government, particularly given that the team around Carney remain similar. Delivery rather than rhetoric will be key. If there isn't much delivery, Canadians in a year or two may start to say there's not much difference between the Trudeau Liberals and the Carney Liberals.

Key issues will be trade, including addressing barriers between the provinces, where there is good momentum. There is also energy and the environment, where climate may not as important as it used to be to the PM, with geopolitics coming before climate. And it will be vital to move with pace on critical infrastructure projects.

Then there's the issue of Alberta, and maybe Quebec. Albertans are unhappy about the state of the country and there is a rise in calls for separation. A referendum could be a lot like Brexit - if underestimated the same thing could happen. If there is an Alberta referendum, there could then be another in Quebec. However, the Clarity Act means that even in the face of a clear majority for secession, there would also then have to be Federal negotiation.

Canada in the World

As we enter a dog-eat-dog world, national security has become a bigger focus. Canadians are not dog eat dog people, but Canada could be internationally more relevant if they are more assertive while still being conveners focused on peace. That's going to require more investment in international security. Everybody is scrambling for new dance partners. PM Carney could have a good relationship with Trump because Trump likes aristocrats, and Carney has that kind of background. He will also want Canada to maintain a strong relationship with the US, while diversifying trade with China and other countries like Saudi Arabia; and there seems to be interest with Japan and Korea as potential trading partners in defence.

But the US's slide into authoritarianism means we have to ask which country should serve as the leader of the liberal democracies? That's also going to have a blow back effect, with people wanting to migrate to Canada. The level of admissions from American students for Bachelor's degrees, Masters' degrees, and Doctorates [in one leading Canadian University] has skyrocketed.

However, uncertainty about the US's commitment to NATO and the international rules-based order are creating potential for a renewed cooperation between Canada and western Europe, including enhanced defence and security partnership and common support for Ukraine. There has been much talk of Canada applying to join the European Union. Canada is looking for others with which to work closely, and the natural partners would be those with whom they already have an existing strong relationship, and who share Canadian values.

Rupert Potter

CAHDI Party proposes caretaker government and oversight body to restore legitimacy in Somalia

LI full member CAHDI Party has escalated its response to Somalia's constitutional crisis, building on the concerns it first raised in May 2025. At that time, CAHDI and Liberal International warned of mounting constitutional violations and democratic backsliding. Four months later, the situation has further deteriorated, prompting CAHDI to set out an urgent roadmap for national salvation.

Declaring that the current regime has "forfeited all legitimacy," the CAHDI Party now calls for the formation of a caretaker government to oversee transparent and contestable elections.

The resolution introduces two major new proposals:

A permanent independent oversight body to investigate constitutional violations and issue binding directives, with officials found guilty facing impeachment or removal from office.

A recalibrated counter-terrorism strategy that links security to public trust, de-radicalisation, and federal cooperation, rejecting partisan manipulation of national forces.

Recognising widespread distrust in Mogadishu, CAHDI also urges that future national dialogue forums be held outside the capital to ensure neutral ground for inclusive political engagement.

"Our people deserve security and democracy built on trust in the rule of law," said Prof. Abdirahman Abdiqani Ibrahim, CAHDI Party Leader and 2026 Presidential Candidate. "This resolution is a roadmap for national salvation."

By moving beyond warnings to concrete measures, CAHDI reinforces its leadership in the struggle to restore Somalia's constitutional order, strengthen accountability, and protect the country's democratic future.

05/09/2025

Turkey: an aeroplane without the landing gear.

A. Kurt

When you look at it from outside especially from Europe, Turkey looks sort of nice, with sandy beaches, historical cities, cradle for numerous civilisations and exotic food. The reality is far more different than this. People are hungry, jobless, angry and hopeless. Obviously, there is a small minority which is enjoying the wealth transfer and state contacts, that is jobs given by the state. They enjoy the life by driving big four-by-fours, living in the secure residences which are sold at more than London prices. Well, this list goes on forever.

On the other hand, the latest scandals are listed below: hundreds of fake university degrees which were created by a gang but approved by state! A gang of lawyers, attorneys and judges allegedly letting the criminals go when paid enough money. University exam questions stolen and sold and others which are totally obscure to any person who lives in the civilised world. Basically, if you have enough money, you never do jail time in Turkey, even for murder. If you have enough money, you could buy the best fake degree (funnily enough those are certified by state!). How this has happened nobody knows... in fact everybody knows but if you say something which would incriminate the real criminals then you find yourself in jail faster than Concorde).

In the meantime, a lot of opposition party local mayors are in jail. There is no indictment, for example İstanbul mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, also the Republican People's Party's (CHP) presidential candidate, has been in the jail since 19th March this year. There are others waiting the indictment for longer times. Another gang operates who are talking to the mayoral detainees and saying to them "incriminate İmamoğlu and pay us two million dollars then you go free". The process of jailing without indictment is something Erdoğan uses as a stick, holding people in jail indefinitely like a pendulum above their head. The order, the system (even it was somewhat shaky) had been working but now it seems it collapsing with increasing speed. Turkey was ranks 117th among 142 countries in the Rule of Law Index of the World Justice Project (WJP) published in October 2023¹.

Things are going bad in foreign affairs for Tayyip Erdoğan. Since Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) took over the Syria, Turkey was very happy with the prospects of developments and future opportunities in Syria. He was hoping the Syrian Democratic Forces (Kurds) was going to inject itself into al-Shaara, the Syrian president's government and would eventually cease to be threat to Turkey. Syria is one of the most complex countries in the world in the sense of ethnicity, religion and its foreign relations with neighbouring countries. So, the simple plan of Erdoğan seems not to be working at the moment,

In the mid-August Hakan Fidan, Turkey's foreign minister (an ex- intelligence chief) started talking about an armed response to Kurdish areas in Syria. He demands that Kurds should disarm themselves. Obviously, that is not going to happen, Early in September, Rear Admiral Zeki Aktürk, spokesperson for the Turkish Ministry of Defense, and Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the far-right Nationalist Movement (MHP) were threatening an incursion or supporting a Syrian attack. Damascus is probably more interested in coming to terms with the Kurds, who were heavily marginalised under Assad; a ceasefire was signed in May but there is a long way to go before there is trust on both sides. Armed intrusion to Kobane and other Kurdish areas is very difficult to achieve, first of all the American entity in the area. Secondly since the last invasion, the Kurds are more heavily armed. especially with anti-aircraft weapons, so an attack might cause a lot of unexpected casualties on Turkish side, which is the last thing Tayyip Erdoğan wants at the moment.

In the wider international field, Erdoğan has a closer relationship with Trump than he does with American policy makers generally. He likes to play free with America, China and Russia, and Turkey is in a key position as a middle power, particularly in the context of the Ukraine war. But Erdoğan wants to bet on both horses, both of which will want him to be their man. Turkish involvement in the Azerbaijan-Nagorno Karabakh conflict and Armenia's subsequent threats to withdraw from Russia's

Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) are strains with Putin, Muslim solidarity over Gaza & Israeli genocide conflicts with Trump. Turkey has been a major source of humanitarian aid to Palestine.

Don't forget, all of these places, including Crimea and the Black Sea coast were part of the Ottoman Empire, when the rest of Ukraine was mostly part of the Polish Lithuanian state before the Napoleonic wars. But none of the international scene is of much interest to us Turks struggling with inflation and political repression; we all know the highest bidder will win.

Sadly, there is a failed state in the horizon. I would like to write more about it but there is no point really. Everything that creates a state which some sort of glue holds the order and keep things sort of sensible way has evaporated, disappeared or crushed maybe even destroyed by AKP and its mercenaries. What is happening here is cosmetically different from Nazi Germany, some similarities to the Trump regime, also a lot of similarities to the Putin regime. They never talk about these similarities or numbers are in jail here when they make shiny analyst papers about Erdoğan regime. they keep talking about opposition they never touch the dangerous subject of. I think most of the European governments, almost all of them, want to see nobody but Erdoğan in power. It's kind of like the case of Netanyahu. That is why the country is like a plane without a landing gear and as we all know every plane eventually comes down one way or another.

A.Kurt

¹ <https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/global/2023/Turkiye/>

Young Liberals set new party precedent by calling out “Genocidal” Israeli activity in Gaza, and urge the UK government to take urgent steps to promote a just and lasting resolution.

At their Summer Conference 2025, the Young Liberals overwhelmingly passed a motion calling on the UK government to take urgent and concrete steps to confront Israel's genocide in Gaza, end the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, and support a just, secure and liberal future for both states.

The motion highlights the immense suffering caused by Israel's military assault on Gaza and deliberate blockade of humanitarian aid to the Strip. It notes the International Court of Justice's January 2024 ruling that there are plausible grounds to believe Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, condemns its refusal to comply with the binding measures ordered by the Court, and affirms that it is now right to plainly describe Israel's actions as genocidal. The motion has fired a starting gun on a new conversation within the party regarding the use of the term genocide, only weeks before the national Annual Conference takes places in Bournemouth.

The motion warns that the failure to justly resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict has eroded democracy and civil society on both sides, leaving Palestinians and Israeli civilians trapped in cycles of violence and insecurity, and affirms that only a negotiated political settlement can deliver a just and lasting peace that respects the right to dignity, freedom and security for both peoples.

The Young Liberals urged the UK Government to uphold international law and end its complicity by:

- suspending all military and security cooperation with Israel;
- banning all trade with illegal settlements;
- prosecuting British citizens credibly accused of committing war crimes in Gaza; and
- launching a public inquiry into UK involvement in the conflict.

The motion further calls for:

- targeted sanctions against Israeli officials complicit in unlawful acts;
- suspension of the UK-Israel trade and partnership agreement;
- urgent steps to promote a permanent ceasefire, unrestricted humanitarian aid access; and
- a durable political settlement rooted in peace, justice and democracy.

In his summation the motion, Rowan Fitton, Young Liberals Co-International Officer, said:

“It is not enough to only recognise the state of Palestine as a member of the international community. Whilst a welcome and necessary step, the UK must also take concrete steps to support the long process of reconciliation [between Israelis and Palestinians], invest in the fair and Palestinian-led rebuilding of Gaza, and account for the role played by the UK.”

Anne-Marie Simpson, Chair of Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine, said:

“We warmly welcome this motion, which rightly condemns Israel’s genocidal assault on Gaza and decades-long suppression of the right of the Palestinian people to peace, dignity, justice, and self-determination.

“For too long our government has paid lip service to international law while supplying arms, military support, and diplomatic cover to a state committing some of the worst crimes known to humanity. The UK must stop enabling Israel’s atrocities and end its complicity once and for all.”

The YL’s press release doesn’t say whether Liberal Democrats For Peace in the Middle East or Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel were consulted.

Bournemouth Beyond the BIC

Visit the final graves of Mary Woolstonecraft and William Godwin, moved by her daughter, Mary Shelley, before the railway line blazed through St Pancras Old Cemetery. They are all buried in the grounds of St. Peters Church – the spire over the town shopping centre.

The Russell-Cotes Gallery has exhibitions of the work of May Morris, daughter of William, and of an international tone, Recovering by the Sea, The Indian Army in Bournemouth, 1914-1915. when Indian soldier came the former Mount Dore Hotel, requisitioned as a hospital, to recuperate from injuries on the Western Front.

How much of May Morris’s work do we casually attribute to her father? I think of her honeysuckle le textile and wallpaper design amongst others.

May founded the Women's Guild of Artists With Mary Turner in 1907 because women could not join the Art Workers Guild; so much for socialist equality. The exhibition May Morris, Art and advocacy, focuses on her embroidery and her encouragement of women artists and craft workers. She was active in the creation over the Royal School of Art Needlework And lectured at the late lamented Central School of Art, long gone through the snobbery of British academia..

The Westover gallery has a new collection by British Pop artist JJ Adams, drawing on familiar icons like the work of Beatrix Potter and characters Like Delboy , you will laugh. They also have new glassware by Kosta Boda.

Watch out for the Art & Makers Market on Saturdays, 11.00-5.00pm in Westover Gardens.next to the Aviary – now over 60 years old.

Russell-Cotes Gallery, East Cliff Parade, BH1 3AA

Westover Gallery, 4 Westover Road, BH1 2BY



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Can Sunflowers Just Stop Oil?

Ludi Simpson

If you don't have time to read this article, but would consider contributing to our Sunflowers II Legal Fund, it's here and thank you so much: <https://chuffed.org/project/sunflowers-need-your-support>.

If you do have time to read the article, then I've done the same as before: responded to questions people ask, to bring you up to date with my experience of Just Stop Oil and the ongoing legal trials. As ever, if you don't want to receive these, tell me and I'll remove you, no questions asked. The Sunflowers court case is scheduled at Southwark Crown Court for January 5th next year, and the rest of that week.

So Just Stop Oil is 'hanging up the hi-vis'? What do you feel about that?!

Oh dear, yes. Late in March Just Stop Oil announced that it had won an end to new oil licenses and would be taking time out to consider what comes next. I wasn't convinced about the win, but I wanted a chance to learn more of what was going on. To be honest I'd heard someone 'on the inside' saying a year ago that the new crimes targeting exactly what JSO was doing well (slow marching, locking on, ...), coupled with judicial rulings to restrict the right to protest, were making it harder to recruit people to actions. So perhaps this kind of action was bound to grind to a halt. But yes, it was a shock to me that the announcement came without being accompanied by a new direction.

I guess there were too many of the national core team in jail or tired out or lacking ideas for feasible actions in this new legal environment. And Labour had changed nothing in the routine jailing of climate direct action whistleblowers. So, I might regret that those national leaders hadn't planned a response to this somewhat predictable situation, but this is where we all are. Oh, and it hasn't left me high and dry! There is a commitment to supporting all those who took direct action, by publicity, attending court and friendly support.

Maybe 'hanging up the hi-vis' simply recognises that it is now significantly harder to protest openly outside the usual channels. Those usual channels like voting and petitions and lobbying ministers haven't brought the serious climate action that the UN, scientists, and the majority of the UK population say is needed. So do we have to expect more covert action in the future, the kind of direct sabotage encouraged by Swedish climate ecologist and activist Andreas Malm? I don't know. But the community that brought XR to direct action, and produced Insulate Britain and then Just Stop Oil, has not disappeared. And it is not alone in searching for a more effective people-priority politics in the UK.

Surely the Labour government is going to quietly let you all go now?

Well, my Labour MP, Anna Dixon (Shipley) points to a promised review of protest laws, why can't she point to any government intention to remove those laws. It was Keir Starmer who said climate activists would "face the full force of the law" including Suella Braverman's. It's still possible that the Labour government will change its authoritarian approach and end its co-dependence with corporate business. But is there any evidence for it doing so? There seems to more evidence that those Labour politicians who call for such changes are sidelined and damage their political career. Recent Home Office guidance¹ further restricts protests. So, I've little hope in the Labour direction. Hmm, I agree that there's not much fun thinking about politics unless you've got built-in optimism.

Didn't the February appeals reduce the sentences you're likely to get for soup-throwing in the National Gallery?

The headlines said that the Court of Appeal judges 'reduced excessive sentences'. But only 6 of 16 appealed sentences were reduced, by small amounts, with hardly any change in the guidance to interpreting the anti-protest laws. Specifically, for me and Mollie and Phil's National Gallery Sunflowers II case, Anna and Phoebe's appeal against their 2-year sentences for the same action a year before was wholly unsuccessful. We will work with our solicitors Hodge Jones Allen to convince the jury that we should not be found guilty of criminal damage. We didn't damage the painting (we knew it was covered by glass) so the potential damage was to the frame only. We did succeed in getting a lot attention on fossil fuels as the major culprit for climate collapse.

But if the judge limits what we can say, and we can't persuade the jury, we can expect the judge to implement the Court of Appeal precedent of two years imprisonment. With no spanners in the works that would mean 6 months inside, 6 months with a night curfew tag at one address, and then a year on parole with limited movement.

So what about this fundraiser?

We have legal aid for the Sunflowers II case, which we will use to prepare the best defence and the best strategy to convince jury that we were climate whistle-blowers who should not be convicted. But the rules are that you pay contributions towards your legal fees amounting to all your 'disposable' income over several months, calculated by the government as all your income after housing costs and a living allowance. That means we are looking to raise £15,000 to cover our foreseeable legal fees. Anything small or large would be very helpful and Phil, Mollie and I would be very grateful. In the unlikely event that more was raised, it would go to CASP, the charity giving non-professional advice to protesters in the UK at every stage of engaging with the legal system. They really have been invaluable to thousands. Thank you in advance if you can contribute to not criminalising climate protesters. Here's the link again: <https://chuffed.org/project/sunflowers-need-your-support>

Haven't you done enough now to earn some rest?

Ooh, that's such a good question! I get far too much rest, I'm retired! I'm loving my front and back yards with plums and figs for the first time, and raspberry-and-redcurrant jam ripening nicely right now. I've been on a two-week holiday with Sue, and I love the successes of Commoners Choir and friends in the Bradford climate movements. I'm also liking the ways that so many different organisations are asking themselves just how to change a world where democratic politics give us governments that don't provide solutions for people, decade after decade.

"All that protesting has made things worse for democracy after these new laws"

I've given a couple more Q&A sessions and this came up. It seems that it's easy to blame the victim when the perpetrator has authority. Direct action is just one way to tackle this situation. The government is likely to respond with aggression until such time that it's clear that it can't. By the way, I managed to record the last Q&A session and am half way through the laborious task of editing an automatic transcription. If anyone has a way of promoting it, please get in touch.

What about your Gatwick Airport trial?

It was on 11th June! The eight of us who sat in front of the Gatwick South departure gate to get climate publicity during last summer's international Airport Actions, were all found not guilty. At Horsham Magistrates Court, Judge Amanda Kelly ended the trial after hearing the prosecution's case. The prosecution's case. The prosecution had not convinced her there was a case to answer, so she had no need to hear any more. For your information, in case it's ever useful, it is impossible



to cause major disruption by sitting in front of a departure gate. The removable barriers open up multiple alternative routes!

The prosecution were disorganised before the trial and lacklustre at the trial, we were well prepared, and the judge was willing to uphold a right to protest when there was no major disruption. It might also have helped that I managed to borrow some trousers, after forgetting to bring a replacement for my hot-day shorts...

We were very happy after the trial, with a dozen who turned up to support by being in the public gallery. The penalty I risked was a fine or community service, small compared to the risk in the sunflowers trial coming up. But any conviction also affects loans, visas, insurance and more. So, I'm happy to keep my legal good character as long as possible. There is a JSO press release about our Not Guilty verdict².

Hidden Disabilities, Sunflowers and Gatwick Airport

Here's a funny coincidence. While at the trial I noticed for the first time the Hidden Disabilities sunflower scheme. Anyone can wear a green lanyard with sunflowers to indicate a hidden disability. The idea is that shops or officials know to give you space to express your needs. The scheme was started at Gatwick Airport. I'm wondering whether I should wear one to the Crown Court in January to indicate the cards stacked against climate and other protesters, and the space we need to explain ourselves to the jury.

Thanks, that's it, and I hope you're all enjoying life and able to contribute to make this badly managed world a little bit better.

Ludi Simpson

Oh, here's that fundraiser again. <https://chuffed.org/project/sunflowers-need-your-support>

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwyg0jyjnwxwo>

² <https://juststopoil.org/2025/06/12/gatwick-airport-8-acquitted-after-judge-rules-insufficient-evidence-of-serious-disruption/>

Challenging Labour's attacks on the right to peaceful protest

Following on from the spirit of Ludi Simpson's article, an emergency motion has been submitted following the astonishing assaults by Labour on protest which seem to be targeted on protests against the Gaza genocide [which we understand will be the subject of a separate motion]. Quite frankly, Labour is making fools of the police, using them for their own shabby political ends. Full details of the motion - Challenging Labour's attacks on the right to peaceful protest, can be found in the online edition of interLib, but the summation is:

Conference calls for:

- The Government to reverse the proscription of Palestine Action
- Clear instructions to be issued to UK police forces that the right to peaceful protest is an irreducible human right which is respected throughout the United Kingdom, following the overturning of the Public Order Act 1986 (Serious Disruption to the Life of the Community) Regulations 2023 in the Court of Appeal
- Liberal Democrats at all levels to challenge and oppose further attempts to curtail the inalienable right of citizens to protest peacefully.

It appears that since the print edition of interLib went to press that this emergency motion and another on Gaza will be subsumed into a topical motion debate,



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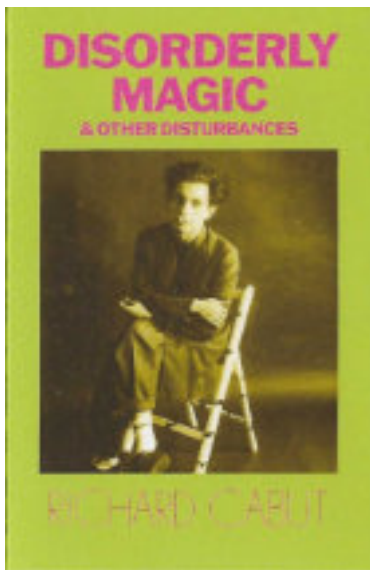
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liberatormagazine.org.uk

Reviews

Disorderly Magic and Other Disturbances, audio release by Richard Cabut.

Many years ago, I made a mental note not to review poetry, why make a bigger fool of myself? The Fool is of course a transitional archetype. When asked to review the cassette of Richard Cabut's *Disorderly Magic* I should have resisted; I don't even have a working cassette player - that could be resolved. A punk poet, most of my collection of punk rock was on cassette, much of it badly recorded at concerts, unplayable by the time I left London more than a decade ago. That somebody was still using the cassette as a medium was enticing in itself. Of course, I did not have the book, could not locate it in any of the small independent book shops close by me. But perhaps that's the point; poetry is an aural medium. Listen to it; take it for its word.



Richard Cabut's *Disorderly Magic* immediately became a best seller; the cassette is the chosen medium. Although I read a lot of poetry, aloud, fleeting references can elude you. Without the reference of the printed word, it is best to dwell on the familiar and see where that takes you.

Cabut opens reflecting on a screening of Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* in the Scala cinema, King's Cross. Was this some kind of golden age for the punk imagination; Lou Reed, Nico, the Factory and all that. The Chelsea Hotel, 222 West 23rd Street, Manhattan, had seen better days by the time of Warhol's film. Dylan Thomas to Bob Dylan, what would become a glittering literati passed through and with them, as urban decay set in, drug use, prostitution and who knows what else? It now only exists in name and memory; each in conflict with the other. At 3½ hours and each screening unique as the dark and light of the twin projections don't quite synchronise, years on, I can't recall how closely Cabut follows the dialogue, but his poetry takes on the proportions of the works of Blake or Swinburne. He cannot linger between the frames of the film. Soon we are out in the

frames of the film. Soon we are out in the streets, not just King's Cross, his Chelsea Girls roam the metropolis, the punk femmes of his youth. The Portobello Hotel was not the Chelsea Hotel, though it might have liked to have been – neither are what they once were; London is not New York. One can recall his Chelsea Girls, more alive than Warhol could make them out to be. They say *there is no poetry to be extracted from my life*, yet here we are, in print somewhere and on cassette, *poetry revealing personality disorder*. Cabut used the term 'Disorderly Magic' in his memoir of Jordan¹, what better example could there be?

Cabut's urban landscapes seem to revel in squalor; the Aylesbury and White City Estates are iconic, I always sought to make the best of them, though not a journey I ever took, many of the streets betwixt are familiar and full of wonders if you really look. Can the flaneur travel by taxi?

Sans text, does Cabut stray from 'angel' to the Polish 'anioł' in his account of his mother's journey? It sounds like it (I later discover this was the case, reciprocating). She was one of two million Poles deported to Siberia on 10th February 1940 when Russia invaded eastern Poland as part of its pact with Nazi Germany; Socialism in action, trust nobody who thinks they have the solution. Her village is now within Ukraine. Poland was part of the Soviet empire from 1944 to 1993 when the last troops withdrew. After a despairing journey Cabut's mother eventually settled in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, where his journey (almost) ends in *Ghost Music*, his family predeceasing him, personal resurrection apart. Yet the room of his first memory cannot contain him, he is off to Godard's *Alphaville*, down paths traced by Borges and Éluard, a poet first. Cabut's poetry is best when it is most personal.

So, we have travelled down streets of alienation, *people living in cities to be alone*; in presenting his work through the spoken word does Cabut's poetry seek to escape or celebrate this? What would I say to the poet? Be concise; even as performance poetry your pieces are generally too long; were I to read them, would they hold my attention? Yes, I think, where they are most personal, but would the poem's free verse hold me where it digresses?

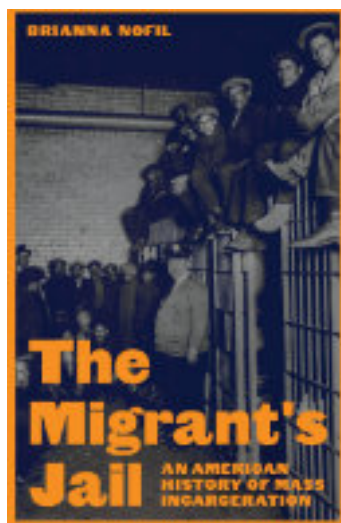
Cabut's voice is underlaid by a continuo of 'ambient dark jazz sonic landscapes', chosen himself and carefully mixed to enhance, not over-power (the hand of Fritz Catlin?). Paul T Kirk (Akatombo) provides the backing to *Chelsea Girls*; Necessary Animals to *Disorderly Magic*, which was previously known as *Unkempt Magic*; Simon Beesley, of June Brides, *In The City*; Deptford's Band Of Holy Joy, *10th Floor*; Keith Rodway, *Aniol*; and AKA (Anthony Moore, Keith Rodway & Amanda Thompson) to *Ghost Music*. A veritable cast. If you are like Colin from *Froth on the Daydream*, you'll be needing this... at least once.

How do you acquire this gem? Putting the question to Google, Dash the Henge, in Brixton came up <https://dashthehengestore.com/> - the Disorderly Magic cassette was launched there on 22nd May... you probably need to visit the store anyway. Otherwise Far West Press is the main distributor - they ship worldwide from NY.

The book, incidentally, is published by Far West Press, isbn 979898506755 – many more poems than on the cassette, but Chelsea Girls are greedy and take up a lot of space. You don't have to use bibliomancy to know that pataphysics is the only science.

Stewart Rayment

¹ International Times, 9.4.2022 – Pamela Rooke, aka Jordan (23 June 1955 – 3 April 2022)



The Migrant's Jail: An American History of Mass Incarceration,
by Brianna Nofil
Princeton University Press, 2024 £28.00
isbn 9780691237039

This is a book about the history of migrant detention in the United States, from the early 20th century to today. It is well-researched, setting out both the wider political context and individual migrants' stories. However, it fails to put forward an alternative approach to enforcing immigration law, which is desperately needed on both sides of the Atlantic.

Nofil's key point is that the US federal government uses a network of local jails (usually at the county level) to detain immigrants, which she argues leads to a range of problems, such as: (i) a dispersed and ever-changing network of detention centres so it is difficult for anyone to understand what is happening; (ii) blurring of lines between those detained for alleged breaches of criminal

law, and immigrants; (iii) financial incentives for counties to make money whilst providing minimum service, with limited federal oversight of detention conditions. Nofil also discusses time periods when federal detention centres or privately-run institutions were more popular, but these arrangements did not appear to mean better conditions. She makes a compelling case that many immigrants have suffered in detention, subject to the whims of politicians, police and judges.

A lot of the book is clearly US-centric, and stems from particular characteristics in that country, such as the division of powers between agencies and levels of government. However, some of the broader points are worthy of being considered elsewhere. For example, a common theme is the extent to which immigration policy is decided by political changes which are beyond any immigrant's control. Someone's experience of the system, including whether they are detained at all, is often arbitrarily determined by these political moods. At the beginning of the book, she describes how fear of the 'Chinese Problem' led to the Chinese Exclusion Act, and many Chinese people being detained in the early 1900s. In the 1960 and 1970s, attention turned to detaining people from Haiti, as the US decided to support the Haitian government and so would not recognise people fleeing the Caribbean country as refugees.

Although the exact time periods and affected nationalities will vary, many modern countries, such as the UK, will have adopted similar approaches of favouring or fearing different source countries over time. We would expect similar stories of an arbitrary increased risk of detention or deportation for nationals from certain countries as they fell out of favour with their country of destination.

However, the easy conclusion of innocent immigrants vs. a cruel and bureaucratic government misses the nuances. In the opening chapter, when she describes the detention of Chinese people under the Chinese Exclusion Act, Nofil explains that it was common practice for Chinese nationals to claim that they were US citizens, although they did not have any papers to prove this. As the US authorities could often not disprove their claim, after some time in detention, the Chinese migrants were usually released. Nofil does not explain

how else the US government should have dealt with people who (as seems generally acknowledged) were fraudulently claiming to be US citizens and did not have any legitimate claim to be in the country.

Leaving aside the obviously racist motivation for the Chinese Exclusion Act, there is a basic question to be answered of how a government should enforce its immigration laws. But Nofil does not set out any solution to the issues she has identified. There are some suggestions that she does not support any form of detention for immigrants, such as when she criticizes migrants for being treated in the same way as criminals. However, it is unclear what measures she does consider the federal government should use to enforce immigration law - or if she thinks that it should be enforced at all.

Some of this book seems defeatist and the reader may be left with the impression that enforcing immigration law in a fair and compassionate way is impossible, so there is no point trying. If Nofil is advocating for completely open borders, it would be an oversight not to make that radical position express in the book. So, we are therefore left with the unsatisfactory conclusion that all attempts in the US to date to enforce immigration law are flawed (and many of the problems probably also exist elsewhere), but there is nothing better on the horizon. Avoiding the debate entirely is not a tenable position in a world where stricter immigration enforcement is on the rise. Leaving it in the hands of only those who care little for the humane treatment of immigrants does not seem to be outcome that Nofil would want.

Eleanor Healy-Birt

**The Mission: The CIA in the 21st Century, by Tim Weiner,
William Collins 2025**



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Donald Trump isn't the first US president to ignore his intelligence agencies. Reading this disturbing chronicle of American missteps reminds us of the ignorance of the G W Bush White House (on all aspects of Iraq), the naivety of Obama (on Russian cyberattacks), and the arrogance of Biden (the withdrawal from Afghanistan).

In the months before 9/11, the CIA warned repeatedly that a profoundly serious Al Qaeda attack was in the works, but their intel was dismissed by Condi Rice, the National Security Advisor, because the administration was obsessed by Iraq.

The fraudster Ahmed Chalabi contradicted CIA doubts about WMD, conning the US taxpayers out of hundreds of millions of dollars to support his plans to foment an uprising against Saddam. America was clueless about Iraq because Saddam had killed any opponent who might pass information to the States. And the CIA knew little about Al Qaeda because the institution had been hollowed out by politicians after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The CIA lacked the language skills to interrogate the detainees they tortured so brutally, or the context to understand what they were told.

For all their arrogance, the Americans emerge as gullible, with Pakistan playing Washington for decades, while actively supporting the Taliban and Al Qaeda. In one episode, Pakistani leader Musharraf persuaded Vice-President Dick Cheney to evacuate hundreds of ISI (Pakistani intelligence) officers from Kunduz, north of Kabul, "to save Pakistani dignity" as the Taliban closed in. The "ISI officers" were Musharraf's friends in the Taliban and Al Qaeda who the USA duly ferried to the tribal wild west of Waziristan where they continue to cause immense suffering to the Pakistani population.

The US taxpayer has also shelled out \$50 billion to mass murderers running Egypt ("an island of stability") since Camp David; \$600m to Erik Prince's Blackwater mercenaries; and they continue to give Pakistan \$6 billion a year, despite their serial deception.

The money trousered by President Karzai and his drug-dealer brother in Afghanistan, and sundry war lords in Iraq is literally beyond calculation. No wonder that American voters liked it when Trump promised no more foreign entanglements.

The White House never grasped that America's reckless footprint was a recruiting tool for Islamists and other terrorists. Weiner recounts the shambles after the overthrow of Saddam. The White House "had no plan", and as Richard Armitage, the deputy Secretary of State, remarked, "Bush didn't know why he was president."

Paul Bremer, appointed by the White House to run Iraq, famously fired Baath Party members, including all the security services who promptly joined jihadist insurgencies and stole the Iraqi army's weapons which had been left unguarded by US troops. The insurgents brought poverty and unimaginable suffering to the people of Iraq, once a middle-income nation where Iraqi women's rights were envied by females across the Muslim world. The instability continues there to this day, with Iran in de facto control in Baghdad and Islamic State biding their time until Trump withdraws America's remaining forces. As Weiner says, it took four years for the Americans to ask themselves why so many Iraqis had become their enemies and what the insurgents wanted, or to see the connections with Syria and Iran. They were clueless.

Weiner's chapters on rendition to black sites (Egypt, Poland, Morocco, Romania, Lithuania, Thailand) reveals that useful information was divulged before torture began, and detainees produced rubbish thereafter, hoping to stop the interrogations. The author also reminds us that torture wasn't a rogue CIA operation: Bush approved it.

Through all of this, Bush preferred the positive spin he got from the US military rather than the CIA's gloomy reports. Like Nixon, (and now Trump), Bush thought the CIA were a bunch of "leftists" seeking to undermine him.

Some of the book's other highlights: the remarkably arrogant General David Petraeus handed highly sensitive CIA information to his mistress who was writing her PhD; for years, the CIA ignored social media and other open source information because it wasn't "secret."; during the first Trump election campaign, his people held 38 meetings with the Russians and 272 email or phone conversations with them – and the CIA was unaware of Russian bots spreading disinformation about Hillary Clinton on Facebook; Obama refused to reveal this Russian interference because he didn't want to be seen as biased, a piety shared by many Democrats who still don't realise we are in new times; neither the CIA nor the US army foresaw the immediate collapse of the Afghan government when the US withdrew four years ago; and two weeks before Hamas attacked Israel on October 7th, Jake Sullivan, the National Security Advisor, said the Middle East was quieter than it had been for two decades.

A fascinating read for those who are interested in the decline and fall of the American empire.

Rebecca Tinsley

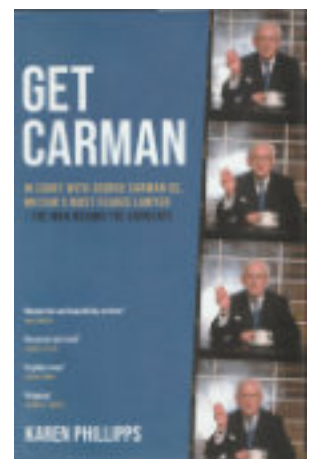
Get Carman, in court with George Carman QC, Britain's most feared lawyer - The man behind the advocate, by Karen Phillips. Biteback 2024 isbn 978 178590 8989

The index to this book is awesome, five pages of names in a small typeface; a veritable who's who of the last 50 years or so celebratii. But you're not interested in those, you're only interested in one, Jeremy Thorpe. George Carman has fought a lot of cases, but you're only interested in Jeremy Thorpe. Well, I'm only interested in Jeremy Thorpe too, when it comes to it, so what does Karen Phillips have to say

Phillips contests that the case was a major turning point in George Carman's life. He was offered a very low fee, what the publicity would be immense, thereby enhancing his reputation. I'm pretty sure George Carman had a reputation at that point, which is why George Carman. Thorpe and his fellow defendants were found not guilty, innocent of the charges against them. The gutter press has never accepted this, but who believes anything you read in the papers these days? One wonders if Milton could write the Areopagitica now.

Carmen also took down Jonathan Aitken & Neil Hamilton, and when, at a by-election in Liverpool, I was unable to deliver a Focus to Ken Dodd's house in Knotty Ash for want of a letterbox,

Stewart Rayment



The Individualists: radicals, reactionaries, and the struggle for the soul of Libertarianism, by Matt Zwolinski and John Tomasi
Princeton University Press 2023
isbn 9780691155548

Zwolinski and Tomasi seek to rehabilitate Libertarianism. A tough job, especially in Great Britain after the disaster of the Truss government. Yet Conservative Prime Minister Liz Truss, as we are frequently reminded, first cut her political teeth as a Young Liberal republican.

We have enough terms to generate confusion already but let us look at the book which announces itself as a history of libertarian thought and goes on the variously name Robert Nozick, Milton Friedman, Ayn Rand and Murray Rothbard as progenitors of libertarianism. We might think about this and place some of these and others in the Liberal Canon, if usually on the economic right thereof.

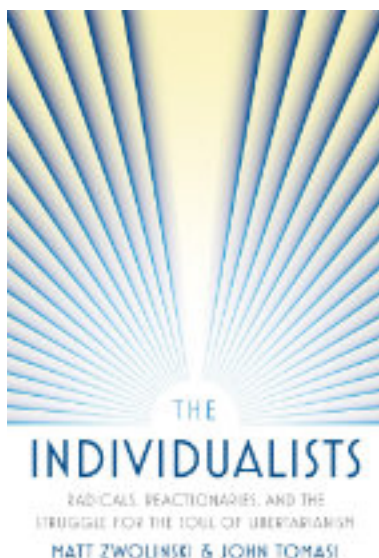
A paragraph. What do libertarians believe? We have ‘don't like government’, ‘obsessed with private property’, ‘love capitalism and hate socialism’, ‘social problems can be solved by markets’. I'm more sceptical of the suggestion ‘against social justice’ and whilst some might be ‘racially insensitive even racists’; they might but this should not stem from their libertarianism if they really hold it.

In real world libertarians will generally ask for small government, the purpose of the state primarily defence and security. Private property is the defence against arbitrary government; they take this from their proto-Liberal antecedents, Locke, Hume, Smith (whom they generally only interpret selectively). Capitalism as opposed to socialism will generally follow from this, certainly the place of the market. But in saying so, what of voluntarism and mutualism as means to address the inevitable social ills that followed the Industrial Revolution?

Social Darwinism? Yes, certainly in the context of the British tradition flowing from Herbert Spencer. Yet Peter Kropotkin, who only warrants a footnote in what I would call the American Anarchist tradition, Tucker etc., wrote his *Mutual Aid* as a riposte to Thomas Huxley.

Zwolinski and Tomasi focus (broadly) on two traditions the British and by extension European, as Hayek and Popper sought sanctuary from the Nazis in Britain and the American tradition which starts with a native anarchism, largely lost, merging instead into a late 20th century mainstream, the Mont Pelerin consensus.

It is unfortunate that Keynes died in 1946; Hayek, who was at the LSE by this time, Often spoke of the dialogue they had together. It would be interesting to speculate how that might have developed had Keynes ideas not been ossified through a broadly social democratic perspective. The battle in the Liberal Party was intense in the 1950s and early 60s. It is a great shame that nobody is around these days to recall the fight, but ultimately the institute of Economic Affairs would drift away from political liberalism. Conservatism as a political philosophy, was at this point constantly fighting a rear-guard action, picking up some of the apparently discarded swords Liberalism. Like the IEA, Hayek's liberalism would not find favour in British soils until it was adopted by Margaret Thatcher. Generally, those of and around Mont Pelerin would find more succour and sponsorship from the Right In Britain and the United States. This is not so in Europe where parties like the VVD Are able to strike more of a balance between social and economic liberalism, albeit more on the economic side. That, however, is not the concern of our authors or their book.



The problem that stems from this is that the solution that arose out of the dialogue between Mont Pelerin and conservatism was neoliberalism; an ideology now well past its sell by date, and since Zwolinski and Tomasi seek to reclaim libertarianism, as much of a problem for them too. Where do we stand now? Neoliberalism evolved into neoconservatism at least a couple of decades ago; surely there is some mistake if this is what libertarians want.

I'm intrigued to see that the Adam Smith Institute will be holding a fringe meeting at the Liberal Democrat conference in Bournemouth (Sunday 1-2.00pm). It is a long time since I've crossed swords with them, Whilst I think and fear that the Liberal Democrats is a natural home for many moderate conservatives in Britain in the current climate, the ASI at their conference Is not a step that I would not have imagined. The populism that currently swamps British and American conservatism may have its libertarian elements, but they are being sold short. Zwolinski and Tomasi are aware of this; one wishes them well in their endeavour. They should revisit Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and see the light.

Stewart Rayment

The Lie of the Land, by Guy Shrubsole
Penguin Books 2025 £10.99, Bookbuster price £9.99

Guy is the author of the bestselling *'The Lost Rainforests of Britain'*. His latest book, out now in paperback, includes some of the remnants of our temperate rainforest, along with 92% of English land, land we have no right to roam upon. Indeed, much of the 8% left over upon which we may walk is privately owned. The recent farce over camping on Dartmoor highlights this for us, and Guy, who himself lives in Devon, covers the court case over access here. The book went to print before the victory was won against landowner last month - judges unanimously dismissed an appeal by Alexander and Diana Darwall against a 2023 ruling upholding Dartmoor Commons Act. Lewis Winks of protest group Right to Roam, in an article in the Exeter Observer, that "Dartmoor remains the only place in England and Wales where the public has a right to wild camp and can lawfully experience the magic of sleeping under the stars. And the fact that one wealthy landowner, Alexander Darwall, was able to temporarily remove a right that belonged to everyone demonstrates how England's system of access is utterly broken." He added: "The Labour Government must now pass a new Right to Roam Act to defend and extend the public's rights to access nature in England. Ministers must urgently change the law not only to protect the right to wild camp on Dartmoor from future challenges, but to expand the public's right of responsible access to the wider countryside."

Shrubsole's hardback edition 'Lie of the Land' was subtitled 'Who really cares for the countryside'. The paperback is more combative, with the new subtitle 'How a tiny group of landowners wrecked the countryside, and how the public can restore it'. The book takes a look at who owns the countryside, how many landowners propagandise about what a great job they do as stewards and suggest the 'townies' will just treat the countryside as a garbage dump. Shrubsole gives this elitist claim short thrift. He gives many examples of how these self-professed 'guardians of the land' in fact cause great damage. This ranges from agricultural run-off, through destructive alteration of the course of rivers and degradation of wetland including SSSIs, to the effect rape of the land in the name of grouse and pheasant hunting for toffs. The latter alone causes immense destruction of our native flora and fauna for a sport which accounts for per annum CO2 emissions of half a billion tons. At the same time, he acknowledges and praises those landowners that do in fact care for their land.

All this makes for a fascinating read, and I recommend it. And I could fill this review with the dastardly behaviour of our elites – but in fact, the best thing about the book is its sections dealing with the second half of its new subtitle, how we can address stewardship and ownership issues. As Shrubsole notes, currently 'in a country where 1 per cent of the population owns half of all England, such decisions are made by a tiny elite'. One clear change required to begin to solve pressing issues around degradation of our natural environment, and urgently enhancing the sustainability of our native food supply, is a widening of involvement in decision-making. It is an uphill struggle, landowners are rich, influential, and often angry – in 1983 effigies of conservationists on the Somerset Levels were hung by the neck by farmers opposed to plans to rewet drained wetlands.

The focus on England is tempered by reference to the various successes in protecting land, beyond the right to roam, in Scotland. Shrubsole gives over a fair few pages to the public acquisition of vast swathes of the former Buccleuch Estate, and what the Scottish government fairly describe as 'an end to feudalism', focussing on community ownership as well as the right to access. Centuries after the eviction of Highlanders from the land they lived on and farmed by arrogant lairds who could be richer with sheep than tenants, the ancestors of the victims of the clearances in Sutherland now have the right to buy the land. A Heritage Trust now owns the Isle of Eigg... Needless to say, in England we remain quite definitely 'feudal', with a disproportionate amount of land still owned by earls, barons, and lords granted vast acreage after the Norman Conquest. And more and more is now owned by venture capitalists, and even Utah's Mormon Church. And changes of governance under Thatcher 'closed down debate about the public ownership of land for a generation'.

So, read this excellent book all the way through! But, here I will round off this review with a quick potted run-down of Shrubsole's main recommendations for action. He says that reform must be a democratic process, a million miles from where we are now. There must be stricter prioritisation, as much land is deemed 'multi-use' that in fact has quite narrow requirements if it is to be protected, such as our vanishing wetlands. One might mention the disconnect between those who think we can address the decimation of our forests through massive monoculture plantations, and those who see that different biomes should be seeded with appropriate native trees and flora in order to recover. And none of this means diddly-squat without addressing 'the elephant in the room', land ownership. To do this requires agriculture and forestry be bought into the planning system, as, unbelievably, they are not!

He finishes on a ten-point programme, beginning with protecting our greatest carbon sinks, moorland and the fens, and banning moorland burning and grouse-shooting. King Charles, our supposedly 'green' royal wouldn't like that. Second, institute a community right to buy in England. Third, use public money to 'buy land for nature'. Fourth, levy a carbon land tax on polluting landowners. Fifth, stop letting landowners unleash hundreds of thousands of imported pheasants on the land in shooting season (indeed, why not ban shooting?). Sixth, create a 'right of responsible access' giving the public rights to become whistleblowers when finding nefarious land practices on yer lordship's manor. Seventh, let national parks serve the interests of nature, especially important now rare-metal rich uplands such as Dartmoor are now technically within the new 'enterprise zones'. Eighth, 'put in place a land use framework for England and open up data on land'. Ninth, 'require landowners to give an account of their stewardship', Shrubsole's *'Ecological Domedstay Book'*, and, tenth, not a policy suggestion, 'but a plea to everyone reading this book' – 'Join campaigns to hold landowners to account and change the laws of the land'.

We cannot go back to 'subsistence rights on the common land', as once granted under the Carta de Foresta, not with a UK population of 70 million people, but we can and must be activists for change. Scotland is proving it works. Solidarity is the way.

Tim Barton

Email: bluegreeneearth@googlemail.com

(Bookbuster, a small independent bookshop that you should use)

Sanctioned, the inside story of the sale of Chelsea FC, by Nick Purewal.

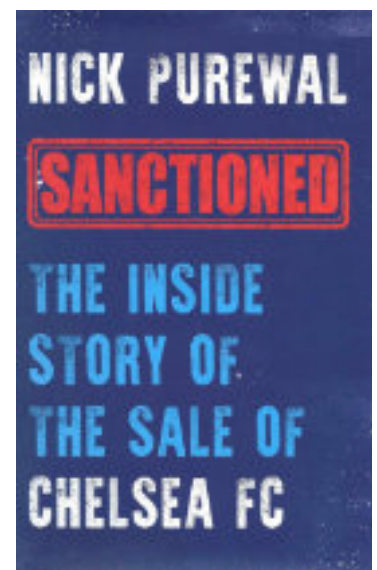
Biteback 2025 £20.0

isbn 9781785909894

In February this year, Roman Abramovich's name was heard once again on the Stamford Bridge terraces. BlueCo has never really cut it with the fans. Since 2022 Chelsea have probably spent more money than any other team worldwide, but without the tangible results that fans crave; the long game doesn't seem to be working, how early do days have to be? Abramovich had taken Chelsea through 17 major trophies in his nearly 20 years; 5 Premier League titles, 2 Champion's Leagues, 5 FA cups, 3 League cups, 2 Europa Leagues, a FIFA Club World Cup and a UEFA Super cup.

The hindsight of history tells us that Abramovich's attempts to broker peace early in Russia's invasion of Ukraine did not stand a chance. It is improbable that a Russian oligarch would not have links to that Vladimir Putin, real politic must have demanded it, but what was the forensic evidence beyond the baying of the small men in Westminster? The British public lead the government in our response to Ukraine; flags everywhere, Boris knew which way the wind was blowing. These same Tories had previously embraced the arrival of oligarchs on British soil. The Daily Mirror reported (on the publication of this book) that *following his sale of Chelsea, Abramovich was ordered to send £2.5bn of the proceeds to aid Ukraine. But as it stands, that amount remains in a UK bank account, with the government now threatening to sue the 58-year-old.* Purewal says Abramovich himself instructed an unequivocal statement confirming that *Chelsea was for sale, in full, we have all the proceeds to be donated to the victims of Ukraine war.* My focus here is football, And there is no doubt that Abramovich has been a good thing for the game, not only for Chelsea. The politics, that's a different matter, Abramovich is named in the Navalny 35 and is sanctioned by many western governments. Back to the ball, this is too good a story for me to reveal any more; enjoy.

Saeed Rahman



BOURNEMOUTH - the international bits...

Saturday 20 September

Fringe Saturday Lunchtime 13.00–14.30

Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong Have we been inadvertently supporting multi-polarity? Let's return to building trusting networks. On the rise of China, Trump is a useful idiot. But while discussing strategic independence, have we been trapped in multi-polarity? We're neglecting trust and the Global South. Nicholas Chan with: Asry Kaloko – Indonesian academic, and John Hemmings - Geostrategy. **Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 1**

Liberal International British Group On the Brink: wake up and smell the cordite! Top rank speakers on the US and Russia will examine the threat of the new Right-wing autocracies at Liberal International 's fringe on 20th September. No country is safe, ours included. **Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 2**

Humanist and Secularist Liberal Democrats Reason, Rights, Renewal: Liberal and Humanist Internationalist Values in Times of Uncertainty In these times of rising nationalism, populism and irrationality, can humanist and liberal values offer a path forward? Join our timely discussion on how rationality and universal human rights can help rebuild trust in politics, strengthen social cohesion, and offer hope for the future. Panellists include Andrew Copson (Humanists UK), Gary McLelland (Humanists International), and Rebecca Vincent (Big Brother Watch). **Bournemouth International Centre, Durley Suite**

Liberal Democrats For Peace in the Middle East (LDfPME) Building Bridges for Middle East Peace LDfPME and Solutions Not Sides with Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilders from the region will address reconciliation, practical solutions, and why we need to educate British schoolchildren about the issue. **Highcliff Marriott, Sandbanks Room**

Conference

16.55–18.00 F14-19 Reports of Party bodies:
F17 Report of Federal International Relations Committee

Fringe Saturday mid evening 20.15-21.30

Cllr Zuffar Haq MBE in partnership with Lib Dem Friends of Palestine Crisis in the Middle East Fantastic opportunity to hear from one of the leading journalists. Arwa Damon former Senior Middle East Correspondent for CNN first hand experience in the Middle East. Emmy Award winning journalist with fascinating insight, not to be missed. **Bournemouth International Centre, Avon Room**

Lib Dem Friends of the Armed Forces and Lib Dem Friends of Ukraine Modern Warfare: Lessons from Ukraine's War Against Russia's Aggression In July, Russia suffered its one millionth casualty fighting Ukraine. How can Ukraine, UK and NATO deter militarily an enemy who believes lost lives are just a statistic - and protect our own? Join Defence spokesperson Helen Maguire and military experts. **Bournemouth International Centre, Branksome Suite**

China, East and South East Asia Lib Dems Mobilising HongKonger Communities for Electoral Success Your essential guide to understanding this fast-growing community. How to build genuine, effective connections that translate into electoral wins. Join CESEA's expert panel chaired by patron Victoria Collins MP for a lively discussion and Q&A. **Bournemouth International Centre, Westbourne Suite**

Fringe Saturday late evening 22.00–Midnight ALDC & Cambridge Lib Dems
Lib Dem Disco Lib Dem Disco
Marriott, Dorchester Suite

Highcliff

Sunday 21 September

Fringe Sunday mid-morning 11.30–12.30

Falkland Islands Government & ICCF-UK Protecting the Blue Frontier: Combating Unregulated Fishing in the South Atlantic Unregulated industrial fishing in the Southwest Atlantic risks some species being fished to extinction. Join UK and Falkland Islands' politicians to discuss the importance of regulating the Blue Hole and how complex geopolitics are currently preventing this from happening. www.x.com/FalklandsinUK **Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 2**

Cyprus Liberal and Democratic Movement Relationship between Cyprus, UK and EU. Rising vet bills and animal care. A meeting inviting the audience to discuss the matters (and not just to listen). All welcome. **Highcliff Marriott, Shaftesbury Suite**

Fringe Sunday lunchtime 13.00–14.00

UK Anti-Corruption Coalition Brave New World: Fighting Corruption and Oligarchs in an age of Trump Russia's invasion of Ukraine revealed the UK's role in providing safe harbour for kleptocrats, oligarchs, and corrupt criminals. Buying mansions in the UK, opening shell companies in our overseas territories, using our lawyers and accountants - all tools to hide heinous crimes. We discuss what the Lib Dems can do to counter corruption in the UK during the age of Trump. www.ukanticorruptioncoalition.org <https://bsky.app/profile/ukanticorruptioncoalition.org> **Bournemouth International Centre, Durley Suite**

CHEM Trust, Green Liberal Democrats Turning over a green leaf: how closer UK-EU collaboration would benefit the environment Despite promises to maintain or strengthen protections on harmful chemicals post-Brexit, the UK has fallen vastly behind the EU. What are the Liberal Democrat's plans for the UK-EU relationship and what benefits could this bring for our shared environment? www.chemtrust.org www.linkedin.com/company/chem-trust **Bournemouth International Centre, Westbourne Suite**

Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel The forthcoming Israeli General Election: why it matters and what will happen. Join us for an exclusive event discussing and analysing the crucial upcoming Israeli General Election. We will be joined by Shelly Bar Meron MK (Member of the Knesset/Parliament) from our Israeli sister party, Yesh Atid. Chair, Gavin Stollar OBE. **Highcliff Marriott, Sandbanks Room**

Liberal Democrat European Group Challenging Illiberalism in Europe Speaker James McCleary MP with politicians from South East Europe. Populism and illiberalism is on the rise in many parts of Europe - come and hear how politicians in Europe are dealing with these challenges, coupled with the malign influence of foreign actors. **Highcliff Marriott, Sherborne Suite**

Conference

15.15 F27 For People, For Planet (Climate Change Policy Paper)

Fringe Sunday early evening 18.15–19.15

Tony Blair Institute for Global Change How do the Lib Dems prosper in an era of disruption? Voters everywhere are pessimistic and want radical change, what does this mean for the Lib Dems? Join TBI, and Daisy Cooper MP, to explore how the party can thrive amid global pessimism and disruption. **Bournemouth International Centre, Branksome Suite**

Fringe Sunday mid evening 19.45–21.00

Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine Rebuilding a Pathway to Peace On the panel: Husam Zomlot (Head of Palestinian Mission to the UK), Daniel Levy (President, U.S./Middle East Project & former Israeli government peace negotiator), Tayab Ali (Director, International Centre of Justice for Palestinians) and Ben Jamal (Director, Palestine Solidarity Campaign). **Bournemouth International Centre, Meyrick Suite**

Monday 22 September

Conference

14.10–14.40 F34 Policy Motion: Protecting the Rights of Hong Kongers

14.40 - F35 Speech: Calum Miller MP (Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs)

Conference

17.30–18.00 F40 Policy Motion: Certainty for Ukrainian Children Living in the UK

Monday 22 September

Fringe Monday morning 08.00–09.00

Conference

09.00–09.45 F31 Policy Motion: Making the EU–UK Reset Count

09.45– F32 Leading the Way (Policy Review Paper)

Fringe Monday mid-morning 11.30–12.30

Tony Blair Institute for Global Change Reimagining International Development With UK development policy at a crossroads, how should it evolve? Monica Harding MP, TBI's Sam Sharps and Sir Myles Wickstead explore how the Liberal Democrats can reshape development to reflect modern global challenges and UK statecraft. **Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 1**

Liberty, Greenpeace, Axe Drax Standing Up for the Planet: Protecting the Right to Environmental Protest Liberty and Greenpeace explore how anti-protest powers threaten environmental campaigners, protect corporate interests, and undermine the right to peaceful protest. Join a panel of MPs and campaigners to discuss why protest remains vital for defending communities, nature, and our future. www.greenpeace.org.uk www.instagram.com/greenpeaceuk **Bournemouth International Centre, Westbourne Suite**

His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar

Rebuilding our relations with the EU, developing our regional economies

INVITE ONLY - Fringe Seminar with Dr Joseph Garcia, Deputy Chief

Minister of Gibraltar; speakers TBC.

www.gibraltar.gov.gi

Highcliff Marriott, Dorchester South

Fringe Monday lunchtime 13.00–14.00

Best for Britain Defending International Liberal Democracy In this era of democratic backsliding and isolationism, how do we protect and promote international liberal democracy?" Join frontbench spokespersons James McCleary MP, Monica Harding MP and former diplomat Arthur Snell in a discussion led by Cary Mitchell, Executive Director at Best for Britain. www.bestforbritain.org <https://bsky.app/profile/bestforbritain.org> **Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 1**

Safe Routes Coalition Safe routes at risk: defending compassion for refugees As Labour further erodes safe routes to protection, vulnerable lives continue to be put at risk by the UK asylum system. Join us to discuss how we can bring forward a progressive alternative rooted in compassion, dignity, and practical action. **Bournemouth International Centre, Meyrick Suite**

His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar Reception (13.15–14.30) INVITE ONLY - Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia will host Gibraltar's annual reception, celebrating its valued relationship with the Liberal Democrats. HM Government of Gibraltar representatives will also be at the Gibraltar stand throughout the conference to welcome and engage with attendees. www.gibraltar.gov.gi **Highcliff Marriott, Bryanston Suite**

EU Delegation to the UK and Centre for European Reform How can the EU and UK build resilient and inclusive societies through cooperating on security, migration and growth? www.cer.eu <https://bsky.app/profile/centreeuropeanref.bsky.social> **Highcliff Marriott, Shaftesbury Suite**

Greenpeace, Hope Not Hate, Liberals and Democrats for Nature and Climate (LDNC) Our Common Ground: Building Local Power through Climate and Nature INVITE ONLY - As the far-right gains ground, their anti-climate politics threaten our future and the ecosystems we depend on. This private roundtable explores how connection to nature and climate are powerful tools in strengthening local communities against hate and division. www.greenpeace.org.uk www.instagram.com/greenpeaceuk **Highcliff Marriott, Yeovil Room**

Monday 22 September

Fringe Monday early evening 18.15–19.15

Port of Dover The Great British Trade Reception Join Port of Dover to explore the future of trade. Let's shape a smarter, greener trading future—removing barriers, driving digital progress, and championing global cooperation to position Britain as a leader in seamless and sustainable trade.

Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 2

European Movement The future of UK-EU Environmental and Energy cooperation How can the UK work with the European Union and its member states in order to secure a green, sustainable future and protect our environment for future generations? www.europeanmovement.co.uk www.x.com/euromove

Bournemouth International Centre, Branksome Suite

National Oceanography Centre and Marine Conservation Society How can the UK be a global leader in marine policy & protection? Panel discussion and Q&A on how the UK can be a global leader on ocean research, regeneration and protection. Speakers include Professor Alex Rogers, National Oceanography Centre, Roz Savage MP (Invited) Pippa Heylings MP (Invited), Gareth Cunningham, Marine Conservation Society. **Highcliff Marriott, Blandford Room**

EU Delegation to the UK (18.15–19.15) EU Reception with Ambassador Serrano INVITE ONLY - Reception hosted by H.E. Pedro Serrano, EU Ambassador. Confirmed speaker: James McCleary MP, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Europe. For information and to register, please email delegation-united-kingdom-RSVP@eeas.europa.eu **Highcliff Marriott, Dorchester North**

The ALDE Party International Reception (19.15–20.15)* INVITE ONLY - Supported by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). www.aldeparty.eu *continuation of joint reception starting at 18.15 **Highcliff Marriott, Dorchester North**

Fringe Monday mid-evening 19.45–21.00

Liberal Democrat Campaign for Racial Equality LDCRE Presents Black, Asian, Muslim. Can we win without them? No, we can't Josh Babarinde MP; Justice Spokesperson and LDCRE Honorary Vice President. Hina Bokhari (AM); Group Leader, Greater London Assembly. The Right Hon Sir Vince Cable; Former Lib Dem Leader and LDCRE Honorary Vice President. Alexandra Ankrah; LDCRE Special Advisor. Senior Policy NHS Confederation. Ann Marie Simpson; Chair, Lib Dem Friends of Palestine. **Bournemouth International Centre, Branksome Suite**

British Future How can liberals win the argument on immigration? Drawing on from findings from the most recent Immigration Attitudes Tracker with Ipsos, British Future and an expert panel will discuss what Lib Dems need to do to win the argument on immigration and asylum. We will also be joined by US Immigration expert Frank Sharpy who supported the Kamala Harris campaign on Immigration. www.britishfuture.org **Highcliff Marriott, Blandford Room**

Fringe Monday late evening 21.30–23.00

Glee Club (starting at 22.00–01.00) **Highcliff Marriott, Dorchester Suite**

Tuesday 23 September

Conference

09.00–10.00 F41 Emergency Motions and/or Topical issue discussions

10.45–11.15 F43 Policy Motion: Towards a Ceasefire and Political Resolution in Sudan

12.10–12.50 F47 Policy Motion: Defending Women's Rights Across the Globe

Fringe Tuesday lunchtime 13.00–14.00

Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom UK-EU Liberal Dialogue: Liberal Collaboration for Today's Global Challenges Join FNF Europe for a vibrant exchange on UK-EU collaboration perspectives, featuring German Liberals! We will dive into futuredefining topics that challenge the EU and UK equally: security, geopolitics, navigating relations with the US, and economic recovery. www.freiheit.org/european-union www.linkedin.com/company/fnf-europe **Bournemouth International Centre, Westbourne Suite**

Civil Liberties of Hong Kongers Living in the UK: Challenges Past and Ahead

Larry Ngan

LD conference motion F34 Monday September 22nd 14.10pm

Since January 31, 2021, approximately 250,000 Hong Kongers have migrated to the United Kingdom through the British National (Overseas) Visa scheme. It is an act of trust and attachment. Hong Kongers moved to the UK distrusting the Chinese Communist Party. They perceive comfort in their historic ties with Britain.

Though sometimes, life is not as rosy as imagined. Some quiet areas in the UK chosen by Hong Kongers for a quiet life are left behind economically. Not all Hong Kongers who desire freedom from the CCP are middle-class Hong Kongers. There is a risk of economic destitution. These compound the challenges over their UK right to abode and transnational repression.

This article will explore the Hong Kongers Diaspora communities in Hong Kong, and how our party can make policies to help them.

In terms of legal and political aspects, Hong Kongers in the United Kingdom faced 3 major challenges, namely 1. The uncertainty of the BN(O) Visa Scheme; 2. The lack of political engagement due to the National Security Law (NSL) in Hong Kong; 3. The presence of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the UK as transnational repression.

Administrative plans but the lack of political enthusiasm for the BN(O) Visa Scheme

The origins of the BN(O) scheme can be traced back to 1989. We can see that contingencies are well planned, but there is a lack of political will. Hong Kongers will worry that the lack of enthusiasm among the day's politicians will once again affect the security they can rely on.

Openly, the Margaret Thatcher government repeatedly denied the right to abode for Hong Kongers in the United Kingdom. Soon after the Tiananmen Square massacre in June 1989, Geoffrey Howe visited Hong Kong in July 1989 for 3 days in order to calm the financial market and public sentiment in the colony. During the visit, he made a speech to a group of community leaders by saying:

"There is simply no way that a British Government could grant to several million people the right to come and live in Britain.... It dismays me that some have suggested that this is a matter of race. It is nothing of the sort. It is a practical problem on an enormous scale."

Administratively, a contingency plan had been drafted by a secret Cabinet Office Committee (MISC140), which reported to British diplomat Leonard Appleyard, for worst-case scenarios. Under this plan, the British government set out a three-stage contingency alert system ("Green", "Amber" and "Red") over the potential risk of panic exodus from Hong Kong. Generally speaking, after 1997, the following situations would be flagged as "Red":

a. Internally generated panic ('In a deteriorating situation, (The "amber stage), ... this might be because of increasing Chinese interference; or because of a perception that the British and the rest of the international community were no longer willing or able to do much to help. In these circumstances, despair could turn to panic ("Amber" to "red), particularly if people lost confidence in the promise of freedom of movement in the Joint Declaration;

b. Panic provoked by China ('... the risk (And fear) of direct Chinese interference in Hong Kong's affairs would be substantially greater.... The draft Basic Law gives (HK authorities) the right to declare a state of emergency in the territory. Either development would be bound to affect local attitudes. Any China-provoked panic would be swifter and the devastating in its effect, thereby shortening the transition from green through to "amber" and "red".')

Under these scenarios, if such an evacuation plan is adopted, and London will further deliberate if Hong Kongers are to be granted refugee status.

The British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990 was also put forward to Westminster. The discussion was then shifted to how many people should be granted a UK right to abode, and how to deal with Hong Kong citizens who will not be given Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK. The 1990 Act granted 50,000 heads of family, which is roughly 225,000 Hong Kong citizens, full British Citizenship. Another 3.2 million, who were British Dependent Territory Citizens (BDTCs), will be granted the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status and BDTC will no longer exist post-handover. Although John Carroll argued the plan was Thatcher's attempt to appease international community and encouraged Hong Kong citizens to stay in the colony, the coincidence of the timing means that the BN(O) scheme and Tiananmen could be also a part of the contingency plan.

In the early 1990s, the political situation in China and Hong Kong had stabilised because of political interventions. These compromises pushed the question of the Rise of China down the road. And the problems associated with the Rise of China under the CCP will surface again in 2019 with the Anti-Extradition Protests in Hong Kong. Instead of accepting the protesters' demand of democratic reforms, which were promised to the people of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong government harshly suppressed the protest movements.

Later, HK authorities furthered the crackdown by adopting Chinese law into Hong Kong. The National Security Legislation ('NSL') paved the way for arresting legislators. Hence, the UK government announced the British National (Overseas) Visa (BN(O) Visa) Scheme on 31st January 2021, citing Beijing's flagrant breach of the Joint Declaration. Under this scheme, all BN(O) passport holders and their family members can apply for a BN(O) Visa. This will also place them onto a 5-year settlement route to British Citizenship.

However, soon after the Labour government took office and enacted tougher immigration policies, there was a lack of clarity on the BN(O) scheme. As Baroness Brinton reminded Parliament, "The BN(O) scheme is unique. It is neither an economic migration nor an asylum application." We believe that the BN(O) scheme represents both historical ties and the UK's answer to holding Beijing to account on the Rules-based International Order.

Labour's new migration policies included longer settlement timelines and a higher English-language threshold. However, we emphasize that the BN(O) migration route is unique and does not constitute mere migration but Britain's answer to stand firm against regimes that choose to break international treaties.

Labour's political ambiguity on the future of the BN(O) scheme unnerved Hong Kongers community in the United Kingdom because when this plan was announced, the duration of the BN(O) visa for those eligible to apply for British Citizenship increased from 5 years to 10. When Pippa Heylings MP questioned Labour Minister Seema Malhotra to clarify their positions:

Heylings: 'Will the Secretary of State clear up ... the further confusion around the proposed changes to the settlement period from 5 to 10 years? And confirm that the BN(O) visa holders living in my constituency, whether these changes will be applied retrospectively or only prospectively, and therefore confirm that (they) ... will not see their pathway to settlement unfairly changed mid-journey?'

Malhotra: 'I thank the hon. Member for her question and indeed the BN(O) route reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to the people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK by taking up BN(O) status and ... we will be having a consultation in which we will ensure that BN(O) visa holders will have the opportunity to share their views during that consultation.'

Although the Labour Minister repeatedly say they would commit to the BN(O) Visa Scheme and allow Hong Kongers to have a say during the consultation period, they did not provide a clear answer on whether the 5-years migration route will remain unchanged.

Backbencher Labour Florence Eshalomi MP noted that some people were considering leaving the UK because their settled status was in jeopardy.

Once again, lack of political enthusiasm had cast a shadow on Hong Kongers and caused doubt on Britain's willingness to lead on the global stage for the rules-based international order.

The lack of Engagement in politics among Hong Kongers community due to the Hong Kong National Security Law

Hong Kong's NSL was a piece of legislation passed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the legislative body in China. Hence, it was imposed upon the Hong Kong legislature by Beijing, which is at odds with the promise to provide a high autonomy to Hong Kong. We can see it as a piece of

legislation overshadowing China's transnational repression.

While Beijing and Hong Kong officials claimed it as a means of resolving the 2019 anti-extradition bill protests in Hong Kong, NSL is an effective tool to curtail freedom for Hong Kongers in HK and prohibit freedom for Hong Kongers anywhere. China's law and judges would be allowed in Hong Kong with long sentences under the rule by law. Any open speech, verbal promotion or intention of Hong Kong secession from China is considered a crime as well. It also granted the administration of this law enforcement to an office (National Security Bureau) outside of Hong Kong's jurisdiction.

Article 38: 'This Law shall apply to offences under this Law committed against the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from outside the Region by a person who is not a permanent resident of the Region.'

The implication of these articles are significant, because first, all NGOs promoted civil liberties could neither set up overseas branches in order to evade penalty, nor they could maintain any connection with organisations overseas (Such as Democratic Party and Civic Party could not maintain their connections with Liberal International); Second, anyone, Hong Kong residents or not, could be prosecuted when they posted anything promoting or encouraging civil liberty movement even if it happened outside Hong Kong. For example, a Hong Kong student was arrested at the Hong Kong airport in 2023 over online posts made from Japan; a Portuguese citizen was arrested for posting pro-independence and anti-China content on social media after returning to Hong Kong to visit family in 2022.

These articles had huge implications among the Hong Kongers community in the United Kingdom. Many will have relatives living in Hong Kong. The Chinese nationality law doesn't help either, because under the law, all individuals of *Chinese origin* who possess the right to abode in Hong Kong (which cannot be renounced) and were born in a Chinese territory are considered Chinese nationals, regardless of the nationalities of their parents. Meanwhile Chinese government had repeatedly denied the legality of the BN(O) passport from the beginning, and since 31st January 2021, the Chinese government and Hong Kong authorities would not recognise BN(O) as a Document of Identity for Visa Purposes. That meant that if BN(O) visa holders are constantly under China's threat of transnational repression.

Presence of CCP in the UK: China's lack of respect for British law and transnational repression within our borders

The Intelligence and Security Committee's ('ISC') report on China, prepared in 2023, highlighted that the remit of China's Intelligence Services ('ChiS') are far larger in the UK. More worryingly, CHiS practices extortion, assault and kidnappings, which are far greater remits compared with the intelligence operations of many other countries.

The role of the CHiS is the fundamental opposition to a new mega Chinese Embassy at the Old Royal Mint. It is a building bordering the City of London and Tower Hamlets. The reports of China's action against our parliamentary democracy and secret Chinese police operations are mentioned by the ISC investigation.

Non-governmental investigation further reported that the first Chinese overseas police station in the UK was set up in 2014, based in Hendon, Croydon and Glasgow. The official stated purpose of assisting overseas Chinese with routine paperwork and liaising with national law enforcement in the countries in which they reside. However, it was part of the United Front Work Department (UFW) and served as the base of political influence operations, apart from hotline services for overseas Chinese to report criminal offences.

The UK government launched an investigation after the news of the Chinese overseas police station was reported in Sept 2022. Then Minister of State for Security Tom Hugendhat criticised the Chinese government as follows:

'The Chinese authorities regularly criticise others for what they see as interference in their internal affairs. Yet, they felt able to open unattributed sites without consulting the UK Government. It is alleged that this was a pattern repeated around the world.'

Indeed, the lack of respect on respecting the British law of freedom of expression was not limited to this aspect. Since the 1990s, China has increasingly used transnational repression to arrest and intimidate overseas dissidents. According to Freedom House, the People's Republic of China was responsible for 253 of 854 physical incidents of transnational repression from 2014 to 2022, making it the most extensive practitioner of transnational repression. In a statement for the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China, Freedom House said that the estimate was conservative, "since these numbers do not include pressure put on the China-based relatives of targeted individuals, digital tactics like harassment and surveillance, or foiled attempts at physical violence".

A recent example was that the Chinese embassy in Prague sanctioned its diplomat to chase Taiwan's Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim car during her visit in the Czech Republic on 2024. Prague intelligence officials later confirmed the incident was part of a much larger and escalatory plan by Chinese diplomats and intelligence officers working out of the embassy in Prague, which included preparing to stage an apparent car collision.

Before the legislation of NSL, the Chinese government had already arrested dissidents from Hong Kong. The most notable case was Xiao Jianhua's arrest in 2017. He was staying in the Four Seasons Hotel in Hong Kong when he was abducted from his own room and taken to Mainland China. He and his company Tomorrow Holdings were convicted of crimes involving tens of billions of dollars, including illegally absorbing public deposits, betraying the use of entrusted property, illegal use of funds, and bribery by Chinese courts. "Economic crimes" are common labels used by Chinese courts in these instances, and most argued he was arrested because he had extensive connections with some powerful families within the Chinese political circle.

After NSL was passed in 2020, the transnational repression extended to Hong Kongers living in the United Kingdom through threats and harassment. For example, the Hong Kong authority issued bounties for information provided on the dissidents or to kidnap them to the Chinese embassy. Some pro-Beijing Hong Kongers, such as Innes Tang, established a network to report on pro-democracy activists within Hong Kong. It led to the political arrests of over 100 people. Tang openly planned to establish a similar network overseas. The most recent case was the arrest warrant issued against Carmen Lau, the pro-democracy activist who fled to the UK in 2021.

In October 2022, when there was a protest organised by Hong Kongers at the Manchester Chinese Embassy, Chinese diplomats dragged a protester into the embassy. With the incident at the Manchester Chinese Embassy, it is reasonable for residents in Tower Hamlets to worry about the proposed Chinese embassy at the Old Royal Mint. Further, we have every reason to believe that the mega embassy is to curtail freedom and liberty in our adopted home in the UK.

The Chinese Super-Embassy Complex: The potential threat to espionage, and personal safety of political campaigners

Some said that the development plan of the Chinese Embassy Complex was a quid pro quo between London and Beijing. Aosheng Pusztaszeri from CSIS explained,

'The United Kingdom's own embassy in Beijing is in urgent need of repairs, but China has frozen the requisite building permits until the United Kingdom greenlights its new embassy in London.'

Chinese authorities first submitted the development plan in 2022, but it was rejected by the Conservative government due to security concerns. China did not appeal the decision immediately till Labour took office in 2024. The uncertainty surrounding Britain's trade relationship with the United States under a second Trump administration may be prompting UK leaders to deepen economic ties with China. Notably, Starmer's decision to "call in" China's application preceded the UK finance minister's January visit to Beijing, during which she secured £600 million in Chinese investment commitments. Further, Foreign Secretary David Lammy and Home Secretary Yvette Cooper have also expressed support for the embassy plan and sent a favourable joint letter to the Planning Inspectorate, which recently concluded its independent inquiry and has issued a formal, non-public recommendation to Rayner on June 12.

The plan was met with strong opposition from local residents, experts in national security, and human rights activists for good reasons. Firstly, the site was very close to the financial district and directly on top of the fibre optic cables between the City of London and the financial district of Canary Wharf, which means the communication would be subject to tapping.

Indeed, this proposed complex was gigantic: The site would have 20,000 m², which made the complex the largest diplomatic mission in Europe. The proposed site will also have a large underground car park and a seven-story Embassy House featuring a rooftop structure, corridors between other buildings and large part of the basement with unclear purposes (Redacted area). China could also design parts of the building to optimize for intelligence collection, such as multi-storey buildings optimized for line-of-sight signals intelligence (SIGINT) collection. It could house additional floors, including sensitive communications and collection equipment.

CHiS apparatus and cases like the Chinese Overseas Police Force in London and Glasgow will be facilitated by the size of the diplomatic mission. The redacted area of this mega Chinese embassy complex could provide the Chinese overseas police and secret agents a legitimate base of operations with little oversight

oversight available to British authorities although entirely within the UK.

Such potential risk echoed a famous chapter in Chinese History: Back on 30th September 1896, the founding father of the Republic of China Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was famously kidnapped by the agents of the Qing Chinese government while Dr. Sun was visiting London for a fund-raising event. He was kept inside the Chinese Embassy in London. After his release, he published his account 'Kidnapped in London' and the incident became a famous chapter in the Chinese History textbook.

This famous story cast a long shadow among Hong Kongers since there was always a perception that the Chinese government would use the redacted area of the embassy complex to harass pro-democracy protestors, or worse, forcibly extradite them back to Hong Kong. Steve Tsang, a political scientist and historian who is director of SOAS China Institute, once said that even though such kidnapping did not happen since the establishment of PRC on 1949, some Chinese embassy staff would be tasked with monitoring Chinese students and dissidents in the UK, and they would also target UK citizens, and those with influence, to advance China's interests.

The Labour Government tried to create political ambiguity on the decision-making process, by entirely placing it on a planning portfolio, then Housing Minister and Deputy PM Angela Rayner:

'A planning application to develop the site and for listed building consent was made to the Council last year, and the Secretary of State took the decision that she would "call-in" the applications so that she, and not the Council, would be the ultimate decision maker.'

It was an act to provide political cover while attempting to remove administrative hurdles to the site becoming a Chinese embassy.

On 6th August 2025, after facing strong opposition, Rayner issued a statement by giving China 14 days to explain why Chinese building plans were redacted and 'why requests from Home Secretary Yvette Cooper and Foreign Secretary David Lammy had been ignored'. About 2 weeks after, Labour decided to delay the planning decision from 5th September to 21st October due to public pressure.

Unfortunately, the plan was only postponed. Without a clear objection putting the matter to rest, it is unclear Labour government intended to use the redacted area as an excuse to make a U-turn or just buying time. This will certainly remind us the terrible effects of the "buying time" when the Conservative Thatcher and Major ministries dealt with Beijing.

As mentioned before, the development plan of the Chinese Embassy Complex could be a quid pro quo between London and Beijing. The FCDO was supposed to award the contract in December 2025, and yet there is no news on any update on the application process. To most Hong Kongers diaspora group, it brought uncertainty to their civil liberties, since they were concerned about whether one day the Chinese government would take action against dissidents who ran away from this authoritarian regime.

We ask that on a matter of this grave concern to the UK's national security should be put to rest. The UK Government must lead today in challenging China's transnational repression and uphold the rules-based international order. European friends like Prague faced similar Chinese operations. We must stand together, as nation partners, and as partners with campaigners against China's transnational repression.

What can our party do to improve political will and empower the citizen?

The Liberal Democrats have a history of supporting Hong Kong since its establishment. Our former leader, Paddy Ashdown had been campaigning for BN(O) holders to be granted the right to abode, and our party remained the position ever since.

During the 2020 autumn conference, our party passed the policy motion titled 'F31: Hong Kong's Future'. The motion called for the UK government to take the following actions:

1. Expand their proposals so that all HongKongers are given the right of abode and a pathway to citizenship, regardless of whether or not they have BNO status; as well as to provide an international 'lifeboat' system if the situation in the region deteriorates.
2. Help ensure a truly transparent, independent investigation into the protests, including police violence in the region; and to call for the appointment of a UN Special Envoy or Rapporteur on Hong Kong.
3. Work with other countries, including the G7 and the EU, to encourage Beijing to retract the 'security law', which contravenes the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

1. Enact Magnitsky legislation and encourage mutual action from other countries to hold Hong Kong and Chinese officials responsible to account in the event of any gross breaches of human rights in Hong Kong.

2. Monitor the impact of the new security law on the rights and freedoms guaranteed the people of Hong Kong under the Joint Declaration and use its influence to persuade the Hong Kong government to hold legitimate Legislative Council elections as soon as possible.

The Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong and Lib Dem MPs ensures political enthusiasm on Hong Kong. For example, our Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Callum Miller tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) in 18th June 2025, (EDM 1507), expressing concern for democracy in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, Claire Young MP signed another EDM in 9th June 2025 on the topic of Hong Kong nationals in the UK. The Newcastle Lib Dems Group also passed a cross-party motion at the Local Government Association (LGA) Lib Dem Group meeting calling for "de-twinning" from China.

At the 2025 Party Conference, we have a motion 'Protecting the Rights of Hong Kongers' for debate. In this motion, we called for:

1. Block the application for the Chinese 'mega embassy' and take measures to ensure that there is the right to peacefully and safely protest outside the proposed construction site.

2. Establish a bespoke Police hotline for reporting incidents of political intimidation, and reaffirm the illegality of bounty hunting in the UK - sending a clear message that the UK will not tolerate CCP-sponsored attempts at extraterritorial repression.

3. Retain the 5-year pathway to settlement for all BNO visa holders, reflecting our unique and historic obligation to the people of Hong Kong and providing the certainty that HongKongers deserve.

4. Include all Chinese Communist Party and HKSAR officials, as well as Chinese Communist Party-linked organisations, on the 'enhanced tier' of the FIRS.

5. Implement targeted sanctions against those officials in the HKSAR and the Chinese Communist Party identified as responsible for raising bounties on the heads of pro-democracy Hong Kong and Chinese activists living in the UK.

6. Appoint a Home Office Departmental Tsar for the 'Protection of pro-democracy activists' - with responsibility for laying an annual report before Parliament outlining the Government's progress in strengthening protection for activists against foreign intimidation, and oversee the tackling of disinformation campaigns aimed at inciting violence against pro-democracy Hong Kong and Chinese activists.

The purpose of this motion is to reaffirm our commitment on Hong Kongers living in the United Kingdom and Hong Kong, and hold Labour accountable on their policy on China, especially over the controversy on the Chinese embassy complex plan.

More importantly, it highlights the value to lead in stopping transnational repression along with all pro-democracy campaigners, regardless of the home they are fighting for.

I urge all readers and friends to pass this motion.

And the next step for our affiliated organisation – the Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong is on coordinating with our sister parties in ALDE and Liberal International on how to tackle Chinese influence in domestic and foreign policies, and contributing to the process of policy formation through policy working groups and roundtable sessions.

The Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong is an Affiliated Organisation of the Liberal Democrats. We are run independently by our elected Executives. Learn more about our work at [@LibdemsHK](https://twitter.com/LibdemsHK)

Larry NGAN is an elected member of the Federal International Relations Committee. He has a Masters in History from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He specialises in Hong Kong identity and the operations of the Chinese Communist Party. His team currently focuses on China's misinformation campaign and multi-polarity expansionism.

Fringe Saturday Lunchtime 13.00–14.30

Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong: Have we been inadvertently supporting multi-polarity?

Let's return to building trusting networks. On the rise of China, Trump is a useful idiot. But while discussing strategic independence, have we been trapped in multi-polarity? We're neglecting trust and the Global South. Nicholas Chan with: Asry Kaloko – Indonesian academic, and John Hemmings - Geostrategy.

Bournemouth International Centre, Bayview Suite 1

1. According to the article published by the LGA, 'That the Home Office figure of 300,000 migrants from Hong Kong is an estimation for the next five years and that – with around 70 per cent of the population of Hong Kong being eligible for BN(O) status – that number may rise considerably', Local Government organisation, Liberal Democrats Group, 'Supporting Hong Kong arrivals to the UK', 2025.
2. A number of articles had been published on this topic, including the LGA article mentioned on note 1, and the one published by Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) on Jan 2025.
3. Barbara Basler, 'Hong Kong Hears Disquieting News', *New York Times*, 4th July 1989.
4. Correspondence from WD Reeves to Appleyard, 2nd August 1989, CAB164/2023/2, *British National Archives*. Indeed the minutes within the MISC140 also mentioned the Governor David Wilson could not be trusted after he sent petition to UK government asking for full citizenship to be conferred on the colony's residents.
5. Correspondence from Mr. Nicholas Bevan to Robin J T McLaren, dated 2nd February 1990, CAB164/2023/2, *British National Archives*
6. John Carroll, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2007, page 192.
7. 'Illegal Migration Bill: Lord Green of Deddington Excerpts at Committee stage', Hanzard, Wednesday 14th June 2023
8. Questions from Chris Curtis MP and Pippa Heylings MP, Oral Questions Session with Immigration Minister Seema Malhotra, House of Commons, 7th August 2025.
9. 'UK "committed" to BN(O) visa route but lack of details worries Hongkongers', *South China Morning Post*, 13th May 2025
10. 'English translation of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Administrative Region'. *Hong Kong Free Press*, 1st July 2020.
11. Koichiro Ishida, 'Hong Kong student arrested over online posts made from Japan', *Asahi Shimbun*, 21st April 2023
12. Frances Mao, 'First European citizen jailed under HK security law', *BBC*, 12th April 2024.
13. 'Standing Committee Interpretation Concerning Implementation of Chinese Nationality Law in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region', adopted May 15 1996, effective July 1, 1997.
14. John Carroll, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2007, page 192-193.
15. 'HKSAR Government follows up on China's countermeasure against British Government's handling issues related to British National (Overseas) passport', *Government of Hong Kong*, 29th January 2021.
16. *Patrol and Persuade: A follow-up investigation to 110 Overseas*, Safeguard Defenders. December 2022.
17. Matt Schrader, *Chinese Assistance Centers" Grow United Front Work Department Global Presence"*, *Jamestown Foundation*, 12 July 2019.
18. 'Update on Chinese 'Overseas Police Service Stations' - Statement made on 6 June 2023', *House of Parliament*, 6th June 2023.
19. Yana Gorokhovskaia, Nate Schenckan, and Grady Vaughan, 'Still Not Safe: Transnational Repression in 2022', *Freedom House*, 18th June 2023.
20. "CECC Statement: The Threat of Transnational Repression from China and the U.S. Response". *Freedom House*. 21 June 2022.
21. Helen Davidson, 'China 'planned car collision' during Taiwan vice-president's visit to Prague', *Guardian*, 28th June 2025.
22. Nectar Gan, 'Chinese-Canadian tycoon Xiao Jianhua sentenced to 13 years in prison', *CNN*, August 19 2022.
23. Bridget Wing & Georgina Lam, 'Hong Kong pro-China informer: 'Why I've reported dozens of people to police'', *BBC News*, 9th May 2025.
24. Damian Grammaticas, 'Hackers, secret cables and security fears: The explosive fight over China's new embassy in the UK', *BBC News*, 4th August 2025.
25. Lok Lee and Elsa Maishman, 'Hong Kong protester dragged into Manchester Chinese consulate grounds and beaten up', *BBC News*, 17th October 2022.
26. Aosheng Pusztaszeri, 'Is China's New London "Super Embassy" a Risk to National Security?', *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 13th June 2025
27. Aosheng Pusztaszeri, 'Is China's New London "Super Embassy" a Risk to National Security?', *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 13th June 2025
28. Aosheng Pusztaszeri, 'Is China's New London "Super Embassy" a Risk to National Security?', *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 13th June 2025
29. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, *Kidnapped in London*, 2016.
30. Damien Grammaticas, 'Hackers, Secret Cables and Security Fears: the explosive fight over China's new embassy in the UK', *BBC News*, 4th August 2025.
31. 'Council Statement on the planning application for the Chinese Embassy at the Royal Mint Court', *Tower Hamlet Council*, 7th February 2025.
32. Sammy Gecsoyler, 'Ministers delay planning decision on Chinese 'super-embassy' in London', *Guardian*, 23rd August 2025
33. Kris Cheng, 'Give Hong Kong's BN(O) passport holders right of abode in the UK if situation worsens, says Lord Ashdown', *Hong Kong Free Press*, 29th November 2017.

International Abstracts

Journal of Liberal History Issue 127 Summer 2025

Malcolm Baines has brought together a series of articles on the Survival of the Liberal Party 1931-60, writing himself on Archie Sinclair, perhaps the most interesting leader internationally, Violet Bonham Carter, Megan Lloyd George and Clement Davies. Andrew Loader writes on Herbert Samuel and on the reorganisation over the party under Lord Meston; Garry Tregidga on Cornwall and Mark Egan on the wider geography of survival. David Dutton revisits the Liberal Nationals and their interaction with the party. Stuart Jones writes on William Beveridge and Ernest Simon, particularly in the context of social policy. William Wallace writes on New Liberals and Old in the Revival of 1957-66.

Liberator 430

Martha Elliott continues her analysis of the Trump administration, otherwise content is primarily domestic. There is focus on the local elections in Kent and Oxfordshire, with further suggestions from John Shreeve as to how to meet the challenge of Reform UK and Julian Ingram on wider voter loyalty. Sabah Hamed looks at Labour's local government reorganisation. Ruth Bright & Matthew Hulbert look at problems in social care and Sophie Layton reviews Ed Davey's book on life beyond that. Radical Bulletin updates us on Philip Goldenberg's brush with the Jewish Board of Deputies After his criticism of Netanyahu (*interLib* 2025-04). Liberator is free, online at www.libderatormagazine.org.uk

Liberator 431

The conference Liberator is almost entirely domestic. The exception is George Cunningham's Starmer *Should Get Real About Defence*, noting the unreliability of America and Russia's aggression. There are pitches from the three Presidential candidates.

Timothy Garten Ash - EUROPE

The fight for Europe's future, by Timothy Garten Ash. Financial Times 28th-29th June 2025

A useful update to the 2024 Isaiah Berlin Lecture. (interLib 2024-02 pages 4-11)

<https://www.ft.com/content/79d87872-67c7-4e51-8778-93a56a367bcd>

Israel

The battle for the soul of Israel, by Fania Oz Salzberger. Financial Times 30-31st August 2025

The LI Wrap/The Liberal Dispatch, August 2025

The latest edition of *The Liberal Dispatch* brings together voices from across the liberal international family confronting today's defining political struggles. **Taiwan's Vice President and former LI Vice President Bi-khim Hsiao** reflects on her journey as a "cat warrior" diplomat, navigating the constraints of Taiwan's international position while championing democratic resilience against authoritarian threats. Her experience underscores the enduring relevance of soft power and the universal aspiration for freedom in an increasingly volatile Indo-Pacific order.

From Lebanon to Venezuela, the fight for liberal values takes on urgent and often perilous dimensions. **Ahmad El Hariri** calls for breaking the paralysis of sectarian politics in Lebanon through constitutional reform, judicial independence, and the empowerment of youth and women. Meanwhile, **Pedro Urruchurtu** testifies to Venezuelans' remarkable resilience in the face of state terrorism, documenting both the brutality of the regime and the strategic breakthroughs of an organised democratic opposition determined to achieve freedom and justice.

Contributions from **Carlos Ernesto González Ramírez** and **Yoko Alender** highlight that in the face of today's global challenges liberals and liberalism are not retreating but adapting. González urges democracies to use trade as a tool of resilience against economic coercion, reforming international rules to defend open markets and shared values. While Alender argues that liberals must reclaim leadership on climate action, grounding policy in honesty, science, and a clear values-based mission.



LIBG Forum



"The Arctic & European Security"

Fierce competition for minerals, military bases and commercial maritime routes have accelerated the strategic importance of the Arctic. Environmental challenges are simmering in the background while major players are looking elsewhere.

Superpower ambitions are potentially shaking up the future of Canada and Greenland. Russia and China have found a new partnership. Both are keen to get economic and military advantages.

What does it all mean for western European security and to the UK?

We are delighted to invite you to a panel discussion exploring the recent developments and the future of the Arctic region.

Our panel:

Astrid Thors, a lawyer, a Finnish politician, former MP and member of European Parliament, the former Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities (2013-2016), former minister of Migration and European Affairs in Finland. Deputy President of Liberal International.

Henrik Bach Mortensen, former Chairman of the Danish Institute of Parties and Democracy (DIPD). Vice President in ALDE (2016-2023). VP Liberal International

Adrian Hyrylainen-Trett, chairing the meeting, Deputy Chairman LIBG

Monday 6th October, 7.00pm – 8.00pm by Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

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