



2026-01 February

# INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



**ICE in Minneapolis**

**Zoran Mandani**

**LI ExCom**

# EVENTS

9<sup>th</sup> February LIBG Forum: Türkiye – see page 3

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> March Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru/  
Welsh Liberal Democrats Spring Conference,  
Leonardo Hotel, Cardiff, CF10 1UD

13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> March Liberal Democrats Spring  
Conference, York.

September Liberal Democrats Autumn  
Conference, Brighton

*For bookings & other information please  
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Hyrylainen-Trett, Stewart Rayment, Jessica  
Tee.

Cover photograph: Liberal International  
Excom, The Hague – Netherlands

## Lord Campbell of Pittenweem

A Memorial Service will take place at 2.30pm  
on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February. It will be held at St.  
John's Episcopal Church, Princes Street,  
Edinburgh, EH2 4BJ.

Following the service, there will be a  
reception at the Caledonian Hotel.  
All are welcome and there is no need to  
register your attendance in advance.



## TURKEY

**9 February at 6.30 pm**

A key country between Europe and Asia, Turkey has been ruled by Recep Tayyip Erdogan for more than 20 years.

Domestically, despite the 2022 agreement with the PKK, the situation remains complex with the Kurds and, more generally, with ethnic and religious minorities, and the rule of law is increasingly under threat, as judges and journalists observe on a daily basis.

In its traditional sphere of influence in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, Turkey is developing a suspicious imperialism, the latest developments of which in Syria are more than worrying.

Finally, as NATO's second largest army after the United States, Turkey wishes to develop an ambitious diplomatic role on the world stage, which often requires it to overcome numerous contradictions.

On 9 February at 6.30 pm, LIBG will host a webinar on this country, which is essential not only for international security and for the respect of human rights but also for its ability to truly embody a bridge between East and West.

The panellists will be:

Baroness Meral HUSSEIN-ECE, member of the Lords Bülent KENES, Turkish journalist, Executive Director of the European Centre for Populism Studies Graham WATSON, Chair of LIBG, professor at Toronto University

The debate will be moderated by Antoine GODBERT, member of the board of LIBG, professor of geopolitics at ESCP Business School

This meeting is now live on the LIBG website and the party's Eventcube listing

**Please use the Zoom link below to join the meeting.**

Meeting ID 837 0883 1140

Passcode 887816

Invite LINK

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83708831140?pwd=zTUXAxTmVz3bK15mzlvRtRXKaXJJsI7.1>

# Watson's World View

## Sir Graham Watson

For forty years, until the Brexit referendum of 2016, UK foreign policy rested mainly on three pillars: membership of the EU and NATO and the "Special Relationship" Britain believed it had with the USA. One pillar fell with our exit from Europe. We thought the remaining architecture of our foreign policy was on the firmest possible foundations. We were surely safe in the world because of NATO and the bonds that held Britain and America in the Atlantic Alliance.

The realpolitik is that the United States under Donald Trump is no longer the granite-hard, reliable friend it was only a year ago.

The USA is now determined to have the Western Hemisphere as its primary sphere of influence. That includes Western Europe. The collectivism, co-operation and consensus that characterised America's relationships with its allies has been replaced with a rigidly America-first approach. It is ideological imperialism carrying a big stick.



America seeks fundamentally to change Western defence policy. No longer will America be our dependable friend, whatever the political weather. In its new National Security Strategy published in November, the Trump administration says: "The United States will chart our own course in the world and determine our own destiny, free of outside interference."

The document proposes changes to the way NATO works. Rather than the US being first among equals, President Trump asks allies "to assume primary responsibility for their regions." True, the strategy adds "the United States stands ready to help." But that is tied to allies doing commercial deals which defer to the US, buying US oil and aligning their export controls with those of America."

The defence of the West is to change from NATO being a mutually supportive military alliance committed to defending democracy to becoming a military industrial marketplace in which America makes the rules.

The implications of this are many and potentially grave. NATO, led by the US, has provided the West with its nuclear shield. Can we depend now on America in the event of nuclear conflict? Can we be sure the US will continue to supply us with the weapons technology and software for the UK's Trident missiles? Will the deployment of our military in future need approval from the USA?

Trump's strategy document goes on to attack contemporary Europe, including the EU and the UK. It says:

"The larger issues facing Europe include activities of the European Union and other transnational bodies that undermine political liberty and sovereignty, migration policies that are transforming the continent and creating strife, censorship of free speech and suppression of political opposition, cratering birthrates, and loss of national identities and self-confidence."

This is not only a staggering distortion of the truth; it also reeks of racial superiority. It's a call too for unfettered capitalism, where the producer holds all the cards and the consumer and the worker are simply components in the system. It is a recipe for political and social alienation that most assuredly would lead to unrest, civil strife and perhaps war between nations.

Though many American disagree with his policies we should not assume that when Trump leaves the political stage his country will revert to behaving as it once did. That would be both naïve and potentially dangerous for the UK and Europe. Future administrations will have to manage an America in which

Trump has uncorked raw populist nationalism in the way that Nigel Farage, Marine Le Pen and Georgia Meloni seek to do in Europe. That will not easily go away.

Donald Trump is already applying his foreign policy. We have seen it in Venezuela and in his threats to Greenland. Cuba may be next and he has made no secret of his designs on Canada and Panama.

Moreover, Trump's tantrum tariffs on European countries showing solidarity with Greenland - albeit subsequently retracted - underline the difficulty in dealing with a man already dubbed 'the toddler in chief'. There is now no predictability and little consistency in our dealings with Washington DC.

The UK and Europe find it hard to understand the consequences of the new world Trump is creating. Raw use of American power may render the sovereignty of the UK and EU states fundamentally meaningless. So the UK must decide what it wants the future to look like. It has three obvious options. Accept American authority over the UK; try to make its post-Brexit isolation work, a policy that has so far failed; or commit to Europe and the EU economically, militarily and politically.

***Sir Graham Watson***

*An earlier version was first published in The Scotsman on 19<sup>th</sup> January as a joint article with Martin Roche of the European Movement in Scotland.*

## **Greenland decides for itself!**

The Bureau of Liberal International strongly condemns the flow of threats from the President of the United States and members of his administration against the Kingdom of Denmark and the autonomous region of Greenland.

The American President has claimed that the United States must control Greenland for reasons of American national security. He and members of his administration have mentioned various means of gaining control, ranging from a purchase to outright military aggression.

The Bureau of Liberal International strongly supports the position of the Governments of Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark that only the people of Greenland can decide the future status of Greenland.

Any American aggression against Greenland would violate international law. Such aggression would also be thoroughly absurd, as Greenland, the rest of the Kingdom of Denmark, and the United States are all members of NATO.

The Bureau of Liberal International notes that the United States has signed declarations in which it guarantees that it will not challenge Greenland's status as part of the Kingdom of Denmark. The Bureau further notes that Denmark and Greenland have concluded agreements with the United States that effectively allow the establishment of any defence installations the United States may wish to build in Greenland, as well as the conduct of any security activities it may wish to pursue.

Liberal International stands for a world order based on the rule of law and respect for national integrity and sovereignty. This commitment includes respect for the right of the people of Greenland to determine their future, as established within the legal framework of the Kingdom of Denmark.

08/01/2026

# Is Zoran Mamdani Burning Down the Democratic Party House?

## Rebecca Tinsley

“Trump and his Republican puppets call us communist terrorists whatever we do, so we might as well choose the guy who inspires young people and the working class.” So says a stalwart of Democrats Abroad in London. She shrugs off the suggestion that New York’s new mayor, Zoran Mamdani, will frighten moderate voters.

But New York City is not America, so the triumphs in Virginia and New Jersey were more significant, although they attracted fewer eyeballs beyond the USA. Equally important were the defeat of Republicans’ gerrymandering propositions.

Democrats boasted that Trump Talk was on trial nationwide. Their complacency is worrying, and part of a fatal pattern: they previously assumed that popular anger at Republican anti-choice policies would persist. The result was losing the House of Representatives and Kamala Harris’s failed presidential run.

### Six Days of Party Unity

The chasm within the Democratic Party reappeared less than a week after Mamdani was elected: eight Democrats in Congress joined Republicans in ending the government shutdown. Progressive Democrats are furious, wanting Trump to “own this hot mess.” Those who cling to a sentimental yearning for bipartisanship (seen as weakness by the Republicans) were Dick Durbin of Illinois, 80; Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, 78; Angus King of Maine, 81; Jacky Rosen of Nevada, 68; both Tim Kaine of Virginia and Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire, 67. Cathy Cortez Masto, Nevada, 61 - concerned Vegas is hit by cancelled flights - and increasingly Trumpy John Fetterman of Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, Senator Chuck Schumer’s recent recruits to leadership are Janet Mills, 77, in Maine; Sherrod Brown, 73, in Ohio; and Roy Cooper, 68, in North Carolina.

### Democrats: where’s the love?

Exit polls found that although people voted to defeat Republican candidates and propositions, the Democrats are not popular. Mamdani is far from corporate-aligned establishment figures like Schumer, Pelosi, Jeffries, and H. Clinton. Instead of Hillary’s twenty-point-policy-papers, Mamdani borrowed from Trump’s playbook: choose two or three grievances, use simple language, and offer simplistic solutions.

The thirty-four-year-old Mamdani achieved recognition by posting short videos walking the city, interviewing residents about their concerns. Meanwhile, no one knew the policies of his main challenger, former governor Andrew Cuomo. His corporate backers threw \$40 million at the race, funding ads linking Mamdani to 9/11. Yet, Mamdani spent less than \$10m, and had 90,000 volunteers.

Instead of cosying up to Wall Street, Mamdani proposed free bus travel, public child-care, LGBTQ rights, subsidised food stores in deprived areas, and rent freezes on stabilised housing. Endorsed by the Democratic Socialists of America, he supported increases in corporation taxes and on people earning more than \$1 million a year. (He didn’t poll well on the Upper East Side of Manhattan). In America this amounts to Marxism.

Although Mamdani comes across as a down to earth, he did not emerge from the mean streets of Queens. His mother is the award-winning filmmaker Mira Nair, and his father Mahmood is a professor at Columbia University. He was born in Uganda and he is married to the distinguished artist, Rama Duwaji (whose work appears at Tate Modern).

### Rotten Apple

Someone needs to do something about New York City. Covid-19 reduced its tax base as companies moved to low tax places like Nashville, or went virtual. Restaurants, cafes and stores closed for good. Commuters who have used the subway all their lives now avoid it because of the vulnerable people with mental health issues who seek shelter there. With uncollected garbage piled on the sidewalks, and the whiff of dope in the air, it resembles *Blade Runner* more than *On the Town* these days.

Yet, for Mamdani to achieve his aims, he needs the cooperation of the state governor, Kathy Hochul, who refused to endorse him. The post of mayor comes with more megaphone than power.

## Where Now?

Mamdani's humiliation of the gerontocratic Democratic National Committee (DNC) vexes the establishment. He exposes their timidity and impotence in the face of Trump's all-day-every-day assaults on the constitution. Most anti-Trump action has been at local level, through non-DNC organisations like Indivisible and the No Kings protest which brought seven million people onto the streets across the country.

Yet, progressive activists should also take note: Mamdani brought the Party back to class issues, not the woke warrior race and gender themes. According to a Democratic activist in Missouri, "Mamdani didn't win because of Socialism, he won because too many voters think the rest of the Democratic Party no longer stands for them."

Grassroots love for Mamdani is not universal. His position on Gaza worries many Jewish Democrats who roll their eyes at the mention of Mamdani; others are fearful of what they perceive as growing American anti-Semitism. It would be more accurate to say it is a return to anti-Semitism which was widespread until the 1970s. The "restricted clientele" signs on hotels all over America applied to Jews as well as African Americans.

If Mamdani's term in office is seen as successful, it may pave the way for a presidential candidate like the tough-talking J B Pritzker, the governor of Illinois, who looks reassuringly like a sanitation worker (although he's a billionaire), unlike the other front runner, Gavin Newsom, who has the aura of a movie star. However, your correspondent elicited laughter from a battle-worn Colorado Democrat when Pritzker's name was mentioned: "America isn't ready for a Jewish president, any more than voters will accept a woman."

## Beyond the Big Apple

Across the USA, Republicans were also road-testing Trump Talk in these elections, while avoiding mentioning the current occupant of the White House. They threw everything at restricting the ability of voters to cast ballots. In Maine, they proposed reducing early voting by two days, requiring photo ID, banning pre-paid return envelopes and limiting ballot drop boxes, (probably in districts with Black and other ethnic groups). In effect, Maine Republicans were asking if voters believe Trump's claims of election fraud. The measures were defeated with 64% saying "nope".

Local posts known as "down ballot" are also important, although the Democrats have overlooked them until recently. Those elected to school boards can ban books by ethnic minorities and women, fire gay teachers, and demand the teaching of creationist theories – and they do this, all over America. A Democrat in Virginia, known to your correspondent, was in a vicious and expensive battle for her daughter's school board. She had to pay for TV advertising, and received threats to her safety. In the end she was defeated because she was pro-choice.

The New Jersey governor race tested Trump Talk, but not Trump. The Republican, Jack Ciattarelli, didn't mention the president but he aligned himself with anti-vaccine groups. The Democrat, Representative Mikie Sherrill, successfully campaigned on the cost of energy, pointing the finger at Trump. She got 56% of the vote to Ciattarelli's 43% on a high turnout. Significantly, the heavily Hispanic Passaic County which went for Trump by three points last year switched to Sherrill, who won by 15 points.

In the Washington DC suburbs of Virginia, there are thousands of federal employees, an endangered species, terrorised by Musk acolytes. Democrat Abigail Spanberger campaigned on the cost of living, getting 56% of the vote to the Republican's 42%. (Less discussed is that the Republican, Winsome Earle-Sears, is Black, and although she's MAGA, MAGA won't vote for a Black woman). In 2024, Trump won among non-college educated Virginians by 19 points: now, the Democrats are level pegging in this demographic.

In California, Gavin Newsom's ballot initiative creating five new Democrat districts was passed with 64%, defying the Republicans' campaign of gerrymandering in twenty states (and counting). Newsom has raised \$114 million in the past three months, \$38m of which comes from small donors in response to his emails, texts and mocking social media presence. Is Newsom too Hollywood? Democrats have an abysmal record (Mondale, Dukakis, John Kerry, Hillary, Kamala Harris) in second guessing what "the people we fly over" want in a president.

## Republican unrest or obedience?

The Republicans in Congress fear Trump will primary them. But after lobbying from Big Farming, they voted against importing Argentine beef (Trump's gift to soul mate Javier Milei). Consumers, who buy 7

80% of their Christmas toys from China, may get a shock on their next trip to Toys“R”Us, thanks to tariffs. Hence pressure from corporate donors might also outweigh fear of Trump if he is perceived as losing his vote-winning appeal.

However, cases before the Supreme Court should concern Democrats because of their impact on the US constitution. In recent judgments, the Supremes have allowed the president to expand his power, draining authority from Congress and the court itself. He threatens to remove federal spending from places where people are rude about him, declaring comedians who mock him “illegal”. His NSPM-7 executive order instructs the FBI to investigate grassroots activism as “domestic terrorism.” He stopped Human Rights Watch submitting evidence gathered in Gaza to the ICC; and a top ICE official says protesters can be arrested for verbally criticising Trump’s mass deportation campaign. None of this is legal, but there hasn’t been a peep of dissent from Republicans, and not much noise from the status quo Democrats.

### **We’re all going to jail after 2028**

Trump needs to keep the House, Senate and Supreme Court to achieve his goals, and MAGA is ready to exploit Democrat post-Mid-Term hubris. As Steve Bannon declared after the vote, Republicans must seize the institutions of government or “we’re all going to jail after 2028.” Voter suppression will now move into high gear, with ICE agents at polling places in 2026 and 2028, frightening minority voters. The Supremes may tell states they no longer need to consider minorities when redistricting, and Trump may declare a state of emergency in the Democrat-leaning places he claims are fixing the vote. The Civil War has never ended, as a friend in Chicago remarked to your correspondent.

And never underestimate Trump’s skill at tapping into dissatisfaction and grievance, even if he doesn’t fix things: his voters don’t expect him to.

A final thought: if Mamdani remains popular and is reasonably successful in New York, Republicans will have to explain to voters why democratic socialism is a terrible idea for the rest of America.

### ***Rebecca Tinsley***

*Rebecca Tinsley is director of Waging Peace and lives in America for half of the year; she spoke on American affairs at the LIBG fringe meeting in Bournemouth.*

## **Transatlantic Legislators’ Liberty Dialogue**

The inaugural Transatlantic Legislators’ Liberty Dialogue brought together liberal parliamentarians from Europe and Canada to advance cooperation on defending democracy, protecting liberal values, and strengthening rules-based internationalism at a time of significant geopolitical strain.

Twenty legislators – ten from Europe and ten from Canada – met (under the Chatham House Rule) to exchange perspectives, build new working relationships, and shape a sustained political network across the Atlantic. The Dialogue aims to support continuous engagement between liberal lawmakers through structured tables and bilateral connections.

The dialogue was co-sponsored by Liberal International and its Canadian Group, with support from Renew Europe in the European Parliament and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). It was co-convened by Sir Graham Watson, former Leader of ALDE in the European Parliament and Chair of Liberal International British Group, and the Honourable Art Eggleton, former Canadian cabinet minister and senator, Vice-President of Liberal International, and head of its Canadian Group. The Transatlantic Legislators’ Liberty Dialogue was held at the University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs, November 13-15, 2025.

Three keynote speakers – Paul Glasstris, Editor-in-Chief of *Washington Monthly* and former speechwriter for President Clinton; Michael Link, former Minister for Europe in the German Government; and Chrystia Freeland, former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and currently Canada’s Special Representative for the Reconstruction of Ukraine – brought a wealth of insight to participants at the Dialogue Table.

Working sessions centred on five key themes:

- current challenges to liberal democracy;
- defence and the future of NATO;
- communicating climate urgency;
- global trading rules versus industrial autonomy; and
- rebuilding transatlantic trust.



We need your help! Please take a moment to **nominate Network for Africa** for a **Benefact Group grant**. The more nominations we receive, the greater our chances of being awarded vital funding to continue our work supporting people living with mental health challenges in post-conflict communities.



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- **Charity number:** 1120932
- **Category:** Health

Your nomination could help us secure **£1,000**, which can make a real difference:

- **£7 / \$9** – could fund one mental health clinic, giving people access to support, diagnosis, medication and counselling.
- **£34 / \$44** – could train a community member to recognise and respond to the signs of mental illness, helping others find treatment.
- **£50 / \$65** – could provide livelihoods for two people with mental health issues, helping them earn an income, save regularly, and build a secure future.

Every nomination counts. Together, we can help more people recover, rebuild, and thrive. Thank you for your support!

Participants welcomed the strengthening of EU-Canada cooperation as both sides diversify partnerships beyond reliance on the United States and China. They noted progress since the June 2025 EU-Canada Summit, driven by the leadership of Foreign Minister Anita Anand and the European External Action Service under Kaja Kallas, including closer coordination in defence, climate policy, digital regulation, justice and crime prevention.

As part of the programme, the European delegation joined the Ontario Liberal Party Convention, where they were welcomed by nearly a thousand delegates and met Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anita Anand, and Minister of Industry, Mélanie Joly.

Participants agreed that this pioneering Dialogue represents a major step toward building a permanent platform for liberal legislators across the transatlantic space and expressed strong support for continuing and expanding the model.

**Sir Graham Watson**  
Co-Convenor

**Hon. Art Eggleton**  
Co-Convenor

## LI bureau statement on Venezuela

The bureau of liberal international is in close contact with the leadership of our member party, Vente Venezuela, in light of the military strikes against the regime of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela last night.

For over two decades the Maduro regime, and the Chávez regime before it, presided over crimes against the Venezuelan people about which LI and our allies have long protested and drawn attention through our own campaigns or at international bodies ranging from the United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, to the European Parliament.

Our immediate concern today is with the implications for the respect for international law and the safety, security, freedom and sovereignty of the people of Venezuela.

As a bureau representing liberals worldwide, and while more information becomes available, we will continue to offer our support to Vente and to those working towards Venezuela's liberal-democratic future.

03/01/2026

# ICE in Minnesota

## Christine Graf

Donald J. Trump thinks he deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. But he has declared war - on Minnesota.

Why us? Why the sudden influx, the invasion of Minnesota cities by a swarm of masked, trigger-happy federal ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents, and why now?

Trump's original rationale for this action was investigation into fraud - a case of fraud involving a small group of Somalis was already being prosecuted - and his constant insistence on deporting illegal immigrants, although there are relatively few in Minnesota.

His real reasons go deeper. Jonathan Karl, Washington correspondent for ABC News, named his newest book on Trump "Retribution," and that's what this ICE invasion feels like. Minnesota is a "blue" or Democratic-leaning state in a sea of Republican or "red" states: a majority of Minnesotans voted against Trump 3 times, in 2016, 2020, and 2024. Now we're being punished for it. Certain other states have more illegal immigrants, but they are "red", or Republican-leaning states, and closer to the southern border.

Donald Trump never forgets a slight, real or imagined. During the last presidential campaign, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, campaigning with Kamala Harris, described his opponents, Trump and Vance, as "weird." Since then he's charged that the president is "a weak, cruel man" and a "wannabe dictator." Events since the election have suggested that he was not wrong.

ICE agents, some 3,000 or more, have swarmed into the Twin Cities, outnumbering the local police by a ratio of about 5 to 1. They are masked and violent, breaking people's car windows and hauling them out without a warrant. Sometimes they demand identification from people, many of whom have a right to be here, sometimes they refuse to look at proof of citizenship and take people in anyway. They hurl tear gas canisters and use pepper spray on protesters, often without provocation.

Even right-wing influencer Joe Rogan has condemned the "Gestapo tactics" against people suspected of being immigrants and the mostly white majority who are trying to alert and protect their neighbours. The majority have been blowing on whistles and sounding car horns to sound the alert that ICE agents are in the area. Demonstrators against ICE report that peaceful protests are met by violence. A 70-year-old Minneapolis resident described being part of a group quietly assembling near the Whipple building, where detainees have been housed. First ICE agents charged at the demonstrators as if they were going to attack them. Then a tear gas canister hurled by ICE agents knocked him down: "I thought I was going to die," he recalled. What he got for peacefully demonstrating was a dislocated shoulder.

### **The Death of Renee Nicole Good**

On Jan. 7th, one of these protestors, Renee Good, a mother of three, was shot three times by Jonathan Ross, an ICE officer, while sitting in her car. She'd just told him "I'm not mad at you" and turned her wheel, starting to drive out of the way. Some say she'd received conflicting instructions, one ICE agent demanding that she get out of her car, another ordering her to stop blocking traffic.

Within hours Trump, JD Vance, and Home Secretary Kristi Noem had condemned Good, labeling her a left-wing terrorist. "At a very minimum, that woman was very, very disrespectful to law enforcement," President Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday evening. The lesson: don't be rude to ICE, or you may never talk to anybody again. Demonstrations against ICE only intensified after the killing of Renee Good.

The agent who shot her, Jonathan Ross, was not following the Department of Justice's own rules on the use of deadly force:

Law enforcement and correctional officers of the Department of Justice may use deadly force only when necessary, that is, when the officer has a reasonable belief that the subject of such force poses an imminent danger of death or serious physical injury to the officer or to another person. Deadly force may not be used solely to prevent the escape of a fleeing suspect. Firearms may not be discharged solely to disable moving vehicles.

To put this into context, Maryland Congressman Jamie Raskin recalled what Trump did when he got into office for the second time: “Trump . . . pardoned nearly 1,600 insurrectionists,” he said, “hundreds of whom violently attacked police officers and called them everything from traitors to pigs to racial epithets and ruthlessly taunted them and maligned them for hours.” He added: “Donald Trump’s very dubious characterisation of Renee Good as having been disrespectful is not only factually suspect, but it’s legally irrelevant - the police do not have the right to shoot people in the head because they consider them having acted in a disrespectful way,” Mr. Raskin said. “That legal standard would have led to a slaughter on Jan. 6.”

The brutality is not exceptional. According to “Democracy Now”, an independent daily news program, Nasra Ahmed, 23, an American citizen, was driving to pick up her medication when she was accosted by ICE agents, who demanded to see her ID. She showed it, but that didn’t stop them from calling her a racial slur, slamming her to the ground face-first, and then tossing her in the back of their car. “They used a lot of force to arrest me,” she said. “They pinned me. I have a bruise on my head. I’ve been having head pain since that incident. My whole body is aching. . . . I was crying. I was screaming.”

Nasra was taken to the current gulag at Fort Snelling, where she said she shared a detention cell with a Native American woman who had suffered gashes to her legs. Two days later, after a seizure necessitated a stay in hospital, during which she was chained up, she was released.

### **Fighting ICE**

Resistance to ICE has come from local churches, with priests and pastors out demonstrating in Minneapolis shortly after the shooting of Renee Good.

I live in an historic district, close where Scott Fitzgerald lived when he wrote his first book. At a supermarket not far away, the young white cashier corrected me when I said “At least they’re not around here,” saying that ICE agents had been all over a local Laotian restaurant. He didn’t know if anybody had been arrested but said he didn’t think he’d ever have to live in a country where federal agents could demand identification and arrest a person who didn’t produce it. For the first time in his life, he’s been thinking of emigrating.

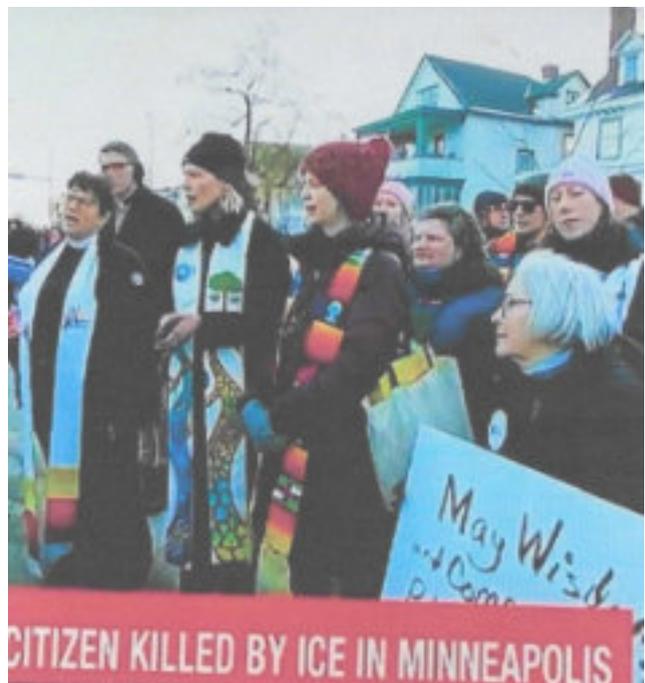
The violence we’re seeing from ICE agents was criticised by Minneapolis Chief of Police Brian O’Hara. Recruited from New Jersey, O’Hara described normal police procedures in an interview with the *New York Times*:

“What is our policy, what is our training? No. 1, you approach the driver, you introduce yourself by rank, by name, by what agency you work for, and you tell the person why they’re being stopped. . . . If the person asks you a question that’s reasonable, you respond to it reasonably. That is the expectation.” He went on to say that stepping out of the path of a vehicle was basic police training, and that people have “a First Amendment right to observe, record and object to government activity.”

Those principles would be news to many ICE officers here. On the weekend I met Kendra, who lives in the Cedar Riverside area of Minneapolis. She said one of her friends attending a protest heard an ICE officer say: “Didn’t we teach you a lesson, killing that lesbian bitch?”

### **Effects on the community**

Businesses have had to close. People are afraid to go to work, or even to leave their homes. Eric T., an attorney who lives in Inver Grove Heights, a St. Paul suburb, told me that of the five Mexican restaurants in his area, only one is still open, El Rincon Mexicano, and they’re careful about who they admit to their premises.



*Rev. Joy Cairns and the Rev. Brouwer protesting near the place where Renee Good died. Churches have been & are important in organising anti-ICE efforts.*

I've been avoiding Lake Street in Minneapolis and other hot spots frequented by ICE agents, but at "Loaves & Fishes" in West St. Paul - a church program to feed the hungry - I was hearing stories. Our group normally provides dinner for 250 to 300 people in West St. Paul. Recently the numbers are down to more like 140. People are afraid to go out, even for free meals. Ethnic restaurants are keeping their doors locked and not admitting anybody but bona fide customers. A volunteer with the Department of Indian Work food shelf in Little Canada, a suburb of St. Paul, reports that ICE has been arresting American Indians, not recognizing their tribal identification. Just another example of racial profiling.

On the way back from Loaves & Fishes I needed groceries and suggested that my friend and I stop at El Burrito Mercado, a Mexican supermarket on Cesar Chavez Street in West St. Paul. Two burly men stood outside the supermarket and looked us over before they unlocked the door and let us in. When we were leaving they and others made a point of thanking us. That's something that doesn't usually happen in supermarkets - it seemed poignant at the time.



*At church, warn-your-neighbours whistles and petitions to sign*

On Friday we heard that federal investigations have been launched against Governor Tim Walz and Minneapolis mayor Jacob Frey, both of whom have been urging, "Don't take the bait. Protest peacefully."

Bizarre, but nothing this president does can really surprise one anymore. As he's said, only his "morality" restrains him.

Shortly after her death a Go-Fund-Me page was started for the late Renee Good's family - she left a spouse and three children - and people contributed generously. Surprisingly, another Go-Fund-Me has been started for Jonathan Ross, the ICE agent who killed her. At this writing, close to \$800,000 has been raised for him.

Currently agents receive a \$50,000 bonus and good benefits for signing up with ICE. They receive only 47 days of training, in honour of the 47th president.

### **Another Execution by ICE**

Another shooting by ICE officers in Minneapolis happened on Saturday, January 24th. A video surfaced where several ICE agents were seen beating up a man and then shooting him several times. He died at the scene.

The victim has been identified as Alex Pretti. He worked as an Intensive Care Nurse in a Veterans Administration hospital. Dr. Dimitri Drekonja, a Minneapolis doctor specialising in infectious diseases, knew Pretti and described him in an interview on Minnesota Public Radio as a "sweet guy," an "incredibly competent person," whose "whole life was about helping people." Dr. Drekonja mused: "This is America - it's a bitterly cold weekend . . . as far as I know he was out helping people. He was the epitome of a kind helping person. I'm floored that he's taken from us."

Just another weekend in Trump's America.

### **Where Hope Is**

But if there was hope, it lay in the Proles. You had to cling onto that. When you put it in words it sounded reasonable; it was when you looked at the human beings passing you on the pavement that it became an act of faith.- George Orwell.

Trump's cabinet, chosen not for their competence but for their loyalty to the Donald, vie with each other in the extravagance of their compliments to the Chief. Foreign heads of state, seeing how Volodymyr Zelensky was treated last February, approach Trump with caution, often with gifts in their hands. Captains of industry, heads of law firms and Ivy League universities have kowtowed to the President, offering him

millions towards his Inauguration, offering free services, conceding to his demands, anything to induce him to leave them alone.

But one group has been standing up to Trump: ordinary people. To Orwell, “the proles.” In 2024 they might have voted for Trump, wanting a secure border but they don’t like what he is doing - they don’t like to see their neighbours brutally hauled away. Last year millions protested in the “No Kings” anti-Trump rallies. Now, in Minnesota and across the country they turn out, often in subzero temperatures to protest ICE activities and the murder of Renee Good. Bruce Springsteen and other prominent musicians have reacted to her murder, Springsteen stating at a concert: “You don’t deserve to be murdered for exercising your American right to protest.”



He echoed Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey’s declaration that “ICE should get the f \_\_\_\_ out of Minneapolis.”

We can hope.

*Christine Graf*

*Last updated 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026*

## **Liberal International Excom, The Hague – Netherlands (22<sup>nd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> November 2025).**

2025 Liberal International Executive Committee was held in The Hague, Netherlands from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> November where the weather was rather icy cold, and the need for warm jackets, gloves and scarfs was essential.

The Liberal Democrat delegation was led by our Chair of Federal International Relations Committee (FIRC), David Chalmers, alongside our second official voting member Irina Von Wiese, with Liberal International British Group voting representative Adrian Hyyrylainen-Trett. Chair of the Human Rights Committee, Baroness Sal Brinton and Vice President Phil Bennion also had their own voting responsibilities and a number of other FIRC colleagues also attended including Vice Chair, Hannah Bettsworth and Larry Ngan.

The Liberal Democrats put forward two important motions on Sudan and Rwanda which were passed successfully and the influx of several new parties from Africa generated interesting discussions. Liberal International should take credit for their new informal format of gathering at the beginning of the conference, for us to get to know the new parties and ask them more about their work and issues at home, rather than it being just an “administrative” process of approving new members.

From a Human Rights perspective, the committee I sit on alongside our Liberal Democrat Chair Baroness Sal Brinton, we paid a visit to the International Criminal Court of Justice (ICC) along with a number of other committee members from all around the world. The briefing we received was exceptionally well received and we learnt extensively about the processes and procedures of the Court. They currently have 33 cases in progress but what was really fascinating was how they went about their work, and the allocation of jurisdictions and multiple sources who are able to provide evidence.

On the Saturday evening, our final night in The Hague, we were delighted to be joined by the family of Victoire Ingabire, Liberal International’s Prize for Freedom winner, and both Vice President Phil Bennion

and Baroness Sal Brinton played a crucial part in the giving and presenting of the prize to Victoire's son and daughter who also both gave impassioned speeches which brought many of the audience to tears.

The Human Rights Committee also had the privilege of meeting with the family in private, along with their legal team earlier in the afternoon, where they could give us a clear update of current situation and more detailed actions which are planned for the future.

Finally, it was really good to see the Liberal International Women's Network (INLW) being very prominent during the course of the conference and taking the main stage for the first time in my memory with a detailed presentation of their work followed by an interactive workshop, getting everyone involved in those issues. I myself have joined (INLW) as an ally to support their work and learn, as that's what we must all do at this moment with the world in its current changing geopolitical situation.

***Adrian Hyyrylainen-Trett***

Vice Chair (Liberal International British Group)

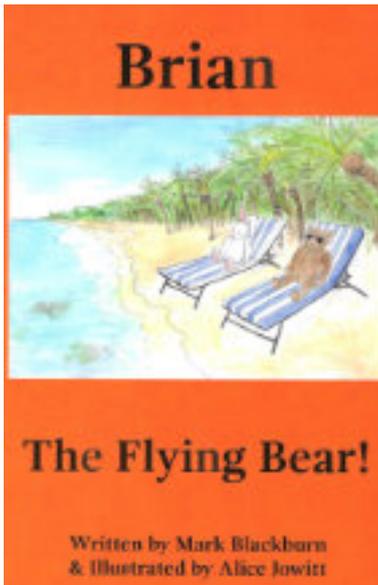
Liberal International Human Rights Committee Member (LIHRC)



# Reviews

**Brian the Flying Bear, by Mark Blackburn, Illustrated by Alice Jarrett.**  
**Mark Blackburn 2024 £9.99 hbk, £4.99 pbk, also e-book & audio**  
**isbn 9871838097546 hbk**

Brian, the Flying Bear? I thought Mark's father's name was David? This book, the second in the life of the Barrington Bear, came out at around the same time as *Final Approach*. Since the bear himself is frequently overlooked, a late review isn't unexpected. Whilst it is common for a well-loved toy to get lost as a ploy in fiction, for Brian to achieve this on a second occasion seems a little careless. Nonetheless, the bear manages to get left behind in Spain and his avian adventures making his way home enchant us.



Alice Jarrett has an eye for the birds, especially the exotic, amongst the delights of the story.

*Upupa epops* does make it to southern England, possibly even to Somerset; Barrington is fairly south, so Brian hopped the wrong bird, though the RSPB only reckons on only 100 visitors. He was lucky to pick up, or rather, be picked up by *Milvus Milvus*, so far east in the summer, though BBC News told us earlier in November that birds had been introduced to Extremadura in Spain; so next time a bear gets left at an airport, who knows?

You can contact Mark Blackburn on [mark@markblackburn.co.uk](mailto:mark@markblackburn.co.uk) to get copies of his books,

**Stewart Rayment**

Brian the Barrington Bear, by Mark Blackburn was reviewed in *interLib* 2020-08 page 23

**Ending Wars, NEJPP Special Issue, Vol 37, Issue 1, 2025 - Papers from the 2024 Conference on the Resolution of Intractable Conflict, Oxford coedited by Lord John Alderdice and Padraig O'Malley**  
**Artis Europe 2025 £25.00 isbn 9781805418368**

"*Ending Wars*" is the bold title of a new book co-edited by Lord John Alderdice and Padraig O Malley and published earlier this year by the New England Journal of Public Policy. Its companion publication entitled "*The Changing Character of War and Peacemaking*" (2023) was curated along the same lines as a compilation of articles penned by a wide range of contributors to the conferences organised by the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflicts (CRIC) held at Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

Most would remember Francis Fukuyama's *End of History and the Last Man* (1992). Following the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, we were lulled into believing that liberal democracy had won the day. Yet September 11 occurred, and more recently the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Alderdice in his Introduction to the special issue of *Ending Wars* cited that the Global Peace Index (GPI) the leading measure of global peacefulness has been deteriorating over the last 6 years and the rules based international order continues to be under threat. At the time of writing this the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza conflict rumbles on though we may well have reached a denouement outside the sphere of the United Nations and of international law.

As Alderdice explains, building peace involves communities that have different perspectives finding ways of conducting their differences without the use of physical force. With his background as a consultant psychiatrist, Alderdice sees politics as the "psychology of large groups" and how we function, not as individuals, but as communities. The aim of conflict resolution may not necessarily entail reaching an agreement on all social, political and economic issues. Put simply, we merely need to reach "a place where those who differ deeply can agree to disagree without killing each other".

Until 1945 there were limits to our capacity to destroy our enemies and our environment, but since the development of the nuclear bomb there can be no such assurance. Hence there is now a real threat of nuclear war and of environmental catastrophe. One is reminded of the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Nihon Hidankyo in 2024, 70 years after the end of WW2. Yet there is faint evidence that some political leaders are taking the nuclear threat sufficiently seriously.

What is clear from both books is that there is a desperate need to come up with a new paradigm for dealing with conflicts and peacebuilding. Instead of viewing wars as an inevitability and responding to threats to security with matching military responses, we should instead focus on understanding the root causes of those conflicts, whether unaddressed historical injustices, or from competing interests such as scarce resources, often exacerbated by a change. There may also be wider geo-political forces at play.

With the advent of new and more lethal technologies, coupled with the use of AI, cyber-attacks, misinformation and disinformation, our

ability to prevent, mitigate, let alone eradicate wars call for a new holistic approach that accepts plurality of values in an increasingly complex world.

To quote Pdraig O'Malley in his Editor's Note:

*"All wars end, some with a whimper, some with a bang, some with outright victory for one side and peace agreements reflecting the victor's demands; some with ceasefires where uneasy armistices do not address the root causes of the conflict ...some grind to a halt, frozen conflicts..."* Moreover *"Peace agreements in themselves often do not bring peace and sometimes contain the seeds of the next war."*

I believe this is a hugely important and timely anthology of essays on War and Peacebuilding. Without trying to summate on the diverse contributions from numerous authors I would urge you to read the essays for yourselves, though not necessarily in one sitting! By way of illustration of the breadth and depth of the articles I have selected a few chapter headings: *Understanding the Underlying Motivations of the Russia-Ukraine War* (by John Bell), *The Future of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (by Scott Atrons and others) or *Preventing War as Ending War – The European Network Remembrance..Through Dialogue on History* (by Rafal Rogulski), and *Gerald Templer's Leadership in the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) Its Enduring Relevance* (Kumar Ramakrishna). Together they make a significant contribution to our understanding of the challenges of war and peace, but also chart possible ways of addressing them.

See also <https://lordalderdice.com/index.php/2025/08/19/new-book-on-ending-wars/>

### **Merlene Toh-Emerson**

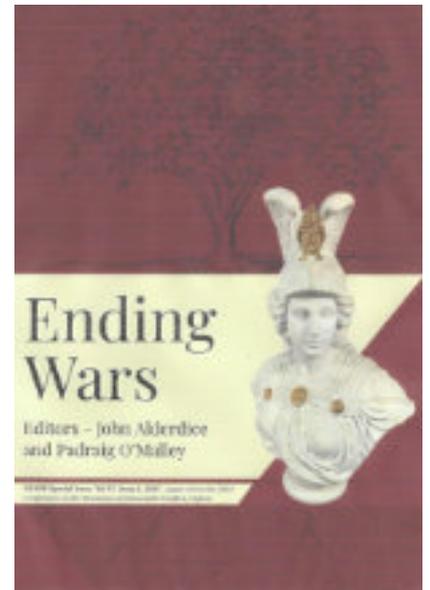
Merlene Toh-Emerson is Director of the Paddy Ashdown Policy Research Forum Limited

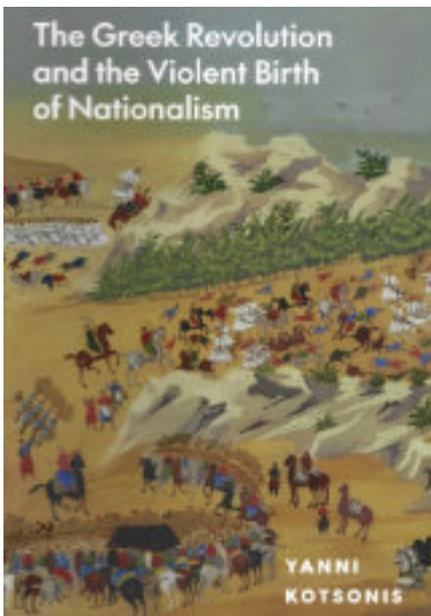
### **The Greek Revolution and the Violent Birth of Nationalism, by Yanni Kotsonis Princeton University Press 2025 isbn 978 0691 215266**

In the 19th century the newly emerging Liberalism was often associated with the newly emerging Nationalisms, both ideologies coming out of the French Revolution. This was particularly the case where a nation was emerging from an absolutist or despotic regime. The Italian Risorgimento is perhaps the best remembered, Garibaldi sainted no less by the Whig historian G M Trevelyan, with Mazzini's *Duties of Man* being part of the Liberal canon.

The Greek revolution or the 1820s is perhaps less well known except for the fact that Byron fought in it and Shelley died on the way. It is generally portrayed as Greeks freeing themselves from Ottoman tyranny. Kotsonis calls this into question and may well make himself unpopular for doing so.

Kotsonis paints an opening picture with which we are familiar, the Balkans as a patchwork of communities of different ethnicities and religions; what was to become Greece was no exception. These communities alternately got on with each other or fought; banditry was rife. There was not much that the Ottoman authorities could do about this, reliant on a feudal system of local dignitaries to enforce their rule, whilst they contended with external threats – it was around the time of the French revolutionary and





Napoleonic wars that Russia was expanding into Ukraine and towards the Black Sea and Caucasus (the Greeks being scattered across the whole region, linked to the Russians by ties of religion and thus played upon).

The Godwin-Shelley's, in Italy, had met a Danubian Greek prince, Alexander Mavrokordatos who had fallen out with his Ottoman masters. They introduced him to Byron, who was looking for a cause. Byron represented the London Philhellenic Committee, set up by Whig MP John Bowring to raise funds for the Greek War of Independence; Byron's role was primarily the distribution of these and his own funds, primarily to Mavrokordatos, before he died of malaria in 1824. Thereafter, the funds were mainly distributed by a bank clerk, Samuel Barff, who concluded that recent massacres (Chios immortalised by Delacroix) required the funds to be distributed immediately, without recourse to the London Committee, It seems likely that the funds mostly went on the Greek civil war. The 'war of independence' had been factional from the start and at least a triangular conflict followed between Roumelian and Morean Greeks, Albanians and the Ottomans,

two had brought in Ibrahim Pasha's Egyptians. In the end it was the Russians, British and French who determined the outcome, in their own interests = the Greeks an incidental beneficiary.

All a bit of a pig's ear, which no doubted echoed well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nationalisms are not to be trusted, needing the corrective of Liberalism, perhaps even more so that democracy. A fascinating rethink of a past we pay too little attention to.

**Stewart Rayment**

**The Quiet that Remains, silence and the story of a Ukrainian family, by Ben Skliar-Ward.  
Otter Stream Press 2025 £18.88 isbn 9781068268809**

To understand the Ukrainian conflict, one has to understand Ukraine's tragic history, and "What remains when history passes over the ordinary ". Russia's invasion in 2022 is the latest of many invasions, many other wars; the word Ukraine means borderland, and borderlands are transient places "Ukraine's history is one of interruption. Every time its people began to shape a future, larger forces intervened. Imperial Russia, Soviet rule, Nazi occupation - and now modern Russia - each sought to claim the land and silence its people."

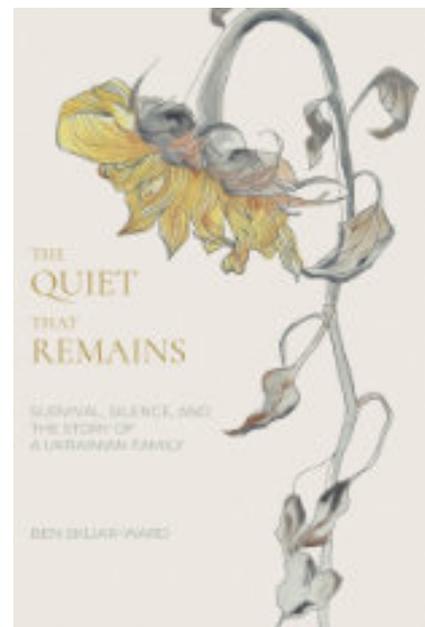
When Ben Skliar-Ward opened a suitcase, forgotten in the back of a cupboard -"the" suitcase which many exiles and refugees will recognise -he found photographs, letters, diaries, wallets, the tangible proof that connects one generation to its distant others. "What emerged was a window into how Ukrainians navigated the twentieth century from the underside, through bureaucratic compliance, adaption and cultural persistence".

The contents of this suitcase inspired "The Quiet That Remains", which follows the broad arc of Ukrainian history through the lives of his Ukrainian forebears; the suffering, famine, wars, revolutions, torture and repression, and finally exile, which engenders the quiet that remains, the silence of disconnection, despair and survival.

Skliar-Ward's book begins with an excellent short history of the country from the C9th to today, including that of the era of the Cossacks who held sway from the C16th to the C18th. His family are descended from Cossacks. Even after Russian control was established in the C19th, to be a "Cossack" meant something, recalling a status even after their conferred rights had disappeared, and is still part of Ukrainians' identity today.

It is in the C19th that the author's own family come into focus, and their history and that of Ukraine's intertwine. "They were Psalmists, bookkeepers, villagers, exiles. Ivan Skliar prayed aloud from memory, when the prayer books (and the Church) were gone." His son Viktor's wife was killed in a Soviet air raid on what was Nazi occupied Ukraine. Victor was in turn a student psalmist, a fighter for Ukraine, a Soviet conscript, an agricultural bookkeeper during the great hunger, the Holodomor, and then during Nazi occupation, and finally an exile. One of his sons, Wsewolod went with him into exile; his other son, Vladim, stayed and made his life in the Soviet Union.

The Holodomor, the great famine of the 1930s, was brought about by Stalin's aggressive collectivisation campaign. Whilst the Skliars survived the Holodomor, the book records the horrific testimonies of others who did not. The famine shattered communities. Life in the Soviet Union did not return to normal when the famine ended; it was swiftly followed by Stalin's Great Terror and then the Nazi invasion. The ending of that occupation and the return of the Soviets meant retribution, not liberation - no distinction was made between coerced labour and collaboration. Having endured famine, conscription, the bombing which killed his wife, Viktor decided to leave. Nothing was left of his Ukraine - church, family, nation. And he was not alone; by 1944, perhaps 500,000 Ukrainians made the desperate journey west. He and Wsewolod travelled through Europe, through the transit and forced labour camps, to Austria by the April of 1945. The Skliars were now Displaced Persons, two among the nearly three million Ukrainians stranded in Europe.



The Soviet Union wanted the Ukrainians back, and nearly two million did return. But by modifying his documents to change his birthplace to Poland, Viktor and his son managed to stay in a Ukrainian DP camp, until March 1948, when the Skliars arrived in Harwich and a new beginning.

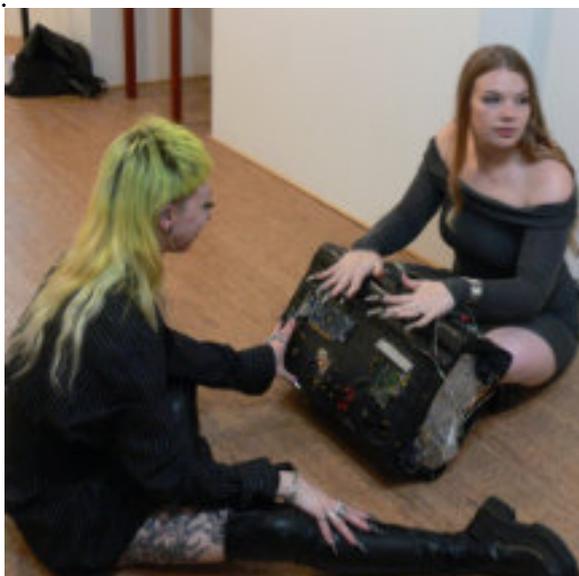
Life in post-war Britain was hard enough for the British. It was a miserable era of cold, rationing, austerity, bomb sites, a grey uncertainty. But the British had family, friends, familiarity with how the country worked, its culture and traditions; Viktor and Wsewolod had none of these, nor, as Displaced Persons, any choice about where to live and what career to follow. But they survived, flourished and started a new family, bringing with them their legacy of Ukrainian poetry, language, recipes, history, and the silence they kept too survive - "(the) silence becoming its own form of Legacy"

Ben Skliar-Ward's blend of history with his familial, personal connection makes his narrative more intensely real, and anchors more firmly it in the reader's mind. "The Quiet that Remains" is an excellent and important book for any of us who are trying to help Ukraine and put this current war into perspective.

*Wendy Kyrle-Pope*

### **The Price of Progress: Reuse Technology Group's Art Show that turned E-Waste into Awareness**

I'm invited to an exhibition at the Stash Gallery in Voot-O-Reenee's, Prescott Street, just east of the Tower of London. I know these streets well. It is a clear night; where is the fog that traditionally haunts Autumnal evenings? Somehow the city has more glitz these days and west is creeping east. The Stash is below a church; I move through the gallery before hitting the bar. There is an ominous looking suitcase with wires & bits hanging out of it, in an alcove. This could be a trap, Peter the Painter used to stalk these streets, old East End anarchism... it turns out to be an installation/sculpture piece, suspiciously anonymous but created



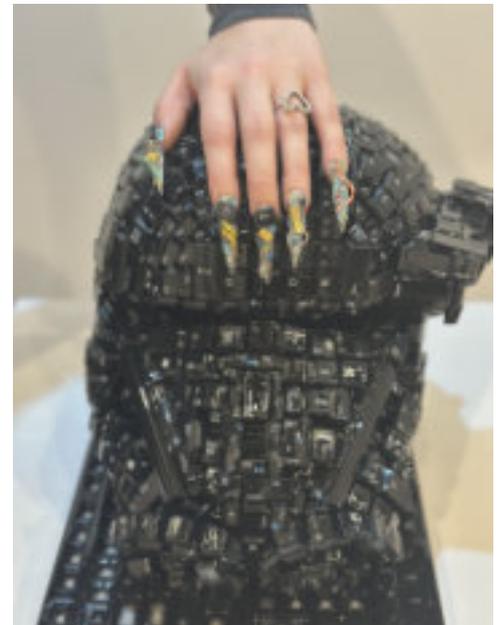
by Rose Rayment from Manchester. Later it will be reused as a worktop for Em, Mancunian nail artist, installing her e-waste nails on Jessica Tee, of BobsYourUncle PR, curator of the exhibition. Those claws are really explosive. Jessica exhibited Darth Vader's helmet, *Keyboard Warrior* created from a load of reused computer keys.

Earlier last year, Darryl Arjoon, of the Reuse Technology Group reimagined electronic waste as art with 'The Price of Progress', an exhibition that transformed discarded tech into thought-provoking installations. Darryl's company recycles tech waste, e-waste.

Artists rebuilt laptops, screens, and circuit boards into powerful works that questioned the true cost of innovation and the impact of our throwaway culture. ,

In 2023, the UK was the world's second-largest contributor of e-waste per capita. Despite generating approximately 1.6 million tonnes of e-waste each year, just over half (54%) of this is formally collected for recycling. The planet cannot stand this; it not only squanders valuable resources like copper and lithium but also accentuates environmental challenges. Most councils collect e-waste separately, check yours and next time you see an old computer dumped in an alley take it home a put it with your rubbish, suitably labelled. Or contact the Turing Trust.

The Turing Trust was the nominated charity of the event, as it featured a mural of Alan Turing by Justin Eagleton, another Mancunian – acrylic, collaged with old newspaper cuttings & e-waste pieces. Justin had connections to Alan Turing's last living relatives! James Turing, founder of The Turing Trust said: “The Turing Trust are delighted to be supported by the exhibition. We believe that such an initiative will have a catalytic role in showcasing the myriad of possibilities for transformative action on e-waste that can help improve the lives of some of the world's poorest people, opening up new digital futures to help make a better world”.



***Keyboard Warrior nailed.***



***Alan Turing by Justin Eagleton***

was a reminder that creativity can rewrite the story of technology, from disposable to sustainable.

***Sayed Rahman***

The Turing Trust refurbishes IT equipment, installs a wide range of educational software, and delivers it to classrooms around the world. In the last few years the Trust has donated thousands of devices to students across the UK and the Third World. An estimated 40 percent of students in Ukraine are relying on online or hybrid learning due to ongoing conflicts and working with the Ukraine Educational Initiatives Foundation and Reusing IT, over 2,000 computers to schools in Kyiv. If you or your organisation have any IT equipment to donate please do get in touch with them at <https://turingtrust.co.uk/give-computers/>.

Around 85% of all artwork featured in the exhibit was made from Reuse Technology Group's recycled e-waste. Other artists participating were Chika Afam, Lizzie Hill, Balthazar Mattar, Jenny Nelson, Martin Rayment, Katie Surridge, Megan Tee and Kim-A-Tron. Check out their websites. If you want to get your nails done by Em she's at Nail & Coffin, 1st Floor, 52 Church St, Manchester M4 1PW.

The Price of Progress was more than an art show; it

# International Abstracts.

## Journal of Liberal History Issue 129 Winter 2025-26

Alan Mumford begins his examination of the last four Liberal Prime Ministers. Rosebery was Foreign Secretary before his elevation to Prime Minister; he didn't want the job, but the Queen couldn't stand Harcourt. Diffidence sums up premiership. Belgium and Uganda were the international issues his tenancy, the latter reflecting his Liberal Imperialist views. Mumford only deals with his premiership; the great mystery is why Asquith & Co., the Limps, continued to have faith and expectations in him. He would haunt his successor, Campbell-Bannerman, but nothing would come of it and the Relagus plot was dealt with. C-B is perhaps best remembered for his 'methods of barbarism' speech against the conduct of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Boer War, before he was Prime Minister; he would set the tone for the South African settlement, though alas magnanimity did extend the vote to the coloured populations. Had he lived, C-B might have brought in votes for women however, a difficult call but one he supported. His premiership was too short.

Which can't be said for the Grand Old Man. Gladstone made his last public speech on 24th September 1896 on the Armenian Hamidian massacres. Paul Nuttall tells us the story. Gladstone declared "To serve Armenia is to serve civilisation" – President Trump will not go down in history on that account. Derek Earls writes on Edward Donner and the rise of Manchester Liberalism; a friend of C-B, the article expands on women's suffrage. Manchester owes him a lot, as indeed does to the Simon family, subject of a recent book reviewed in this issue.

## Liberator 432

Annelou van Egmond explains how a stricter immigration policy helped D66 come top in the Dutch general election. Martha Elliott looks at signals that the American public has had enough of its president. Rebecca Tinsley's article on Zoran Mamdani, which appears in this issue, is also shared. RB reports on the dubious activities of the Liberal Democrat's Federal Conference Committee over an emergency motion on Gaza at last year's Bournemouth conference. Lord Bonkers looks at cricket.

## USA

Pete Hegseth's attempt to gag journalism is a responding failure, by Margaret Sullivan. The Guardian 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025

[Pete Hegseth's attempt to gag journalism is a resounding failure | Margaret Sullivan | The Guardian](#)

Lawless Enforcement: the Feds are out of control, by Jennifer Rubens. The Contrarian, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

*The opening sentence "MAGA Republicans have done more than any political movement to undermine public respect for and confidence in law enforcement" says it all but the litany gets worse. We couldn't imagine how much so.*

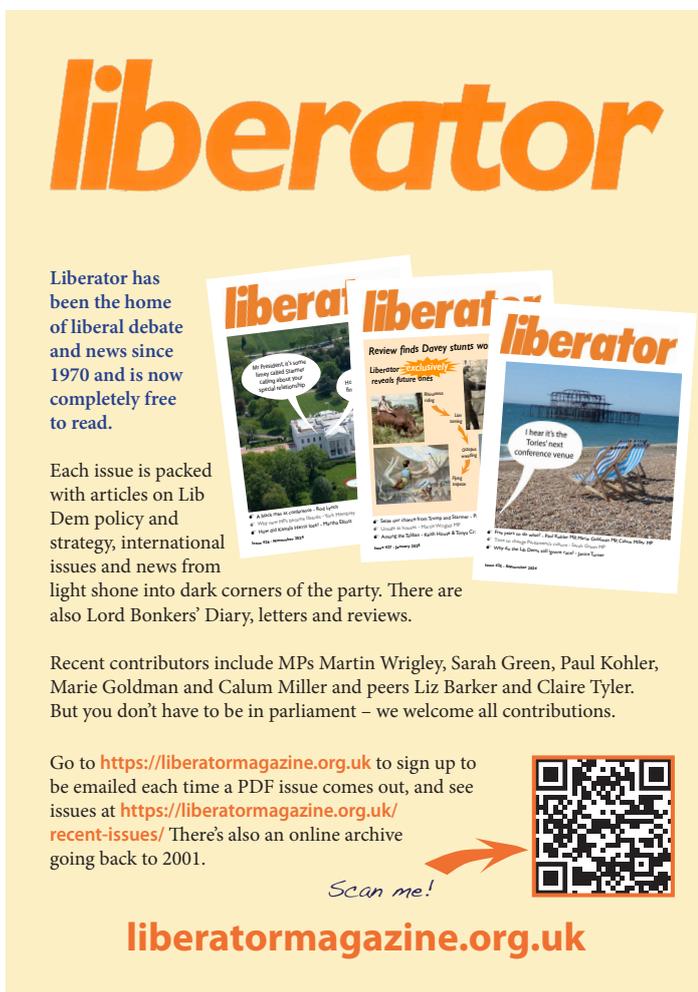
[contrarian+jen-rubins-morning-columns@substack.com](mailto:contrarian+jen-rubins-morning-columns@substack.com)

## Isreal-Palestine

Trump had to choose between Israel and Qatar. He chose Qatar, by Lawrence Freedman, Financial Times, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025

*An account of events leading up to and including the last two years from a reliable source.*

[Trump had to choose between Israel and Qatar. He chose Qatar](#)



**liberator**

Liberator has been the home of liberal debate and news since 1970 and is now completely free to read.

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