



2012 no.1 £3.00 (free to members)

# INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



Acholi woman in the depths of the original LRA territory near Gulu.

Inside

**UGANDA      EGYPT**

**ISRAEL & PALESTINE**

**TRADE LIBERALISATION**

**CONFERENCE REPORTS**

**& MORE.**

# EVENTS CONTENTS

**3<sup>rd</sup> May** local elections across UK, including London Mayoral/Assembly

**4<sup>th</sup> June** Stop the War on Iran, End the Arms Trade demonstration – 12 noon outside Barclays Bank, North Street Brighton, march to Hove Town Hall. [www.smashedo.org.uk](http://www.smashedo.org.uk)

**21<sup>st</sup> June** Lord Garden Memorial Lecture. Jon Snow. Chatham House 13.00-14.00

**2<sup>nd</sup> July** LIBG AGM

**22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September** Liberal Democrats Autumn Conference, Brighton.

**2<sup>nd</sup> October** 127<sup>th</sup> Liberal Party Assembly, Wolverhampton

**17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> October** LI Congress, Abijan, Côte d'Ivoire

For bookings & other information please contact the Treasurer below.

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

Liberal International (British Group)  
Treasurer: Wendy Kyrle-Pope, 1 Brook Gardens, Barnes, London SW13 0LY

[email w.kyrle@virgin.net](mailto:w.kyrle@virgin.net)

*InterLiB is published by the Liberal International (British Group). Views expressed therein are those of the authors and are not necessarily the views of LI(BG), LI or any of its constituent parties.*

Comments and articles can be sent to  
Lockhart & Hastings, Creative Media Centre,  
45 Robertson Street, Hastings TN34 1HL,  
email [lockharthastings@btconnect.com](mailto:lockharthastings@btconnect.com)

Chair's letter Page 3

Diplomatic Reception Page 3

The Pearl of Africa – Uganda. Kay Barnard Pages 4-6

The Arab Spring at Inverness Page 6

The Revolutionaries versus the Good, the Bad and the Ugly: a year after the Egyptian Revolution. Mohammed Nossier Pages 7-9

Ronnie Fraser Scholarship Page 9

Time to Rethink Iran – the Garden Lecture Page 9

Has Global Trade Liberalisation come to an end? Nick Hopkinson Pages 10-11

The Future of *interLib* Page 11

Palestine & Israel in 2012. Guy Burton Pages 12-13

Gateshead Lib Dem conference report Pages 13-14

Is there a future for the Arabs in Israel? Page 14

Belarus Forum report Pages 14-15

Viv Bingham Obituary Page 15

Reviews Pages 15-19

David Griffiths Page 20

**RONNIE FRASER  
SCHOLARSHIP**

**Deadline 31st May 2012**

**See Page 9**

# Chair's Letter

The last few months have been busy with further innovative for LIBG in terms of shared events. In December we welcomed the Rev Nadim Nasser who spoke to a joint meeting with the Lib Dem Christian Forum. We held the first, highly successful, joint meeting with Liberal Youth in February and look forward to further collaboration with them, including a joint fringe at Autumn Conference.

The Annual Diplomats' Reception, generously sponsored by BTP Advisers, in late February proved hugely popular, with many senior diplomats coming to hear the Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, and Foreign Office Minister, Jeremy Browne. Just two days later we held a rather sadder event – a small gathering to commemorate the life and work of former LIBG Chair David Griffiths, at which we were delighted to have a chance to share reminiscences with David's children, Gareth and Justine.

I am delighted to announce the establishment of the Ronnie Fraser Travel Award for students and young people, made possible through a generous bequest from Ronnie, to whom tribute was paid in (insert date of obit in InterLIB). Details of the award and application procedure are on page 9.

Our AGM this year will be a little earlier than normal – on 2<sup>nd</sup> July – in order not to conflict with the activities of the Olympics. An agenda and nomination forms will be sent out nearer the time but members might like to consider putting themselves forward for the Executive. There will be at least one vacancy as under the terms of the Constitution I must stand down as Chair this summer after my three years' tenure. If you are interested in joining the Exec please do contact me or one of the other members.

With best wishes,

Julie



*Carlos dos Santos, High Commissioner for Mozambique with Cllr. Howard Henshaw & Karen Henshaw, Mayor & Mayoress of Fylde.*



*Shinichi Ishikawa, Second Secretary, Political Section, Embassy of Japan and Barbara Emerson, Chair Brussels & Luxembourg Lib*



*Khaled Al Duwaisan, Ambassador of Kuwait, & Simon Hughes*



*Elisa Bennaton-Jiménez, Minister Counsellor, Political Affairs, Embassy of Honduras, Jeremy Browne & the Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan*

*The Diplomatic Reception. NLC 28th February*

# The Pearl of Africa - Uganda

Kay Barnard

I climbed down the steps from the plane at Entebbe under a velvet sky filled with brilliant stars, a sight rarely seen in Europe. I was visiting Uganda in 2008 for the first time with my husband, who had established links with the Acholi peoples near Gulu in Northern Uganda. We were there to investigate the potential for our small family business to work with Ugandans to benefit both. Since then the links and friendships have continued and grown.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> last year the Economist published an article describing Africa as “The Hopeful Continent”. My recent trip to Uganda in October certainly reinforced that image. The country which suffered dreadful oppression under Idi Amin in the 1970s and the Lord’s Resistance Army in the north for twenty years from the 1980’s onwards is clearly healing. And the country is not just healing but growing economically, and at a rate far above the more developed economies of Europe and America.

Try to negotiate your way around the capital Kampala by car and you will find chaos. Road markings are non-existent and the traffic comes to a halt at junctions as cars and lorries push in from the side-turnings. You may wait for an hour at any time of day to find that the jam just evaporates into the tropical sun. I have heard such jams described as “the triangle of chaos” as three vehicles, each at an angle, cannot move forward or backward and block the whole road. The traffic is slow with potholes to negotiate and pedestrians are usually treated with courtesy. Surprisingly there are no local buses. People travel by ubiquitous minibus taxis and “boda bodas”- motorbikes for hire with a driver, no helmets of course. It would not take much to improve things; a few traffic lights and some driver discipline would work wonders. However the government has decided to buy a large number of buses. As a local traffic manager said “White paint would be a cheaper option”. The huge white cranes (the national bird) circling in the sky over Kampala have a great view, there are definitely no traffic helicopters here.

Putting the young men with their motorbikes out of work would certainly add to unemployment. And unemployment in the cities and the countryside is a big issue in Uganda, as in most developing countries.

With a national average age of 15 years old (CIA World Factbook, 2012) there is clearly a need to find constructive employment for young people. Formal statistics on such economies can be misleading. In common with other developing countries, much business is outside the government’s information systems. The unofficial economy on which no-one collects taxes is very hard to estimate. There is obviously a growing urban middle class who can take advantage of new shopping centres and restaurants. Thriving roadside workshops are open all hours, with welders shooting sparks across the road.

Most Ugandans are farmers so I make no apology for writing about agriculture. According to UN figures nearly 90% of the population live in the countryside.



*Jim Barnard with Acholi children.*

Uganda is blessed with a fertile soil and good rainfall. It is to our shame that we in the “global north” have undervalued the wealth creation and sustainability of farming in the developing world. It is only now, after fifty years of international aid money for development, that the importance of farming is being recognised on the world stage. As part of a farming family myself I feel that huge snobbery clouded the judgment of those deciding development budgets. Most money was spent on education in the western mould and on health care systems to treat people who had limited ways to feed themselves.

In addition the role of women in rural food production has been undervalued. Although they

have few land rights in Uganda, three quarters of farmers are women and they account for about 80% of food production (UNDP report on Uganda, 2007). Perhaps gender discrimination also played a subconscious role in ignoring the importance of women as farmers in development budgets.

Simple infrastructure which we take for granted in Europe is just not there. Post harvest facilities to treat and store produce could reduce wastage by 30%. Transport to markets would mean that locals are not dependent on casual traders who pay low prices, often quoted as half the real value. Measures like these could increase rural incomes for a family by hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year. If families have money like this that they have earned, they and their government can afford education and health care without being reliant on handouts.

A large number of Ugandans live in poverty. Despite the easy going nature of life, violence against criminals who steal from those trying to better themselves is commonplace. My husband had to rescue a young thief in Kampala who had stolen a mobile phone. A crowd of angry locals were about to kill the lad, having beaten him mercilessly. But the other side to Uganda was shown in a Channel 4 documentary last October about a ground-breaking "CARE" hospital in Mbale, which is treating hydrocephalus in young babies caused by infection from poor conditions at birth. The parents were astounding, caring with huge difficulty but great love for severely disabled children in remote villages, and the Ugandan doctors and nurses showed enormous compassion to those they help. The programme in the Unreported World series is still available to watch on the internet.

The country is lucky to have a thriving civil society with several newspapers of varying political colour. Despite the outcry here over extremely harsh proposals on treatment of gay individuals, the UN Development report in 2007 stated that "Uganda has a multi-party political system of governance and a relatively vibrant civil society, the media and freedom of association and speech." Yoweri Museveni has been president for 25 years. Although there were real disputes over the conduct of the poll, he was re-elected in 2011 with 68% of the vote, largely because he has brought relative stability to a country desperate for peace. The European Union's Ambassador to Uganda, Mr Roberto Ridolfi reported that "the legitimacy of the outcome of the election should not now be under question" and the EU monitors made recommendations for future

improvements to the democratic process. While I was there, three senior government ministers (including the Prime Minister) were accused of corruption over a government deal with Tullow Oil, who had been granted concessions on rich land in the West of the country.

In common with other countries, Uganda is now keen to attract foreign investment in public private partnerships. Investment is thought to run at more than 20% of GDP. Rolling black-outs or power cuts are commonplace in the capital. I learned the value of a small solar-powered lamp and a wind-up torch on my last visit. How much more frustrating and difficult it must be for local businesses. Often the sound of generators fills the air.

Trying to overcome energy shortages, the government gave permission for a new dam on the Nile at Bujagali in 1990, only for the proposal to fail



*A Ugandan workshop.*

to get World Bank funding because of corruption and environmental issues. The dam has finally gone ahead with joint investment from a Kenyan firm (with a stake from Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development) and an American energy company, Sithe. The Bujagali Falls is not really a waterfall but a series of breath-taking rapids; a wonderful sight and a valued tourist attraction. The massive flows attracted white-water canoeists from around the world. Do I support the development? As an environmentalist my sympathies are divided but, on balance, I think the future of Uganda's population will be helped in the short term by the energy generated. There are other falls on the river and the tourist establishments are relocating further downstream to other magnificent rapids. The area flooded by the dam is quite limited because the dam

works largely on natural flow of the river. Contacts in the Department of Fisheries Resources take very seriously the real concerns about falling water levels in Lake Victoria when existing dams released too much lake water. I was glad of the opportunity to see the Bujagali Falls before they vanished under the water but Uganda needs energy and the dam is much better than imported oil.



***Kay Barnard at Bujagali Falls, October***

I'm going to finish with a confession. I have been bitten by the Uganda bug. Such a mix of life-affirming optimism and desperate need, coloured by a cheerfulness we have lost from our over-worried lives. It was Winston Churchill who named Uganda "the Pearl of Africa". I'll definitely be back. We have a lot to learn.

*Kay Barnard is a Lib Dem who is joint owner of a UK food business which works with Ugandan farmers. She has an M.Sc. in International Development, but work from the viewpoint that small businesses working together is one of the most promising routes for fair development to take place. For more information feel free to contact Kay at [kaybarnard@gmail.com](mailto:kaybarnard@gmail.com)*

## **THE ARAB SPRING AT INVERNESS**

A feature of the Arab "Spring" is the rise - immediate and prospective - of Islamist parties. •Is that to be welcomed or feared?

Kishwer Falkender, Lib Dems' spokeswoman on the Arab world in the House of Lords, addressed the dilemma for Western observers when she spoke at a fringe meeting organised by the Scottish committee of LIBG during the Inverness conference of the Scottish Liberal Democrats at the beginning of March. Her

analysis, based on personal contacts in the region as well as scrutiny of academic studies, was that there is little "to be desperately worried about." •Islamist parties are likely to loom large in countries where autocracy gives way to democratic elections, but such parties will have to concentrate on showing their accountability and commitment to the interests of those voting them into power. •Worrying about day-to-day issues and ensuring re-election will be uppermost in their minds rather than religious orthodoxy.

But in the wider Middle East Lady Falkender singled out Syria and Iran as having regimes where the prospects were more worrying. •In the first case, civil war was on the horizon. •Confronting Iran, the Israelis believed they had less than a year to reach a deal before the prospect of war might become real. •Any conflagration would spread, possibly bringing in Saudi Arabia. So when countries like Brazil offered to act as mediators, they should be listened to, if only to buy time for peaceful progress. The meeting was the first to be held using a small contribution from the legacy left to the LIBG in Scotland by its founder Ronnie Fraser.

During the conference Malcolm Bruce MP, president of the Scottish Lib Dems, said that a recent visit to the new nation of South Sudan had led him to reflect on independence movements around the world. •"Do we really want the world to break up into a growing list of tiny countries nursing their grievances through the international community? Continue reading the main story

"Does it really make sense to have 200 separate nations to quarrel with each other and to waste our precious and fast diminishing resources?" asked Malcolm Bruce, the Scottish Liberal Democrat president. "Indeed divergences can be magnified when countries go their separate ways. Consider Czechoslovakia. Since Slovakia seceded, the GDP per capita of the Czech Republic has risen to 25,600 while Slovakia's stands at 16,288 with higher unemployment and inflation. There are currently recognised to be 196 states in the world with about 50 with varying degrees of aspiration to join them," Malcolm Bruce went on. •Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmon "says he doesn't want Scotland to be better than other countries but equal. But where does that end? Scotland cannot be equal to the United States anymore than Montenegro or Malta can be equal even with British Columbia or New South Wales.

*Fringe meeting organised by LIBG in Scotland at the Scottish Liberal Democrats' conference in Inverness, March 2nd-4th.*

***Willis Pickard***

# The Revolutionaries versus the Good, the Bad & the Ugly: A Year after the Egyptian Revolution.

Mohammed Nossier

The Revolutionaries initially thought that Mubarak and his family were the corrupt barrier keeping Egypt from attaining political freedom and practicing a genuine democracy that would eventually lead to prosperity. After Mubarak stepped down, however, the reality soon became evident: there are other political forces in Egypt who are much stronger than Mubarak, and who have managed, so far, to resist the application of any kind of reforms. These forces are the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.

The 'Good' are the political Islamists who have been brandishing the label of the good values of Islam (which Egyptians highly appreciate) in order to achieve their political goals. Although religion is meant to guide the community, teaching its followers to behave morally by abiding with religious values, Egyptian political Islamic organizations don't mind using corrupt means to reach their goal of ruling Egypt. Using fraud to gather votes is, from their perspective, a justifiable means towards a good end; that of placing political Islamists in power.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis were outlawed organizations during Mubarak's era, but in reality both groups were very active across Egypt, under the supervision of the State Police with whom they had an implicit understanding. On one hand they were allowed to expand as organizations, while on the other their leaders were periodically arrested. Apparently, political Islamists have a different understanding of justice than that of the application of Rule of Law. They don't mind being imprisoned for a number of years,

believing that this is a part of what is called Jihad in Islam. They can live with the years behind bars, which, in their eyes, are counted as Muslim credits.

The 'Bad' refers to Egyptian government bureaucrats who always have been, and still are, willing to serve the ruler - regardless of his mission or political agenda. Egyptian government employees account for roughly one-third of the Egyptian labour force. They are known for their low productivity and low incomes, which render them vulnerable, allowing any ruler to manipulate them through the provision of promotions or salary increases. These employees spend their entire careers in search of such bonuses, and they are willing to provide their services to their respective bosses without questioning their mission. People sometimes misunderstand bureaucrats and define them as 'Mubarak's allies'. However, this is not at all the case; they are simply trained to serve the ruler, any ruler.

Government employees at large are often defined as civil servants. They constitute a burden on taxpayers who, in essence, are paying their salaries in return for the provision of government services. However, Egyptian government employees are raised in a corrupt system and environment, groomed to eventually become bureaucrats who will serve the ruler, regardless of his ideology or political alliance. They benefit enormously from rampant government inefficiency and corruption, which help to sustain their power.

The current government, which has no links whatsoever with the revolution, provides the

SCAF (the current ruler of Egypt) with a good autocratic government. This has also been SCAF's motive in naming the various autocratic governments over the last year. Basically, the SCAF wants a government whose members understand the rules of the game and will apply them immediately. The prosecutors who have been investigating the alleged crimes of Mubarak and his associates are a core part of the bureaucrats who follow the ruler's orders. Egypt is a nation that is not ruled by the law; it is, simply, ruled by the ruler.

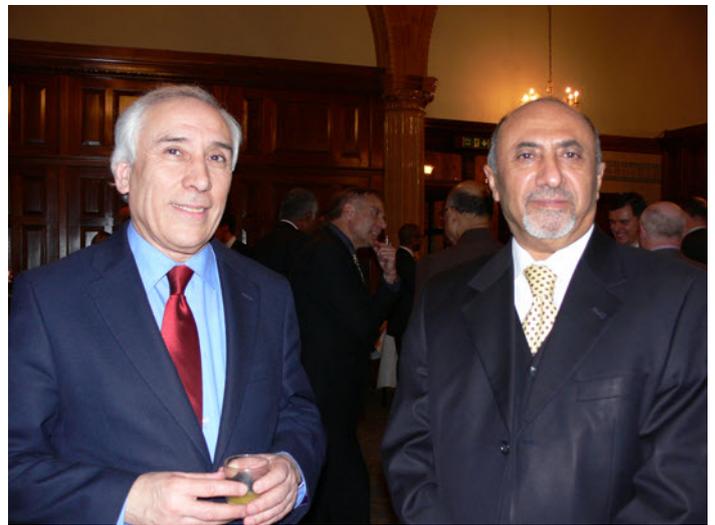
The Egyptian military made the conscious decision to play the 'Ugly' role. Mubarak used to rule Egypt with a veiled iron fist by way of extensive threatening and a limited application of harsh violence. The military inherited the role of ruler after Egyptians had overcome their fright of the ruler. Thus, it is only able to rule using heavy, harsh violence, since other tools were diminished with the revolution.

With the end of the Mubarak era, Egyptians were able to criticize him and his family - but the discussion of military affairs was completely forbidden. The military and its affairs had always been a genuine taboo, a subject that Egyptians never managed to approach. Now, one year after the January 25 revolution, the SCAF is not only criticized by the majority on a daily basis; its members are also described as liars. The SCAF claims to have no interest in nominating a military president, but the fact of the matter is that it knows that such a move is almost impossible in the present era. Therefore, claiming no interest in the presidency is being realistic. The SCAF definitely wants Egypt to continue to be ruled as it has been for decades, by a military mentality, and it is successfully working in this direction.

The common factor among these three political forces is their respective ability to manipulate Egyptian citizens. Each force has its own tactics and tools, but the goal is the

same: to tighten the political framework, by endeavoring to limit the freedom window that Egyptians were able to gain in the wake of the revolution. The three political forces are in strong agreement that in order for them to continue to play the parental role they have been performing for decades, it is imperative to minimize the power of Egyptian citizens.

Based on this common goal, there is a good synergy among the three groups. Each political force knows the role that it needs to play. The SCAF plays the role of the initiator, the one who defines a political vision for Egypt. While SCAF does not lay out explicit plans for the



*'The Arab Spring? It's over...'*

*Amar Abba, Ambassador of Algeria and Abdulla Ali Ai-Radhi, Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen at the Diplomatic Reception.*

other two forces to follow, there is a very good understanding among all three political groups on what needs to happen.

The bureaucrats execute SCAF's ideas (with a strong willingness to shoulder the blame should anything go wrong); they are very competent at this. The political Islamists play the role of the 'justifiers'. The deep-rooted influence they wield among the poor and illiterate allows them to manipulate an overwhelming portion of the population by on one hand calling upon Islamic values, and on the other, providing financial support. By

offering Egyptians a better life (with a promise to Heaven eventually), they are in the perfect position to easily justify SCAF's actions and behavior.

This cooperation and good synergy concluded in the running of parliamentary elections, during which each of the political forces played a role to sustain this arrangement. The SCAF produced an election law and structure that favored political Islam, allowing it to win almost three-quarters of the seats in the People's Assembly. Government bureaucrats (who were financially compensated during the elections) ran the elections, closing their eyes to the fraudulent practices of Islamic parties. Finally, the Islamists paid back the SCAF by not challenging them and by declining to participate in ongoing demonstrations against the SCAF.

Meanwhile, youth protestors, often unorganized and spontaneous politicians, are having a tough time struggling with the above political forces, all of which have been well established by Mubarak for decades. Protestors working on a genuine agenda of reform for Egypt are not welcome by any of the above-mentioned political forces. Instead, these forces aim at inducting the revolutionary youth into their organizations, thus maintaining the same corrupt system that has served them so well.

This struggle is expected to continue for years to come. The three political forces are strong, widespread in the community, well financed and heavily supported by a corrupt system that has not changed. Egyptian youth, on the other hand, accounts for roughly two-third of the population, is enthusiastic about reforming the country, motivated by the many lives lost, in various clashes, among their numbers, and keen to produce political initiatives and projects that constitute real thorn in the side of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. The struggle is certain to be a long one.

*Mohammed Nosseir*

*Chair of International Affairs for the Democratic Front, Egypt*

## **Ronnie Fraser Memorial Travel Scholarship**

**Deadline 31st May 2012**

Applications are invited to the Ronnie Fraser Memorial Travel Fund. This Fund, established thanks to a generous bequest to Liberal International British Group from the late Ronnie Fraser, is intended to assist students and young people to undertake international travel.

This may be in pursuit of academic research on matters relating to international relations, development or cognate disciplines, personal interest or to undertake voluntary work overseas. The successful applicant will be expected to write a short report on their trip and we would encourage them to write articles whether for LIBG or other outlets.

There will be one award of up to £400 in 2012. Application process: candidates should send a covering letter, outlining their proposed trip, including indicative costs, and a CV to the Secretary, at [dh@dirkhazell.com](mailto:dh@dirkhazell.com) by **31st May 2012**.

Eligibility: under 26s and students of any age, resident in the UK

## **TIME TO RETHINK IRAN!**

For the three decades since the Islamic Revolution, the West has failed to develop a policy beyond ostracization. For three decades Iran has been perceived as a threat rather than any thread that might lead to the resolution of any of the towering problems in the region. Is oblivion the only way, or is there evidence that engagement might chart another way? Jon Snow, who was reporting from Iran during the Revolution and the subsequent US Hostage Crisis, and who has been to Iran on a number of occasions since - including to interview President Ahmadinejad several times - will attempt a new perspective, informed by events that range from to Syria to Pakistan and beyond.

Jon Snow

*Jon Snow will be giving the Tim Garden lecture at Chatham House on 21<sup>st</sup> June.*

# HAS GLOBAL TRADE LIBERALISATION COME TO AN END?

## Nick Hopkinson

Liberalisation of world trade has long been a central tenet of liberalism. To paraphrase Richard Cobden, the eminent 19<sup>th</sup> Century statesman and thinker: if goods do not cross borders, then armies will. One need only contrast the low levels of trade between India and Pakistan, and the tensions in their bilateral relationship, with the close economic and political integration of Germany and France today to prove the point. A world economy with low trade barriers is a fundamental building bloc of global peace and prosperity. Furthermore, there are few better ways to kickstart and lock in global economic recovery than through a concerted international effort to relaunch and conclude the current Doha Round of international trade negotiations. Whilst the benefits of global trade liberalisation may be relatively small, the impetus trade liberalisation could contribute to global business confidence and preventing protectionist backsliding should not be underestimated.

The Round of world trade negotiations agreed and launched in Doha in the aftermath of the 9 September 2001 terrorist attacks was intended to launch a “Development Round” (focused on agriculture, market access for non-agricultural products, services, trade-related aspects of intellectual property, trade and the environment, World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, and trade facilitation). However, the development goal is now unclear or perceived as one of many in the current Round. Almost a decade later, it appears there is no prospect of a successful conclusion to the Round. At the heart of the stalemate is the dilemma whether WTO members, which are acting in a mercantilist framework of negotiations, can actually deliver a pro-development or indeed any outcome.

The world economy has evolved rapidly in the near decade since the 2001 Doha Declaration. This period has been dominated by the rise of fast growing economies, notably China, India and Brazil, and efforts internationally to recover from the worst global recession since the 1930s. A growing number argue the longer the Doha Round drags on, the less relevant it is seen to be. It does not address major challenges such as: the impact of the rise of fast growing economies, exchange rate fluctuations and currency misalignments (which render trade instruments such as tariffs, anti-dumping duties and rules of origin ineffectual), climate change, food and energy security, and 1996 “Singapore Issues” such as procurement and competition policy.

The stalemate in Doha negotiations is increasingly regarded as jeopardising the WTO’s other functions. More attention should be paid to the functioning of the WTO as a rules-based system and dispute settlement body. Previous rounds succeeded because their agendas were re-aligned with current global realities.

As Jagdish Bhagwati noted in 2011 “Evidence is mounting that Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) foster harmful trade diversion by increasing discrimination against non-members through differential use of anti-dumping actions. Furthermore, bilateral agreements tend to introduce tied policy objectives of the developed market. For example, Colombia was obliged to introduce crime-related measures to secure a bilateral free trade deal with the US. In contrast, larger developing countries, as in the case of India in its agreement with the EU, are better able to secure concessions (in this case the dropping of all non-trade related measures)”.

Attempts to demonstrate leadership and improve communication about the WTO and the world trading system to the public and businesses worldwide are vital. Successive G20, G8 and other International Summits have repeatedly affirmed the value of an open world trading system and the need to bring the Doha Negotiation to a successful (and prompt) conclusion. The High Level Trade Experts Group (Final Report) observes “The follow through from these statements has been incomplete or non-existent”. Their Final Report argues “The Doha Round cannot be completed solely by trade negotiators; it needs a much stronger and direct involvement of political leaders”. Their Interim Report maintains “Politicians must be willing to explain the value of liberalisation, not just in terms of new market access for exports but in terms of the value of imports to widen choice and competition and drive productivity and growth”.

The greater engagement of and input from international business could help advance trade liberalisation. Unlike the Uruguay Round, which notably US financial firms supported, international business has largely been absent from lobbying activity during the Doha Round. In many cases, much tariff liberalisation has already been achieved. Secondly, even if tariffs and regulatory measures remain obstacles, with global supply chains, international business is largely able to circumvent

tariffs through their growing ability to locate various stages of production where it is most advantageous to them. Thirdly, the absence of most of the “Singapore Issues” (notably investment, competition policy, standards and procurement) gave business less of a stake in the Round. Fourthly, trade negotiations are slow (dominated by mercantilist, often defensive, positions) and any results are too small, long term and uncertain to ensure the fuller engagement of business.

The 2011 High Level Trade Experts Group (Final Report) notes “the current Doha package is substantial and a great deal has already been achieved. However, it is incomplete. Much of what needs to be done is relatively small, and involves limited political pain... while the agriculture and trade facilitation chapters are very advanced, others are (less so)... In industrial goods, the core of an ambitious agreement is already there... sectoral agreements seem achievable in at least seven areas where momentum genuinely exists. Adapted criteria could accommodate the necessity of special and differential treatment for developing countries. A sectoral agreement covering environmental goods should be added ... in services, both developed and developing countries need to produce a text that creates real new opportunities for exporters, building on the constructive engagement shown during summer 2008 at the Signalling Conference.”. Their Final Report also notes “the (services) package (could include): a pledge not to impose any new restrictions, especially on cross border trade and investment, by inscribing binding language to this effect in the schedules of specific commitments in the GATS; inscribing ... commitments to implement reforms by a certain date in the future to liberalise particularly foreign investments and in air and maritime sectors; agreement to expand the scope for temporary movement of services suppliers (Mode 4), conditional on source country obligations and transparent criteria relating to host country economic conditions”.

The inability to secure agreement after almost a decade of protracted negotiations raises questions about the functioning and relevance of the WTO, and the prospects for continued global growth. There are growing calls for an end to the Round in order to prevent other parts of the WTO (the Trade Policy Review Mechanism, Dispute Settlement and trade facilitation) being damaged. If Doha fails, new multilateral trade negotiations are unlikely to be re-launched for some time (largely given the run up to elections in the US, France and Germany in 2012 and 2013). Yet, the WTO is not the only forum for trade negotiations. Many countries are seeking liberalisation agreements, whether bilateral, plurilateral, sectoral or regional, with the fast growing economies of Asia in particular. If such PTAs liberalisation continues as it did

before the Uruguay Round, then the growing “spaghetti bowl” of trade agreements may in due course require urgent rationalisation and a renewed commitment to work at the multilateral level. Thus in spite of temporary frustrations, perhaps we can draw some inspiration from the reasonable hope that the international framework will ultimately deliver the result to which we aspire?

*Nick Hopkinson is a writer and rapporteur on international policy issues, Vice-Chair of Arundel and South Downs Liberal Democrats and a Councillor in two parishes. He was previously a Director at Wilton Park, the Foreign Office’s policy forum.*

## The Future of interLib

For reasons of economy, interLib will now be sent to most members by email. Readers will be aware of the massive hike in postal charges – down to the last Labour government, as we should remind those who complain, and also of paper and printing costs. Those members of LIBG who do not have this facility will continue to receive a paper copy, as will libraries. We will be happy to receive the opinions of members on this matter, but are not in a position to take any other decisions financially at this time.

A growing number of members have expressed a preference for emailed copies as it happens. Furthermore it enables us to break out of the constraints of paper production, running longer articles when appropriate (this has always been a difficult decision in the past). We hope that you continue to enjoy the magazine and find it useful. In dark days of recession Liberals of all persuasions must keep the flag of Internationalism flying.

***Stewart Rayment***



***Treasurer Wendy Kyrle-Pope & Chair Julie Smith with Alan Beith at the Diplomatic Reception.***

# PALESTINE & ISRAEL IN 2012

Guy Burton

This time last year *interLib* asked me to outline the internal situation facing the Palestinians. At the time I reported the general consensus in society that the Oslo peace process was dead. Although the Palestinian leadership had not yet officially given up on it, they were exploring a different track, which involved a more unilateral approach by embarking on a programme of state building and international legitimacy via full membership of the UN.

Twelve months on, neither approach can be said to have made much of a difference, although the context in which both the Palestinians and Israelis are operating has certainly changed. At the international level the Arab Spring continues to be felt across the region. Along with the removal of leaders in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, the demands of civil society have become more vocal, with many and especially the young expressing their frustration and dissatisfaction at their economic prospects and desire for more political freedom. This has manifested itself domestically, both in Palestinian and Israeli societies.

In the occupied Palestinian territory, politics is largely factional and concentrated between the nationalist Fatah and Islamist Hamas who have controlled the West Bank and Gaza respectively since mid-2007. The political division has been a source of much frustration in Palestinian society, although it took the example of Egypt to inspire the emergence of a new, non-aligned youth movement. Young people took to the streets to demand national unity and reconciliation, resulting in a heavy clampdown in Gaza and tense standoffs between the security forces and hunger strikers in the Ramallah city centre during March and April. The following month the protestors appeared to get their wish when a deal was brokered between Fatah and Hamas. However, by the end of year this had yet to lead to an end to the differences between the two sides. Moreover, it had not resulted in a national unity government.

The lack of any significant movement in the leadership is much in evidence. Although the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA) introduced a two-year plan for statehood in August 2009 and the leadership claimed it would demand UN membership at the General Assembly last September, the date passed by with little result. Although many Palestinians are realistic enough to admit that it would take more than

a declaration to achieve statehood, the PA leadership does not appear to have presented any alternatives. In May the PA introduced its National Development Plan, which consists of a continuation of its previous two-year project, with an emphasis on building up state institutions using donor funds while reducing spending on many essential public services; the main exception to these cuts are the security services, which have been the main recipients of international aid in recent years. At the same time the Palestinian bid for UN membership has been stalled, having been kicked into touch through the creation of a Security Council committee to review its application.

On the other side of the Green Line, the Israeli leadership appears distracted by regional concerns. The drumbeat for war with Iran has grown over the past year in response to Tehran's nuclear programme and suspected development of nuclear weapons. At the same time the leadership feels a growing sense of insecurity resulting from the Arab Spring. Reliable allies such as Egypt's Hosni Mubarak have been removed while reliable foes such as Syria's Assad regime, which can be realised on to maintain a cold peace, appear to be tottering. Perhaps as a result, the Israeli government got its initial reaction to the J14 movement which sprang up in the summer wrong. Frustrated by rising living costs and insufficient job or wage prospects, many of Israel's youth took to the streets, sleeping in tents to demonstrate the difficulties they faced. The government responded by claiming the youth were spoilt and not representative of wider Israeli society. In response the protestors' ranks swelled to over 300,000 in early August – a sizeable proportion of the country's total population of 7 million.

Although J14 echoed many of the other social protests that emerged not only in the region but globally last summer (e.g. the indignados in Spain, the students in Chile, the Occupy protestors across the US and in London), the Israeli movement faced two key challenges in relation to its position on the Palestinian question and how to sustain itself. On the Palestinian question, J14 was never able to reconcile the different strands of opinion within Israeli society, many of whom prefer to live in a 'bubble' where Palestinians and other Arabs are 'outside'. In addition, J14 struggled both to maintain its organisation and to institutionalise itself in Israeli politics. First, the

government set up a commission to review the problem on one hand while on the other hand the movement saw many of its supporters begin to peel off as autumn and winter approached and the need to find work intensified. Second, the movement failed to build sufficient links with established political parties to maintain pressure on the government. For an outside observer like me, today's impression of last summer's protests is that it offered a glimmer of an opportunity for change – but one that has been largely lost.

In sum, these observations of both the Israeli and Palestinian scenes point to the likelihood of continuing stalemate between the two and in relation to the Oslo process in 2012. The absence of any substantial change in the leaderships on both sides suggests that the scope for societal pressure on the PA or the Israeli government is limited. The same can also be said of the relationship between the two leaderships as well. The Israelis, who occupy a stronger position to the Palestinians, do not appear especially concerned or interested in the latter. Consequently, it is highly unlikely that the Palestinians will be able to make their presence felt.

Given this, I think that without some external catalyst – most likely from either the US or the EU – the status quo will persist. Yet the omens for such intervention are not good. Neither side has been especially active over the past year; the Obama administration has made no concerted effort to bring Israel and the Palestinians back to the negotiating table since the failed talks in September 2010. That it has not done so may well be due to shared US and Israeli concern with the Iranian threat, trumping other concerns. Meanwhile, despite being the PA's biggest funder, the EU has been largely silent during the national unity discussions between Fatah and Hamas. This in itself is telling, especially given the EU's decision to cut funding to the PA when Hamas last took national office following its parliamentary victory in 2006. To date it has made little comment on an eventual national unity government. Whether this means that it now realises that pressure may be more effectively brought to bear on the stronger party is a matter for conjecture. But what is certainly evident is that without pressure on Israel, the current situation will continue.

*Guy Burton is Acting Director and Research Fellow at the Centre for Development Studies in Birzeit University in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has previously been an advisor to the Liberal Democrats in Parliament.*

## ***THE GATESHEAD GAZETTE***

The agenda of the LibDem spring conference in Gateshead was almost entirely devoted to domestic matters, from tax to the NHS. But Conference overwhelmingly passed an important motion reaffirming the Party's belief in the future of the European project and how Britain needs to be right at the heart of the European Union, not on the margins to which David Cameron foolishly propelled us at the Brussels Summit last December. The debate of the motion in Liberal Democrat News of 16<sup>th</sup> March, including the recognition of necessary reforms in the way the EU functions. However here is Jonathan Fryer's speech from the debate:

*'Way out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean there is a small island, called Little Britain. A strange tribe known as the UKIP lives there, and over the last few weeks several Conservatives — notably the MEP Roger Helmer — have swum out to Little Britain, to help the UKIP repel foreign boarders. Alas, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, seems to dream of moving there himself — or at least that's the impression he gave our European partners at the Brussels Summit in December. He thought they would be impressed, but they weren't. And Cameron has done a grave disservice to the British people.*

*Let's be brutally honest. Britain is no longer a first rank global power. Just recently, Brazil leapfrogged Britain in terms of GDP and India won't be far behind. The world is moving rapidly towards a multipolar reality, in which Asia, Latin America and one day even Africa will assert their economic and political might.*

*For Europe to survive as a potent force in the 21st Century world, the European Union has to proceed with further integration. It must increasingly speak with one voice, not only on issues such as Trade and the environment but also in areas of common foreign and security policy. Currently, despite the best efforts of Cathy Ashton, the EU is punching below its weight. That situation must not continue, otherwise Europe itself will be marginalised.*

*So what does all this mean for Britain? At the moment, as so often during the past 60 years, the driving forces in Europe are France and Germany. But they would like Britain also to be at the heart of the European project. Because of our rich history and experience in international relations, Britain has so much to offer Europe. But there is a real danger that that opportunity is being lost. And the longer Britain positions itself on the margins of the European Union, the less the country will matter in global affairs. David*

*Cameron needs to stop pandering to those in the Conservative Party who look through rose-tinted spectacles at the mid-Atlantic island of Little Britain and instead face up to the real challenges ahead.*

*The world is changing fast and the EU must adapt to ensure that it keeps and indeed enhances its influence globally. It would be tragic if the United Kingdom were not a full partner in that development process. I do not want to live on the island of Little Britain, Mr Cameron — and neither should you.'*

*Jonathan Fryer*

## **IS THERE A PLACE FOR THE ARABS IN ISRAEL?**

The Lib Dem Friends of Palestine held a packed lunchtime fringe meeting at the Lib Dem Gateshead conference on Saturday 10 March. The topic was whether there is a future for the Arabs in Israel. There was seating for 40, but it was strictly standing room only and the audience spilled out into the corridor.

The speakers were Miri Weingarten of J-News and Baroness Jenny Tonge. It was chaired by Simon Hughes MP, deputy leader of the party, who revealed that Palestine was one of two topics that brought him into politics in 1970 (the other being Apartheid).

Miri Weingarten, an Israeli human rights advocate now living in this country, spoke about the discrimination faced by the Arab minority in Israel, and the attempt now very evident in influential sections of Israeli opinion to delegitimise their position as Israeli citizens. Avigdor Lieberman, the Israeli foreign minister, has even suggested that some predominantly Arab areas close to the border with the West Bank should be transferred to Palestinian control as a "swap" for illegal settlements, and that the Israeli Palestinians living there should lose their Israeli citizenship. She asked us to imagine what it feels like for Israeli Palestinian citizens to hear such discourse being conducted over their heads without any pretence that they had a right to be consulted. She also drew attention to discrimination against Israeli Palestinians in matters related to land, and when they marry other Palestinians from the occupied territories who do not have Israeli citizenship.

Baroness Tonge condemned the inability of politicians in the West to do more than wring their hands when firm action is needed. She extended the discussion to

the misery of those Palestinians in the occupied territories, particularly the Gaza Strip. In response to a question from Baroness Ludford MEP, the deputy chair of the Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel who warned against delegitimising Israel, she pointed out how Israeli policies in Gaza are creating hatred among malnourished children terrorised by the Israeli air force. How are these children going to feel when they grow up, and whom are they going to blame for their plight? She ended on a solemn note, pointing out that — quite apart from the moral and legal perspectives — it is not in our own, selfish interests to tolerate the continuation of this state of affairs.

John McHugo

Chair Lib Dem Friends of Palestine

*The Lib Dem Friends of Palestine fringe meeting at Gateshead Lib Dem Spring Conference*

## **BELARUS FORUM**

LIBG's joint forum on Belarus with Liberal Youth on 6<sup>th</sup> February looked at how proponents of democracy and human rights can seek to engage with Europe's last dictatorship. Belarus lies immediately west of Russia and was briefly a democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union before its current leader Alexander Lukashenko secured the presidency in 1994. Since then it has come to resemble the former Soviet Union, complete with a security police still called the KGB.

Yaruslau Kryvoi of the *Belarus Digest*, told the meeting that Belarus "is very dominated by Russia" which does not want the regime to fail. "It gets gigantic subsidies from Russia which allow its inefficient economy to function and distribute its subsidy among the population". He said Russia supported Belarus because she saw it as part of the former USSR that could choose the Eurasian solution that it is promoting among its neighbours rather than a European one. "Sanctions are unlikely to be effective because Russia will always support its economy and keep the regime going" Mr Kryvoi said.

Mr Kryvoi said there were some freedoms in Belarus, for instance use of the internet was not greatly restricted, and that political parties exist "though the votes are never counted and we are just given the results". A priority, he said, should be to engage with younger Belarussians in civil society bodies, as they had only ever known an independent country and looked to Europe more than do older people. Lower level officials might also be fruitful subjects for

engagement, since “if the regime were ever to change there would then be contacts”.

Alex Nice, until January head of the Russia and Eurasia programme at Chatham House, said the EU had conflicting aims in Belarus – it sought to promote human rights while also maintaining a working relationship with the regime. “The EU does not have a lot of leverage” he said, “Russia sees places on its border as a zero sum game in terms of its influence, and sees the EU as a threat to its domestic stability”. “They will stick with Lukashenko even if they don’t like him if the alternative is a pro-Western regime”. He predicted that change would only come from within Belarus, or within Russia.

Jo Swinson, Liberal Democrat MP for East Dumbartonshire, said she first became interested in Belarus when taking part in a Parliamentary debate in 2008. She pointed out the west did not “have a great record on regime change” but added “No regime lasts forever; we need to support civil society there, and the Belarussian diaspora”.

*Mark Smulian*

## VIV BINGHAM 1932-2012

Viv Bingham was one of those Liberals who will be deeply missed. An unstinting internationalist and pacifist, Viv was President of the Liberal Party 1981-1982. He was one of those politicians who never quite made it, in the sense of succeeding in getting elected, carrying the Liberal banner through fallow years. He tried often enough, standing for Parliament in Heywood and Royston (February and October 1964), Hazel Grove (1979), Derbyshire West (1983) and Stalybridge and Hyde (2005). He also had a stab at the European Parliament in 1979.

In the days of the old Liberal Party Council, he was often a thorn in the leadership’s side and at later Liberal Democrat conferences he often found his natural allies among the young. He was granted an OBE in recognition of his political activities but was probably too critical of the establishment for the peerage he richly deserved.

His experience in the business world, in the Co-operative Movement, formed a link with that organisation which otherwise slavishly thinks it belongs in the Labour camp. Having forgotten about this plank of Liberal policy, the Lib Dems seem at last to be awakening to it once more.

Viv was remarkably unstuffy and saw himself very much on the Left of British politics, actively supporting CND, Liberal CND and the Lib Dem Peace Group. Many will remember him leading the singing of ‘We Shall Overcome’ at a Glee Club.

Viv summed up his passion for Liberalism in one word: Freedom, and he raged against injustice. He could at times be a caricature of a gruff Northerner and at others the total gentleman, rooted in family and community, but with a non-Conformist compassion that embraced the whole of humanity.

*Jonathan Fryer & Stewart Rayment*

## REVIEWS

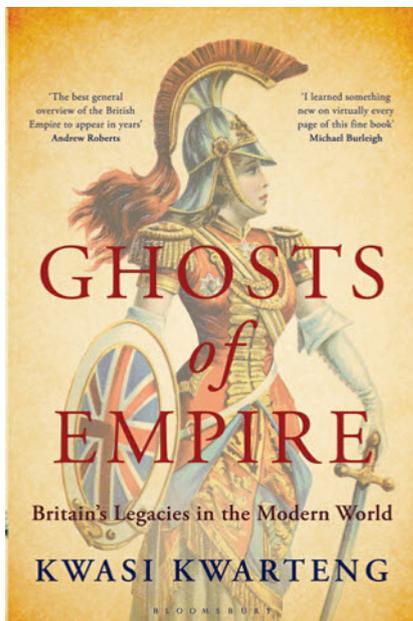
### **Ghosts of Empire, by Kwasi Kwarteng Bloomsbury 2011 £25.00 (also eBook)**

Kwasi Kwarteng is a Conservative MP. Given his account of the British Empire this is almost incomprehensible, but as Private Willis (an intellectual chap) put it in *Iolanthe* ‘every boy and every gal that’s born into the world alive is either a little Liberal or else a little Conservative!’ Socialists are of course, usually, the worst kind of conservative.

Kwarteng focuses on a handful of Britain’s imperial adventures, and how these have impacted on some of the greatest tragedies of the modern world. He starts with Iraq, moves on to Kashmir, then Burma, Sudan, Nigeria and Hong Kong. Therein we are treated to a catalogue of errors, usually the choice of the man on the ground, with little or no reference to Parliament (which in any case, at the time was barely up to dealing with such matters). Change the man on the spot and like as not the policy would change. I believe it was Julius Nyerere who said something like the borders of African countries were so insane that there must be something sacred in them. Most of these countries didn’t exist outside of the imperialist nightmare, which accounts for their being barely sustainable, except by force, now. The partition of Sudan is important because it breaks down an old imperial frontier, though we certainly haven’t heard the end of that matter.

Though Tanganyika isn’t one of Kwarteng’s cases, Nyerere was a typical product of the imperial system – the son of a Zanaki Chief, given an education (typical of the imperialist feudal mentality to promote those who reflected their hierarchical world view), is polluted by Fabianism whilst at Edinburgh university and drives his country to wreck and ruin.

Progressive Liberals fought a rear-guard action against all this, but we had our LImps and others, and tended not to overturn the policies of a previous Tory administration. The piece on Burma is perhaps the best example of this. Randolph Churchill had flouted Parliamentary sovereignty in the annexation of Upper Burma, and Gladstone undoubtedly found himself in a no-win situation. We are treated to Henry Richard's denunciation of imperial war and Lewis McIver, who seems to have had some understanding of the country, attacking the move in the Commons. The gist of this is that by over-throwing an existing government the country would be 'consigned to a long period of anarchy' (the term used pejoratively, but haven't we seen that somewhere else more recently?) Kwarteng concludes on Burma with the tragedies of Aung San and his daughter Aung San Suu Kyi (let us now hope



there is light at the end of the tunnel). It is incidentally, the centenary of Richard's birth this year (April 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Kwarteng concludes *'The British Empire, in its scale and ethos, was completely unlike any system of government that the world has known. It is highly unlikely that such an enterprise will be undertaken by any nation, no matter how powerful, ever again.'* The dominant imperialisms – American and Chinese, are certainly different beasts – even in denial that they are imperialism at all.

**Stewart Rayment**

**Nick Clegg: the biography,**  
**by Chris Bowers.**  
**Biteback 2011 £17.99**

In one aspect Nick Clegg is particularly striking to a foreigner – a Liberal, but after all, still a foreigner – it is his “continental” nature. I refer to his attitude, his dialectics, his political ideas, which are really very continental and closer to what we expect of a European politician than an Anglo-Saxon.

The first impression is given by Nick Clegg observed from a distance, in his speeches or statements. And the close-up Nick Clegg, when you greet him and hold a conversation, confirms that first impression.

Obviously, with his origins, his choices, and his personal and political history, any other Nick Clegg would have been bizarre. I've met a few Anglo-Saxon politicians – British, American, Irish, Australian... but though I admire the political excellence of some, in none have I perceived a politician with a continental outlook. Until I observed Nick Clegg.

I have no solid grounds on which to assess the performance of Nick Clegg in government. Nor, in fact, that of the Lib Dems in government after so many years in the wilderness. The task they faced was no easy one, and that of Nick Clegg, even less so. He had to fight on two simultaneous fronts: both within the coalition government and also within his own party, which was reluctant to make a deal with the Conservatives. A daunting undertaking, which itself obliges us to grant particular respect and recognition to the man who has taken it on. In this case Nick Clegg. After reading Chris Bowers' biography of him I believe I have a better understanding of what is happening, although very little of why.

In Continental Europe there are opposing views regarding Britain and its role in Europe. For some, its “hands off” participation, its historical bebuffs, its antipathy to integration, all suggest that Britain should quit the European Union as soon as possible. But for others, including myself, it is difficult to conceive of Europe without Great Britain, without the British. Our idea of European identity is closer to the United Kingdom than that of the French-German axis, or at least we cannot contemplate a Europe without the balance provided by the two sides of the Channel.

From this standpoint, from the hypothesis that a British presence should be maintained in a key element of the Europe we want, the personality of Nick Clegg represents a unique opportunity. I would say both for Britain and for the rest of Europe. It will

be very difficult to find someone in the Cabinet with a stronger European dimension, especially at the personal level, which is important. If this dimension, moreover, is that of a Liberal ideology, such a figure becomes almost irreplaceable.

The political world is subject to many pressures and we cannot know Clegg's direction and results will be



*Nick Clegg at the Diplomatic Reception.*

affected by his having been a member of a coalition government, at this time and with these partners. We do not know whether the final balance will tilt more toward success (as we hope!) or disappointment. Nevertheless, for many continental Liberals who feel very close in spirit to the UK, Nick Clegg represents a memorable opportunity to narrow the gap, bridge the differences and the achieve a more European Britain – and also, let us not forget, a more British Europe.

*Josep Soler*  
*Vice President & Bureau Member, Liberal International*

**Imposing Values, an essay on Liberalism and Regulation, by N Scott Arnold.**  
**Oxford University Press (USA) 2009**

The White House appears through the Washington haze on the cover photograph; somehow this tells us something. Arnold contrasts the consensus and divergence of Economic and Social Liberal theory in American public policy. As we hear echoes of Mitt and Newt arguing about the dismantling of all this, it is good to see what is alive in American liberalism, not least because there are those over here (mostly to our right) who look there for possible solutions. It is also an object lesson in how bureaucratized solutions become, possibly defeating their original purpose, and in that a word of caution.

*Stewart Rayment*

**China, a wolf in the world,**  
**by George Walden**  
**Gibson Square 2011 £9.99**

George Walden is an old China & Russia hand, of Cold War, and particularly Cultural Revolution experience. He was also Conservative MP for Buckingham. Younger Conservatives like Iain Dale consider him to be a crushing bore (surely the pot calling the kettle black), but ought to concede that in his field Walden is a man to be listened too.

Walden's message is fairly straight forward; there will always be uncertainties in dealing with China, exacerbated by our tendency to match it to the expectations of our own prejudices rather than the facts, which may be plainly before us. He is particularly scathing of western left wing academics that ignore those facts – the Mao Tse-Tongue-in-Cheek. China can never have justice until the true legacy of Mao is admitted to, but this, for the moment at least, challenges the supremacy of the Communist Party (CCP).

The China that has reinvented itself over the last thirty years embraces all of the mistakes of western capitalism – cars, cyber-sex (better than the masses dabbling in politics so far as the CCP is concerned). Given the vanguard position that miners have frequently taken in revolution, their conditions are amongst the worst in the world.

He sees an authoritarian capitalism emerging in China & Russia; we would probably cite further examples in the East – Singapore for instance (as a Tory, Walden thinks 'democracy has been prudently measured' in Singapore). China has scores to settle with the West. We see these in the Chinese position on Darfur, Libya and Syria, but Walden thinks direct conflicts are more likely to be the long postponed issue of the border with Russia, with whom China's scores are no less. Japan & Taiwan will probably accommodate themselves. Tension with India is also a delicate course. Walden doesn't say much about Tibet or the Uighurs. China has 20% of the world's population, but only 5% of the world's fresh water supply. Hu Jintao has already noted how water shortages impact on 'China's economic security, ecological security and national security' – this in particular will impact on all of these issues.

*Stewart Rayment.*

**The Atlantic and Its Enemies,**  
**by Norman Stone**  
**Penguin 2011 £12.99**

Somewhere between Allen Lane and Penguin, Stone's opus has lost something in its subtitle – it is no longer 'A personal history of the Cold War' but 'A history of the Cold War'. Take note.

Stone is a Conservative, indeed sometime adviser and speech writer to Margaret Thatcher. As an academic one does not doubt his expertise on Russia and eastern Europe and he has insight on matters closer to home.

The book is pretty much what it says on the packet – a history of the Cold War; it is opinionated, and that is why a 'personal history' is most honest, because we know where it comes from. In the middle of the book is an essay '1968: A Generation' – it is an attack on France, and all that has gone wrong with it since the Third Republic (it is great to find somebody giving a cheer for Jean Zay – cruelly murdered by the Vichy Milice and like so many minor ministers of governments, almost forgotten).

Essentially a collection of essays, you can dip in and out. 'Ending History' is worth a read as a critical appraisal of Thatcher (with a particularly jaded academic twist). I can't help thinking that those problems are still with us; just what did New Labour achieve?

One will concede that Liberal parties were not major players in the UK throughout this period (& the two indexed references go back to 1906 & 1914). In 'Ending History' Stone cannot bring himself to name us – 'the middle party' takes Eastbourne after Ian Gow's assassination by the Provisional IRA. So you know where we stand. I will be more generous, Stone provides a useful insight to the events those times, especially since many of the issues are unresolved and thus work in progress.

***Stewart Rayment***

**From Normativity to Responsibility,**  
**by Joseph Raz**  
**Oxford University Press 2011 £30.00**

Joseph Raz is arguably the most influential successor to HLA Hart who developed a theory of law based on the attitudes of participants in the legal system and a major contributor to Liberal philosophy in and beyond the legal field. He teaches at Oxford and Columbia universities. Raz's own theories have further explored the nature of legal norms (what we ought to do) and

the sources of law's authority. He is known for his interest in topics spanning the whole of legal philosophy, and in this latest book moves beyond law to the nature of all human actions. Instead of concentrating on how the law gives us reasons for acting, he examines our reasoning process for any action, and what our responsibilities are.

It is perhaps slightly alarming to read a book which begins with the declaration 'This is not the book I intended to write.' Luckily, Raz is not confessing to accidental off-topic ramblings for 300 pages, left unedited because of a submission deadline. He is trying to explain that the subject he wishes to explore is so vast, that this book can only hope to address one part of it. And it is a very vast subject. Away from the narrow confines of law, Raz is trying to create a theory which demonstrates the 'why' for every one of our actions.

The first part, 'On Normativity', looks at the nature of normative reasons and suggests one possible theory of normativity. Raz believes that normative reasons are not merely explanations. They are reasons that motivate an agent performs an action, and the agent is aware of this reason. Intentional actions are performed for practical reasons and so are necessarily aimed at some good. Raz considers the problem of Ignatius blowing up a plane to destroy some documents, knowing that this will kill everyone on the plane. Raz holds that the killing of the people is intentional, even though he had no reason to kill the people. This is because intentional includes 'embedded' intention, and so Ignatius' reason for destroying the plane knowing the side-effect will be killing the people shows he intended to kill them.

In the second part, 'On Practical Reasoning', Raz turns to how we assess and reconcile conflicting reasons, and so come to decisions on how to act. He believes that practical reasoning is similar to other reasoning in that the conclusion to all kinds of reasoning is 'beliefs'. Turning to the conflict of reasons, Raz considers situations where we have reasons for performing two acts, but there is only the possibility of performing one of them. He believes that such conflicts are subject to the conformity principle, which states we should conform to reason completely, and if this is not possible we should come as close to conformity as possible. There is specific examination of our almost instinctive support for aggregation – that, given the choice, you should save two lives instead of one, assuming both options are equally achievable. Raz believes that aggregation cannot apply to all situations – well-being is superior. We are, thankfully, morally free to make friends with

those we like and will make us happy, instead of seeking out popular people who can provide lots of friends-making opportunities in order to increase net friendship in the world.

The third section, 'On Responsibility', examines what it means to be 'responsible' for our actions, and explains the circumstances in which we do assume this responsibility. The conditions for responsibility, Raz suggests, are connected to our perception of our ability to guide our actions, from areas where we feel confidently in control to ones where we seem to be at the mercy of 'luck'. He looks at the link between responsibility and blame, and concludes that the latter is an artificial conception, ignoring important factors such as intention and mental states. Responsibility should be understood as resulting from the functioning of our capacities of rational agency. Returning to his 'home ground' of law, Raz justifies the sanctions attached to negligent activity on this basis.

Raz has explored in this book the way we understand our duties and rights, and how we decide the way we ought to act. In less than three-hundred pages it provides a clearly-written and focused answer to these types of inquiry. It will be interesting to read academic responses to this work, and any attempts by other daring philosophers to join Raz at the forefront of philosophy, presenting comparably comprehensive accounts of normativity, reasoning and responsibility.

*Eleanor Healy Birt*

**Madame Pamplemousse and the Enchanted Sweet Shop, by Rupert Kingfisher  
Bloomsbury 2010 £7.99**

Now it is time to be harsh. Madame Pamplemousse first appeared about three years ago with her *Incredible Edibles* and moved on with the *Time Travelling Café*. These are mostly set in the darker corners of Paris (though possibly millions of millennia before Trojan exiles first settled there). The stories are charming, as are Sue Hellard's illustrations; the production is attractive, so why wait for the paperback when the hard cover is going for a song? But I urge Rupert Kingfisher to try harder; he has some excellent stories and material and I'm sure he can do better with it. Re-read Susan Cooper and consider her work against that of J.K. Rowling. Read 'Zazie dans la Metro' and Walter Benjamin.

Having read the *Time Travelling Café*, the chief critic's only comment was that it was 'Alright'; she and friends were later baffling parents with their explanation of the café and its coffee machine, which

were apparently the focus of the game they were playing.

Political corruption is hinted at in *Incredible Edibles*; the president of France is, predictably, faceless – we shall see in a few weeks time. Will it be Sarkozy or a dash of Hollandeise sauce? What ever the outcome, the absence of a substantial Liberal movement in France is a tragedy in the country that gave us Tocqueville and Montesquieu. *The Time Travelling Café* deals with the evils of planners and politicians who think they know better than us oiks. *The Enchanted Sweet Shop* confronts some of the basic problems of being different and time travel. The science fiction and the individualism are sound.

*Stewart Rayment*

## JENNY TONGE

The Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine regret the resignation of the party whip by Baroness Tonge and offer her their full support. Her resignation follows condemnation of her by the party leadership for remarks she made in a meeting at Middlesex University last week. The condemnation was made before the leadership had heard her side of the story or even spoken to her. That action in itself worries us. She is entitled to an apology.

Her actual words which caused the controversy were "Israel is not going to be there forever on its present performance". She has confirmed to us that her intention was to imply that Israel's wilful failure to uphold and respect the human rights of Palestinian Muslims and Christians is behaviour which is likely to lead to its self-destruction. This failure by Israel applies both with regard to its own Arab citizens (whom it discriminates against) and to the people of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (who have endured Israeli occupation for nearly 45 years). We consider that her words, when interpreted in this context, were entirely reasonable.

It is worth noting that her remarks were made at the end of a long and acrimonious meeting in which she was repeatedly barracked by pro-Israeli government hecklers. The video clip which recorded her remarks is incomplete and does not give a full or accurate impression of the debate. What disturbs us most, however, is the selective reporting of her remarks on the blogs by Richard Millet and Guido Fawkes. The three minute clip of her remarks on Guido Fawkes is entitled "LibDem Peer says 'Israel won't be there forever'." This partial quotation would seem very possibly to be deliberate, and has had the effect of fostering a misinterpretation of her views.

John McHugo, chair of Lib Dem Friends of Palestine, said, "This is a witchhunt based on trial by blog. Jenny's motivation in speaking up for the rights of the oppressed is anger at injustice when others, who have the duty to speak out, pass by silently on the other side of the street. It is also an attempt to make Jenny the story, and to detract attention from the evils of Israel's occupation."

*John McHugo*



*Family and friends of the late David Griffiths gathered in his memory on Saint David's Day at the NLC. Joyce Arram, Valery Davis, John Alderdice, Adrian Trett, Sharon Bowles, Simon Hughes, Barbara Emerson, Justine Lawson, Gareth Griffiths, Julie Smith, Phil Bennion, Paul Keetch, Stewart Rayment, & Dominique.*



*Sharon Bowles, Justine Lawson, Valery Davis & Dominique*



*Robert Woodthorpe Browne, John Alderdice, Paul Keetch & Adrian Trett*



*Barbara Emerson & Gareth Griffiths*