100 YEARS ON, OUR FIGHT IS NOT OVER

Equality has not been won, say Labour women

by Lamiat Sabin

TODAY marks 100 years since the Representation of the People Act that facilitated some women’s right to vote — but more needs to be done to improve politics for women, campaigners and Labour have said.

The shadow cabinet will be meeting at the Museum of London to mark the centenary of property-owning women over 30 achieving the right to vote in 1918.

A decade later, that right was extended to all women over 21.

The Labour Party said it is proud to have a gender-balanced shadow cabinet and more female MPs than all other parties put together.

But only just over a third (37 per cent) of young women think equal representation in Parliament will be achieved in their lifetime, according to new research from gender equality campaign group the Fawcett Society.

At current rates — with just 32 per cent of MPs women — it will take until 2062 to achieve equal representation.

Increasing the number of female MPs makes “political sense” as laws regarding women’s rights would not have been passed otherwise, Fawcett Society chief executive Sam Smethers said.

She suggested that this process can be hastened by legislating to require parties to “take action,” and having “meaningful sanctions” imposed by an independent regulator in cases of sexual harassment in Parliament and local government.

This afternoon, the shadow cabinet will launch Labour’s year-long campaign at the Suffragettes Exhibition to celebrate the centenary of women’s suffrage and look at how to achieve full equality for women.

And Megan Dobney of the Sylvia Pankhurst memorial committee said the Suffragette’s legacy should be recognised and called for support for the campaign to erect a statue of her in Clerkenwell Green, London.

“Statues don’t win progress but they are a lasting reminder of the contribution of those they represent. Sylvia fought racism, fascism, imperialism and for the democratic rights of all — as well as for the vote for women. 2018 is the year to mark her unique contribution.” Shadow home secretary Diane Abbott said: “Personally I will never forget the day that I cast my first vote. Nor will I forget watching my first election count and seeing thousands of ballot papers with X against my name.”

Shadow education secretary Angela Rayner said: “In 2009, the fascist BNP were standing in the European elections. “On polling day I ended up in hospital waiting to give birth, but I knew I had to use that right to vote. “To everyone’s surprise, I insisted on getting out to the polling station to vote Labour.”

Shadow minister for women and equalities Dawn Butler said that the centenary “illustrates that every battle is worth the fight as it takes us a step closer to equality but we must never stop fighting.”

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has also filmed a video featuring a commemorative plaque that he and the late Tony Benn placed in the Commons brough cupboard where Emily Wilding Davison hid overnight so she could be registered in the census as living in Parliament.
HUNDREDS of workers employed by bankrupt public-service private Carillion have been emailed and told: “Don’t bother turning up for work on Monday.”

The email carrying the blunt message was sent by the company’s receivers, finance firm PwC.

Four hundred and fifty workers involved in Carillion’s public and private contracts were contacted on Saturday. The job losses are on top of 377 redundancies announced on Friday.

Union GMB, some of whose members are affected, denounced the email sackings as “callous.”

GMB national secretary Behana Azam said: “Loyal Carillion staff are being treated with utter contempt by PwC.”

“The receiver said that Carillion’s central office staff would remain in place until April, then we see almost 500 are being booted out. “It’s not just the fact so many are being made redundant. It’s the callous way PwC are going about it which is so outrageous.

“Some people received emails on Saturday simply telling them not to bother turning up for work on Monday. Others have been given less than a day’s notice.

“And the ones that still have a job are in limbo. They turn up to work each day not knowing if they’ll still have a job at the end of the day.

“Carillion, which went bankrupt last month, employed 20,000 workers in Britain. Despite three profit warnings issued by the firm last year, the government gave the company £2 billion in public service contracts.

“Shadow business, energy and industrial strategy secretary Rebecca Long-Bailey said: “The government has let down workers and businesses impacted by Carillion’s collapse.

“Eight hundred workers have lost their jobs, more are left not knowing what the future holds for them and Carillion’s shoddy treatment of businesses in its supply chain threatens even more jobs.

“The Tories have failed to protect the pay, conditions or pensions of workers on Carillion contracts.”

“They must now act quickly to ensure that these workers receive swift redundancy payments and are properly supported.”

The government said yesterday that it “appreciated” the difficulties faced by hundreds of sacked Carillion workers.

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WHITE supremacist Ethan Stables was found guilty yesterday of planning a machete attack on a gay pride event in a pub.

The 20-year-old was arrested by armed police on June 23 after a tip-off as he walked towards the New Empire pub in Barrow, Cumbria.

A member of a far-right Facebook group warned police that Mr Stables had posted that he was “going to war” and planned to “slaughter every single one of the gay bastards.”

Mr Stables was unarmed when he was arrested, but police found an axe, a machete and bomb-making material at his home.

Jurors were shown a video of him burning a rainbow flag and posing next to a swastika flag hanging on his bedroom wall.

Police also found internet searches for “how to make chemical poison,” “what is prison like for a murderer” and “I want to go on a killing spree.”

He had also searched for how to make a bomb from matches and police found a collection of cut-off match heads in his flat.

During his trial, Mr Stables, who is on the autistic spectrum, claimed he was himself bisexual, telling jurors at Leeds Crown Court that he did not intend to carry out the attack and was simply venting his anger online.

His lawyer Patrick Upward QC told the court that his client was not a white supremacist but simply a “white fantasist.”

Mr Stables, of Egerton Court, Barrow, was found guilty of preparing an act of terrorism, making threats to kill and possessing an explosive.

He will be sentenced tomorrow.

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It’s outrageous: Virgin’s West Coast rail contract extended

UNIONS have slammed the government’s “outrageous” decision to extend Virgin Trains’ contract to run services on the West Coast Main Line.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced yesterday that the company’s contract would be extended until April 2020.

The franchise had been due to end this April, but the government previously announced Virgin would run services until April 2019.

Mr Grayling has been hammered for his mismanagement of Virgin’s East Coast franchise, which will end three years early in 2020. RMT general secretary Mick Cash said Mr Grayling’s announcement exposed “the cronynism and chicanery of the privatised rail franchising process and will ram yet another nail into the coffin of this whole rotten business.”

And drivers’ union Aslef’s general secretary Mick Whelan said: “It is outrageous that Virgin Trains has been handed a lucrative new contract to run services on the West Coast Main Line despite serious criticism of its owners’ handling of the east coast franchise.”

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**INDUSTRIAL**

Usdaw demands talks after Homebase moots jobs cull

SHOP workers’ union Usdaw demanded talks yesterday after DIY firm Homebase announced plans to close up to 40 stores with the potential loss of 2,000 jobs.

The firm said that between 20 and 40 of its “worst-performing” stores could close down. Homebase which has 250 stores in Britain employing 12,000 workers, was taken over two years ago by Australian-owned conglomerate Bunnings in a £340 million deal.

The announcement follows what has been reported as a “miserable January” for high street businesses.

Supermarket chains Sainsbury, Tesco and Morrisons have all announced job losses, despite being in profit and handing out dividends to shareholders.

Usdaw national officer David Gill told the Morning Star: “Usdaw is the trade union for Homebase staff and now more than ever they need representation and the support we can provide.

“It is crucial that the company listens to the staff to make a success of the business. We are providing our members with the support and representation they require throughout this difficult time.”

**PHONE-HACKING**

Hugh Grant: now is the time for Leveson Part II

HUGH GRANT called yesterday for the second part of the Leveson inquiry to take place after settling his phone-hacking damages claims against Mirror Group Newspapers.

The actor is understood to have donated a six-figure damages sum to campaign group Hacked Off.

Speaking outside court, Mr Grant said the case was not just about him but the “nature of high-level concealment at the Mirror Group.”

Alex Wilson, for MGN, said the company “deeply regrets the wrongful acts of its former employees.”

But Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom chair Ann Field said the settlement did not end matters.

“Staff in Homebase stores are extremely concerned that Wefarmers, the parent company of Homebase owners Bunnings UK, are reviewing the business after acquiring it barely two years ago.

“I have written to the company seeking clarification about their intentions and calling for them to involve Usdaw in the review to ensure the staff have a voice in their future.”

**MITTIN INQUIRY**

SPYCOPS VICTIMS BLAST ‘FARCE’ OF ANONYMITY

CAMPAIGNERS’ SILK: undercover policing hearings ‘increasingly look like window-dressing’

AN INQUIRY into undercover policing was branded a “farce” yesterday as counsel for the victims complained that keeping the officers anonymised would undermine the purpose of the inquiry.

Counsel for the victims said they were “extremely disappointed” with the inquiry’s progress and several observers left the public gallery at London’s High Court during proceedings.

Inquiry chairman Sir John Mitting heard applications for proceedings.

Police’s special demonstration officers from the Metropolitan Mitting heard applications for proceedings.

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Inquiry chairma
Corbyn savages Trump NHS jibe

by Lamiat Sabin

JEREMY CORBYN slapped down Donald Trump yesterday after the US president claimed people were marching because the NHS is “going broke and not working.”

Saturday’s demonstration was organised by the People’s Assembly Against Austerity and NHS Campaigns Together to demand that Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt backs off from further privatisation and stops starving the NHS of sufficient funds.

Labour leader Mr Corbyn replied to Mr Trump on Twitter, telling him: “People were marching because we love our NHS and hate what the Tories are doing to it. Healthcare is a human right.”

The co-organisers of the march said the protest was against the prospect of moves to an “American-style system which is widely acknowledged to be one of the most expensive, inefficient and unjust healthcare systems in the world.”

In their own message to Mr Trump, they said: “We don’t agree with your divisive and incorrect rhetoric. No thanks.”

The future was sparked as Labour secured an urgent debate on the NHS winter crisis yesterday.

Shadow health secretary Jonathan Ashworth, who made the demand, said the four-hour A&E waiting time target had effectively been abandoned until March 2019.

Turning on the US president, he told MPs: “By the way, we’ll take no lessons from Donald Trump, who wants to deny healthcare to millions with a system that checks your purse before it checks your pulse.

“The NHS model isn’t broke, but it does need funding. If this government won’t give it the funding it needs, then the next Labour government will.”

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NHS forced to cancel cancer operations as funds run dry

by Peter Lazenby

OPERATIONS on cancer and heart patients are being cancelled as the NHS sinks deeper into crisis, it was revealed yesterday.

Campaign group the Patients Association said the government has created “a nightmare” for people desperately needing treatment.

Hospitals had already been told by management body NHS England to postpone non-urgent operations such as hip and knee replacements to free beds for more urgent admissions. But NHS trusts say they are now having to cancel heart and cancer operations too.

Hundreds of patients are being told on the day their operation is due that it is cancelled. Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said that in December and January 34 cancer operations were postponed on the day of surgery or the day before because of a lack of beds in intensive-care units.

University Hospitals Birmingham said it had to cancel 34 cancer operations, 53 cardiac procedures and four heart repairs.

University Hospitals North Midlands medical director Dr John Oxtoby said that “due to severe and sustained pressure on our services” its hospitals had to “prioritise some urgent surgery.”

Chief executive of the Patients’ Association Rachel Power said: “The canby cellation of an operation for someone with a life-threatening condition is always deeply undesirable.”

She demanded to know from NHS England if the number of cancelled operations this year was higher than in previous years.

“Delaying surgery in these instances increases the risk to life and is a nightmare for any patient subjected to it,” she said.

National officer of general union GMB Kevin Brandstat ter said: “The fact the government has mismanaged this year’s winter crisis so badly that cancer and heart operations are being cancelled is scarcely believable.

“Everyone apart from Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt seemed to see this crisis coming a mile off – it repeats the pattern of previous years.

“Yet instead of properly preparing for it, seriously ill patients now face the nightmare of having their operations cancelled.

“Jeremy Hunt is clearly not up to the job and must step down before the NHS crumbles to dust in front of us.”

A panel of health experts, set up by the Lib Dems, suggested yesterday that a new ring-fenced tax to fund the NHS and social care, replacing national insurance, should be introduced.

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Property guardians ‘need more protections’

LONDON Assembly Members are demanding more action to protect property guardians in the city. A report published today by the assembly’s housing committee calls on the mayor and Westminster government to improve the rights of those legally living in vacant buildings.

Owners of empty residential and commercial buildings often draft in property guardians, who have a licence agreement but no tenancy rights, on cheap rents to deter squatters.

The committee warned that many guardians are low-paid and forced to accept substandard living conditions and said legislation should be reviewed so that they benefit from improvements made to the private-rented sector.

Assembly members need guidance about their legal rights and a place to raise concerns about a property guardian company.

London Assembly housing committee chairwoman Sian Berry said:

“Most guardians are simply working Londoners on lower than average wages who don’t see any other affordable options.

“We want to see action from the mayor and government to make potential guardians more aware of their rights and close the gaps in the law to give these most vulnerable renters more protection and security.”

Activists lay into plans to charge migrants NHS fees

TRADING union activists seeking to oust Tory Work and Pensions Secretary Esther McVey from her Tatton constituency released a new campaign song yesterday calling for her sacking.

Salford musician Dominic Williams’s hard-hitting song No More (Back Esther) Now exposes the then disabilities minister’s role in imposing the hated bedroom tax and harsh benefits changes that hit hundreds of thousands of Britain’s most vulnerable people.

Ms McVey also came under fire in the Commons yesterday for ignoring a question on government failure to protect workers’ pension schemes, including those of Carillion employees.

Downing Street “categorically” stated yesterday that Britain would not enter into any form of customs union agreement after leaving the EU.

It clarified its stance over the matter amid clashes and confusion in the Cabinet.

The government says its decision is based on Britain’s ability to strike independent trade deals with non-EU countries.

PM Theresa May’s official spokesman said the government had set out its position in a paper published in August, which acknowledged that the options of a customs partnership that were being explored would be “challenging” to implement.

The chairman of the Commons exiting the EU committee, Labour MP Hilary Benn, told BBC Radio 4’s Today programme that it was a “profound mistake” to leave the customs union.

GMB union general secretary Tim Roache said that the government appears to have rejected the idea of a customs union to placate squabbling members of the Cabinet and save Ms May’s skin, rather than taking jobs into consideration.

He added: “The future of our ports, manufacturing and our trade with Ireland will be hugely affected outside a customs union, yet these issues are seemingly absent from government thinking.

“If this is indeed the Prime Minister’s decision — where is the plan for our jobs and our ports?

“Industry, communities and livelihoods are at stake, we cannot continue with this level of uncertainty.”

The government must put working people first as not having any form of customs union would be “bad for jobs, bad for investment and bad for business,” TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady said.

She added: “The Prime Minister must break free of the Brexit extremists in her party and put working people first.”

The EU’s chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier warned yesterday that there was “not a minute to lose” in efforts to achieve a Brexit deal.

After a three-course lunch of smoked salmon, pork belly and vanilla custard tart, Mr Barnier told Downing Street the “time has come to make a choice.”

Outside the customs union and single market there would be barriers to trade, he pointed out.

Labour has called for maximum access to the single market without calling for membership, which would place restrictions on its plans to extend public ownership and invest in industry.

Barnier visit: May seeks to quell dissent while union attack lack of focus on jobs and workers

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Morning Star Tuesday February 6 2018
**IRAQ**

International parties back endangered communists

ALMOST 60 communist and workers’ parties have signed a new statement in support of jailed Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) leaders.

The statement, released yesterday, condemned President Omar al-Bashir’s “dictatorial regime” for the arrests made during and following last month’s SCP-organised protests in Khartoum against International Monetary Fund-demand ed cuts to wheat subsidies.

“We believe that the health and lives of the detainees of the Sudanese Communist Party are in imminent danger,” the signatories said, adding that authorities had seized copies of the SCP organ Almadian and other newspapers.

Last week SCP politburo spokesman Fathi al-Fadl said at least four party spokesmen Fathi el-Fadl were in Zalingh in the capital of North Darfur state, and Al-Fashir, the capital of the Shala prison outside of miles from Khartoum. But dozens of US soldiers have been transported from Iraq to Afghanistan on daily flights over the past week, along with weapons and equipment, the contractors said.

An AP reporter at the al-Asad base in western Iraq said troop movements reflecting contractors’ account: “We’ve had a recent change of mission and soon we’ll be supporting a different theatre of operations in the coming month,” US Army First Lieutenant William John Raymond told AP at al-Asad.

He spoke as he and a handful of soldiers from his unit conducted equipment inventory checks required before leaving Iraq.

Lt Raymond declined to specify where his unit was being sent, as that information had yet to be made public.

A senior Iraqi official close to Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said 60 per cent of all US troops now in the country would be withdrawn, according to the initial agreement reached with Washington.

The plan would leave a force of about 4,000 US troops to continue training the Iraqi forces.

“Continued coalition presence in Iraq will be conditions-based, proportional to the need and in co-ordination with the government of Iraq,” Inherent Resolve coalition spokesman Colonel Ryan Dillon told the AP when asked for comment.

But the coalition has said it will continue operations with its Kurdish separatist Syrian Democratic Forces allies against ISIS in neighbouring Syria for the foreseeable future against the will of the Damascus government.

US President Donald Trump acceded to demands last year by his Defence Secretary James Mattis and commanders in Afghanistan to send thousands more troops in an attempt to halt major Taliban advances in the 16-year war.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Ramaphosa and Zuma factions clash

SUPPORTERS of South African Vice-President Cyril Ramaphosa beat women demanding “hands off” President Jacob Zuma yesterday.

Several men in black T-shirts bearing the “#Syavuma” (We agree) slogan of Mr Ramaphosa’s successful campaign for the ANC presidency last year attacked supporters of the Black Land First (BLF) march to the Albert Luthuli House ANC headquarters in Johannesburg.

Footage of the incident on the South African Times website showed men pulling terrified women from a pick-up truck, one man beating them with a stick and another kicking a woman as she lay in the road.

The paper said that the same group of men had earlier assaulted a BLF supporter in the street before police rescued the victim. The report added that a heavy police presence was needed to separate the Ramaphosa supporters from BLF.

ANC spokeswoman Khusela Diko said the ruling party “respects and will always uphold the right of all citizens to protest.” The party later condemned the attack, especially “the assault of women in so callous and dehumanising manner.”

ANC Johannesburg Region spokesman Jolidee Matongo identified one of the assailants as Inner City Zone 12 branch secretary Thabiso Setona — and promised he would be promptly disciplined for his “revolting” behaviour. The march followed speculation in white-owned anti-ANC media that Mr Ramaphosa and other ANC officials elected in December had urged the president to step down at a private meeting on Sunday.

No confirmation of that emerged yesterday, suggesting the rumour was false, as with many earlier reports.

As ANC president, Mr Ramaphosa is the party’s candidate to succeed Mr Zuma in the general election at the end of his second term in May 2019.

**ECUADOR**

Correa run mired by return to presidential term limits

Ecuadorian voters backed a return to presidential term limits in Sunday’s referendum, blocking ex-president Rafael Correa’s potential challenge to his erstwhile ally.

President Lenin Moreno hailed the 64 per cent vote reversing the 2015 constitutional reform abolishing the limit as a victory for democracy.

But the president and leader of the left-wing Pais Alliance, which Mr Correa sensationally quit last month, relied on an alliance with conservative opposition parties to win.

“It’s going to be very difficult for a mediocre person like Lenin Moreno to keep everyone happy,” Mr Correa told Venezuela’s Telesur network in an interview following the vote.

“The only thing that unites these people is their hatred of Correa, not even love of country.”

Mr Correa’s rift with Mr Moreno erupted last year when he called his successor a “wolf in sheep’s clothing” for sacking and prosecuting vice-president Jorge Glas over corruption allegations.

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**VENEZUELA**

**CARACAS DEFIANT IN FACE OF TILLERSON’S THREATS**

WASHINGTON TURNS THE SCREW: Ex-ExxonMobil US Secretary of State threatens oil embargo

VENEZUELA’s president and foreign minister have vowed to defend their country’s freedom after Washington threatened an oil embargo.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made the threat against imports and refining of Caracas’s dominant export on Sunday as he visited the Argentinean capital Buenos Aires on the latest leg of his Latin American and Caribbean tour.

He said Washington wants “free, fair and verifiable” presidential elections, which Vene-

zuela’s new national constituent assembly has called for April.

“The situation is becoming quite dire in Venezuela, so one of the aspects of considering sanctioning oil is: What effect would it have on the Venezuelan people and is it a step that might bring this to an end, to a more rapid end?” Mr Tillerson said, seeking to justify worsening consumer shortages and hyperinflation.

“No doing anything to bring this to an end is also asking the Venezuelan people to suffer for a much longer time.”

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**KOOREA**

**Sports fans witness unity on ice**

KOOREA’s joint women’s ice

hockey team has had to tackle a linguistic divide after 70 years of separation as it prepares for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics.

South Korea has incorporated many English words and phrases — including hockey terms — into its language, while the North has eliminated words with foreign origins and created homogenized substitutes.

The team’s formation, prompted by the recent détente between Pyongyang and Seoul, triggered a strong backlash in South Korea, with critics worried the deal would deprive South Korean players of playing time.

But on Sunday, with only days preparation, the Korean team had its first match with world No 5 Sweden in front of a crowd of 3,000 in Incheon, west of Seoul. Despite a 3-1 defeat, it was a good result given that both Koreas are ranked outside the world top 20.

The players wore the same uniforms with a unification flag depicting the peninsula, and stood to a Korean folk song instead of their respective national anthems.

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**CHILE**

**Pope accused of ignoring evidence of church’s abuse**

The Vatican’s sexual abuse commission met Francis’s predecessor, Cardinal Sean O’Malley on April 12 2015 to explain their objections to Father Barros’s appointment as bishop of Osorno, and gave him the letter to deliver to the Pope.

“He assured us he would give it to the Pope and speak of the concerns,” then commission member Marie Collins said. “And at a later date, he assured us that that had been done.”

Mr Cruz, who now lives in the US city of Philadelphia, heard the same.

“Cardinal O’Malley called me after the Pope’s visit here in Philadelphia and he told me, among other things, that he had given the letter to the Pope — in his hands,” he said in an interview at his home on Sunday.

Neither the Vatican nor Cardinal O’Malley responded to multiple requests for comment.

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**UNITED STATES**

**Crashed passenger train ‘was on the wrong track’**

US RAIL safety investigators believe that Sunday morning’s deadly crash in South Carolina could have been prevented with the right safety equipment.

The Amtrak Silver Star from New York to Miami collided with a freight train at Cayce after it was switched onto the wrong track at points, killing a driver and a conductor and injuring 116 of the 145 others aboard.

National Transportation Safety Board chairman Robert Sumwalt was set to give a briefing late yesterday in Columbia, 18 miles north of Cayce, but he told reporters on Sunday night that a switch was in the wrong position and that a GPS-based system called “positive train control” could have prevented the crash.

The system tracks the location of all trains and the position of all switches to prevent human error sending two trains down the same track.

It was the third deadly crash involving Amtrak in less than two months.
An NHS tax is a dangerous solution to the Tories’ deliberate funding crisis

FRUSTRATION over uncertainties relating to funding of the NHS should not lead health staff or campaigners to fall for gimmicks like a hypothecated health tax.

An NHS tax is one of the lesser-known planks of the current Tory government’s proposals for funding of the NHS. It would hypothecate taxes “to keep the country safe from its enemies”.

A number of things would happen if a hypothecated tax were introduced to fund the NHS. First, it would be an inefficient way of raising money.

Another problem for allocating specific taxes to a single service is the inevitable complications and lack of transparency that would arise.

A hypothetical NHS tax on salaries would raise significant additional challenges. It would have to be carefully planned and designed to ensure that it would be effective and efficient.

If the question is asked, “What would happen if we hypothecated taxes to fund the NHS?” the answer is: “It is likely that the tax would be ineffective and inefficient.”

An NHS tax is a dangerous solution to the Tories’ deliberate funding crisis, and it argues it is essentially socialists accelerate the

DOUG NICHOLLS writes on the European Union and argues it is essentially socialists accelerate the

The EU has moved to the right and to...
The gender debate is dividing the left. We mustn’t forget unity is strength

The labour movement needs space for a democratic and respectful debate, says TRISH LAVELLE

The adoption of potentially divisive and unworkable policies without adequate consultation is taking place. I realise that, by even writing this, I may unintentionally hurt or lose friends and comrades of both the personal and social media sort, but I cannot stand by and allow decent and longstanding women trade unionists and labour movement and community activists to be silenced and denigrated any longer.

More than four people protest outside Parliament today. The right groupings and far fewer than a million are in the self-declared socialist or left groupings, only 50 are in the self-declared trade union and labour movement. We need to meet in secret. We managed to get through our differences without adequate consultation, asking questions or feeling the need to meet in secret.

The impact of this modern McCarthyism has been increasingly to drive this important debate underground and to create a climate of toxicity, fear and suspicion, the like of which I have rarely seen in over 30 years of activism in the trade union and labour movement. Informed debate and respectful disagreement are part of the lifeblood of our movement and the right to disagree profoundly with your comrades and to offer a counter view in a well-run debate is what makes us a vibrant and progressive force.

Therefore, the silencing of large numbers of, mostly, women has been tragic. How do we ensure that those protec-
tions will surely make us fall. They provide a safe space for disa-
memberment, asking questions or feel the need to meet in secret.

The left of the labour movement has had to consider those conflicts without resort-
ing to “no platforming,” name and the silencing of debate and we managed to develop inclusive and work-
able solutions that drew wide support. Of course, we will always come to better conclusions and solutions when we remember that the primary reason for the oppression and exploitation of women is our class and that the ruling class have always and will always attempt to under-
mine the solidarity of our class.

This bitter and damaging row has all the hallmarks of an orchestrated attempt to divide the left of the labour movement and we should question who benefits most from this divi-
sion.

Those of us in the trade union movement who sup-
port Jeremy Corbyn and the radical Labour manifesto have a responsibility to provide leadership and to facilitate a better debate and discussion, thereby protecting the rights that we have fought for and won together, while avoiding the adoption of potentially divisive and unworkable poli-
cies without adequate consulta-
tion taking place. I realise that, by even writ-
-Q:

War on Want has consistently warned us about the implica-
tions of EU trade, growth and world affairs plans, introduced seven years ago and underpin-
ning EU imperial ambitions today.

These established a retalia-
tory system so that developing countries could be penalised for not opening their public pro-
curement markets to European businesses. The damage this has caused to domestic food produc-
tion in many African countries has been tragic.

War on Want also condemned the policy for aggressively seeking to plunder the natural resources of Africa and Asia for the benefit of European business rather than allowing developing countries to use those resources for their own needs.

War on Want said: “The EU trade policy could not be more regressive if it tried. Instead of developing positive new strate-
gies for jobs and welfare, the EU is seeking to revive the failed neoliberal agenda of the past 30 years.

This policy will benefit nobody except multinational companies at the expense of ordinary working people the world over. EU fans conveniently forget that the institution they so adore is dominated in the par-
lament by integrationists and neoliberal. Of the 751 MEPs rubber-stamping the unelected commissioners’ proposed laws, only 50 are in the self-declared socialist or left grouping, far less than in the decidedly hard-right groupings and less than a quarter of the ruling European Peoples’ Party grouping and half the total number of German MEPs.

The reactionary nature of the EU Parliament with sizeable right-wing majorities reflects the increasing rise of the hid-
ious right in many European countries including Scandinavia. In its wilful perpetuation of some 20 million unemployed workers throughout the conti-
nent, the EU cannot deny its responsibility in making this monster too.

Socialists and trade unionists in Britain should hasten the day of March 29 2019 when we for-
maller leave and remember that those who sup with the devil should take a long spoon and be prepared to reject any offer they put on the table.

Doug Nicholls is chair of Trade Unionists Against the European Union.

Crucially, we need to con-
sider very carefully whether a measure designed to support one person may have an unin-
tended consequence that poten-
tially disadvantages the other and we should be prepared to accept that potentially chang-
ing the way we define half the population should not be driven through without a proper examination of its impact.

Perhaps we also have to con-
sider that women have rights and trans people have rights and that sometimes those rights will be the same, sometimes they will diverge and sometimes they may even conflict.

Only by applying this logic can we begin to design good, workable policy solutions that win the support of all con-
cerned as well as wider society and surely that is our objective here.

Certainly, there is a poten-
tial for conflict, but there will always be conflicts of interest during times of change and the movement has had to consider potential conflicts in the past between young and old people, different groups of workers, religious belief and freedoms versus LGBT and women’s rights.

We managed to get through these conflicts without resort-
ing to “no platforming,” name calling and the silencing of debate and we managed to develop inclusive and work-
able solutions that drew wide support. Of course, we will always come to better conclusions and solutions when we remember that the primary reason for the oppression and exploitation of women is our class and that the ruling class have always and will always attempt to under-
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-Q:
Voices of Scotland

Richard Leonard has already dropped the timid managerialism of his predecessors and promoted radical change, says PAULINE BRYAN

Scottish Labour now offers something the SNP can’t

The SNP budget for 2018-19, which passed with the support of the Scottish Greens, draws a stark line between the mainstream conservative economic policies of the SNP and what is now offered by the Scottish Labour Party.

Even though he has only been in office for two months, Richard Leonard has transformed Labour’s approach to Scotland’s economy from a timid managerialism to one that challenges the fundamental tenets of neoliberalism.

The SNP is using its powers to make changes to the tax system in Scotland, but it is not prepared to offer fundamental redistribution of wealth.

The Scottish Greens are giving themselves a great pat on the back, but the concessions they achieved—an additional £170 million for local councils and public sector pay rises applying to 75 per cent of workers rather than the 51 per cent originally proposed—will do nothing to bring an end to deep-seated austerity.

Nicola Sturgeon must look at the new Labour leader and realise that he is an existential threat to her appeal to the left. Her claim made at that 2015 SNP conference that she was leading a “left-of-centre social democratic party” sounds even less convincing.

The SNP’s budget is timid and small-minded. It is important to understand that Scottish Labour’s proposals are not just about this year’s budget. The plans go much further and aim at radical alternatives to SNP acceptance of Tory austerity.

“Labour’s budget for real change will be undermined by the values which I want Labour to take into government.”

Leonard made this speech in Dundee where he explored the challenges that working people there had faced over the previous century. And he said, “It is a fitting place to consider where the balance of power is today in our economy and in our society and it is a fitting place to consider what we can do, what I believe we must do, to tilt the balance more in the favour of working people.”

Labour, both in Scotland and in Britain, must address this balance of power as a matter of urgency. It cannot wait to be in power to formulate its strategy for change.

It should start the debate by encouraging Labour, trade unionists and community activists to explore how we can shift power in our institutions and in our economy and in our society, to make changes to the tax system, to address gross inequalities and poverty.

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A jazzman of precious unity’s beautiful saxophone songs

HE tenor saxophonist John Tchicai was born in Copenhagen in 1936 to a Danish mother and Congolese father, who had met when they were both waiters at the city’s Aarhus Pleasure Gardens.

He studied at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory, heard the touring avant-garde jazzmen Archie Shepp and Bill Dixon at a festival in Helsinki and pursued them to New York, where he played alongside them as a member of New York Contemporary Five. In 1965 he played with John Coltrane on the epochal Ascension album session. He also recorded with Albert Ayler, and in 1969 found himself in Cambridge, performing and recording with John Lennon and Yoko Ono: altogether, a beginning in professional music of many dreams.

During the next two decades, Tchicai spent much of his career in Europe, teaching full time. In 1982 he joined Pierre Dorge’s New Jungle Orchestra in Copenhagen and made some powerful records with them. In the ‘90s he returned Stateside to southern California, but kept a presence too in France. Always a free spirit who bonded closely with young musicians, he died in October 2012.

One of his final recordings was the live 2010 session at the Jazzwerkstatt Café in Berlin, which, combined with a studio session three days later, compiles this album, with Tchicai blowing with his compatriot Jonas Westergaard, a bassist of a new generation and two Germans; vibist Christopher Dell, born in Darmstadt in 1965 and the young drummer Christian Lillinger, born in Lubben in the German Democratic Republic in 1984.

Lillinger’s dazzling percussive power is prominent on the opener Fortune at Zou Feet, and is followed by Traveler, which could have been Tchicai’s life story. His tenor, full, authoritative and resonating, simmers alongside Dell’s trickling vibes, ending in long, seemingly life-reflective, almost hushed notes.

Tchicai was 76 when he recorded this album, but plays with an astonishing youthfulness. On the age-defying track Share the energy and crystalline lucidity of his sound meshes with the vigour, vitality and range of ideas of Lillinger, some 50 years his junior, so much so that they could be sonic brothers.

Dell is the solo voice of the following track, Fond, his mallets seeking “time blocks in the improvisation” as his notes cascade and climb up and down the cafe walls. Tchicai enters chunteringly on Wet, beside Lillinger’s battery of drums.

On A Double Mescal he blows a breathy flute while Westergaard’s bass delves out a springing riff and Lillinger clips the rhythm forward.

Double Exposure is the album’s longest track, its 14 minutes full of the Tchicai-Dell duo.

There are two complex mind-processes here inventing the notes.

Both men dig deep and Tchicai’s rare artistry pours out of his horn: all those years, all those virtuosi who crowded round his youth.

You hear echoes of Ayler and Coltrane, a cluster of notes from Shepp — but mostly his timbre is his own, airy, clear, ever-inventive, sounds you can see through to the truth about life and its music, with Dell, the other voice of the palaver, receiving and responding, even during a final sublime Tchicai burst.

Who is the Intangible Doorman who gives the title to the next track?

He’s sprightly and lively and Westergaard gives him an agile gait before Tchicai springs in to characterise his cordiality in a human sketch of humour and reality which may be a remembrance of his father, who, among many jobs before he met his mother, was a nightclub doorman.

Strange, almost heroic, that a septuagenarian saxophonist should be casting his horn into a piece of music called New!!!, composed by a drummer still in his 20s, and still sounding as if he is an essential part of the new wave.

Through the last track, Venus, Tchicai sounds like a bird, a travelling bird like one of the millions that journey and migrate every year between Africa and Europe, bringing the sounds of two continents together, while his European companions play next to him, enhancing and enhancing his beautiful saxophone song.

A pioneer of musical conversation, John Tchicai’s a jazzman of precious unity.
WEATHER OUTLOOK

**TODAY**
Cold with sleet and snow for Wales, south-west and central England. Snow showers then mainly in west and north-west. Dry with sunny spells elsewhere. A sharp frost overnight.

**NEXT FEW DAYS**
Staying cold through the period with frosty mornings. Some rain and snow tomorrow and Thursday with snow showers on Friday mainly in the north-west.

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Solution tomorrow...

**Fighting Fund**

**YOU’VE RAISED:**
£3,462

**WE NEED:**
£14,568

WE’RE now a few days into the month and the Fund is looking pretty healthy so far. Let’s hope we manage to keep this up throughout the whole month and then we will be speeding our way into March.

A very decent £644 came in yesterday for which we are very grateful.

We must start off by thanking the comrade from Surrey yesterday for which we are very grateful.

Team Standing Orders did well to send up £318 and we thank the comrades in the Midlands for their Congress collection of £69. Thanks to another comrade in Birmingham for £20 and for the supporter in Leeds for £30.

The recurring donations came to a decent total of £58 yesterday and we would also like to thank comrades in Southampton and Cambridge for their donations of two tenners and thank you also to the supporters in Wiltshire and Lincoln for their donations of £4 and £5 respectively.

Good work, all round. Comrades, but as we all know things can go downhill from here, especially as this is a shorter month. However, we have faith in you to get us through.

**Give by post...**
Payable to PPF Fight for Freedom, 52 Beachy Rd, London E3 2NS

**Give by phone...**
From 10am-5pm on (020) 8510-0815

**Give online...**
morningstaronline.co.uk/pages/support-us

**QUICK FACTS**

A NEW family, new (but familiar) presenter for the latest series of Back in Time for... Back in Time for Tea (8pm BBC2) heads to Bradford to meet the Ellises, who will find how changes in the food eaten can reveal how life has changed for northern families over the past 100 years.

Guiding them through their time travel is presenter Sara Cox and social historian Polly Russell. Rag pudding and tripe are on the menu tonight. Not for the queasy.

Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad died last week. And, spookily, we’re being treated to a three-episode advert, not, sorry, documentary on the innovatory furniture store.

Among the treats awaiting us in tonight’s Flatpack Empire (9pm BBC2) is footage of management recruits making the pilgrimage to the Little Swedish town of Almhult, where Kamprad started up the company 70 years ago. Will they be briefed on his fascist past?

Clare Balding’s Secrets of a Suffragette (10pm Channel 4) attempts to shed some fresh light on the death of Emily Davidson at the 1913 Derby, familiar because news cameras captured the shocking moment she was run down by the king’s horse.

Balding discovers Davison’s story and finds out how a governness from a genteel family became a radical activist. And she explores the history of the militant wing of the votes for women campaign that Emily belonged to, revealing stories of police brutality, forced feeding of hunger strikers and the use of surveillance tactics.

Tonight’s Film on 4 (9pm Radio 4) is titled The Great British Money Laundering Service. It won’t come as a surprise to Morning Star readers that the City of London is awash with dirty money, with new transparency rules designed to reveal the true owners of British companies being flouted.

Reporter Tim Whewell investigates some of the scams designed to dodge new regulations and untangles the global networks set up to fill the pockets of bent politicians and deprive people living in poverty of much-needed public funds.

Film of the day? Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan’s 2008 favourite Slumdog Millionaire (9pm More 4).

**QUICK FACTS**

There won’t be so much laughter when they see what they’ve got for tea.
**THEATRE REVIEW**

**Burden of the Baggage Handlers**

**Beginning**

Ambassadors Theatre, London

★★★✩✩

IT’S 2015. It’s the Guardianista end of the north London’s Crouch End.

And it’s the after-party, with Laura (Justine Mitchell) in a killer party frock and Essex boy Danny (Sam Troughton) sporting a kettle-hat stained shirt, circling each other alone among the detritus of booze, food and a new carpet that’s had a fast stubbed out on it.

They’ve been eyeing each other all night at her house-warming bash and, you might think, now’s their chance to ‘get it on’.

But no, that comes later, for what playwright David Eldridge’s agenda is becomes increasingly clear over 90 minutes of verbal foreplay in which the personal baggage weighing them down is unburdened.

She, we learn, loves ‘Jeremy’, while he appears to have Tory inclinations but that potential seed of dramatic conflict is abandoned as rapidly as its meandering.

Perhaps because the characters may not entirely understand their reality and the significance of their situation.

In any case, the chemistry is there, but the就是‘contact’ is never established.

**Different but the same**

GORDON PARSONS sees an imagined confrontation between Elizabeth I and the jailed Mary Queen of Scots which reveals them as equally imprisoned by personal and political traumas.

Mary Stuart


★★★★✩

White are all pris- oners of our own personal- ities and of history and of the need to achieve her long lost freedom — and that’s where your feet truly lead us.

While at moments the produc- tion directed by Polly Find- erson appears to have been negotiated and some kind of meaningful con- nection seems on the cards.

But despite the stellar efforts of both actors — and the what’s worth seeing for per- forming them alone — I was ultimately left unmoved by a drama whose tell-all inti- macies might better suit a radio play.

It was rather like watching a dramatised version of the relationship advice in a ‘qual- ity’ newspaper and it chal- lenges the suspension of disbel- lief to accept that both charac- ters get more lucidly self-aware the more bittersweet they become.

If you go and see it, avoid the knee-crunching seats in the circle. Audience-friendly seats, they most certainly are not.

 Runs until March 24, box office: theambassadorsd YT.co.uk

LENO PHELAN

**ALBUM ROUND-UP WITH MICHAL BONCZA**

Park Jiha

Communion (Glitterbeat Records)

★★★✩✩

There’s a minimalist, Zen-like quality to the disciplined soundscapes conjured by this instrumental quartet led by South Korean Park Jiha.

Much of the sound is defined by the piri (double-bamboo flute), saenggwang (mouth organ) and the characteristi- cally otherworldly, ripped sound of a local hammered dulcimer — all played by Jiha.

Kim Oki on tenor sax and bass clarinet infuses the mix with gentle ripples of jazzy improvisations, which oscillate between the nearly inaudible and an assertive meditative accumulation.

There’s a crystalline quality to these meditative spaces, devoid of Western introspec- tion or ornamentation, with the pulse measured by metro- nomic accents from the percus- sion and dulcimer.

The First Time I Sat Across From You: Accumulation of Time and All Souls’ Day beguile — even more so if you deposit yourself on a comfy sofa and close your eyes.

Then, listen with your skin.

Thomas Truax

All That Heaven Allows (Psycho Teddy Records)

THOMAS TRUAX inhabits the same musical territories as Giant Sand, Valparaiso, the Dresden Dolls, Post War Glam- our Girls or Moriarty, where rich veins of cabaret, chanson- punk are reconfigured to unexpectedly spectacular effect.

Truax probes at the very edge of genres, forcing con- stant adjustment from listen- ers to a sound that is wonder- fully eclectic and romantic, recreated with each song. Hard-edged yet polychtonic, it’s as melodically elaborate and varied as it is sensitive.

Humane Train mesmerises with its innovative musical evocation of a railway train, one on which “pay with a smile” and where “a kind act gets you extra miles.”

On the pounding, ragged International Homeland Security, Jesus is confronted with a blunt indigation: “Are you an anchor or a ball and chain?”

Truax demands.

Truax is touring small ven- ues in February and March. Not to be missed.

Sonido Gallo Negro

Manbo Cosmic (Glitterbeat Records)

THE ELEGANT arrangements and superb musicianship on this third offering from the Mexican octet somehow fail to make the title quite as cos- matic as promised.

Matters stay terrestrial, and that’s where you might stay firmly rooted as pieces like La Danza de los Diablos (Dance of the Devils) will keep them kicking the dust.

This traditionally joyous, carnivalesque dance is dedi- cated to Gaspar Yanga, a black warrior who conquered the Spanish in the Vera Cruz area, winning autonomy for his Maroon people in 1618.

He’s considered to be the first liberator of Latin America.

Danzon Fuyuvero subverts the ceremonial, stop-and-start mathematically calculated steps of the traditional dan- zon, which results in an endearing misalignment between the waltz and the tango that will keep you bop- ping away, as will the remain- ing array of mambo, cha cha- chas and porros.
Opposing Israel’s crimes is far from anti-semitic

I RECENTLY saw a brilliant play at Liverpool’s Unity Theatre called The Lynching, which was written and performed by Jackie Walker, a black Jewish woman and Labour activist who was accused of anti-semitism, suspended from the Labour Party and demonised in the press and on social media.

And I thought to myself that I must suffering from the same illness. The symptoms are anger and heartbreak from seeing the still un-built ruins of Gaza and the knowledge that the brutal Israeli siege which has lasted 10 years continues denying Palestinians enough food, medicines or basic building materials like cement.

A friend in the Labour Party advised me that they all had it and that what I was suffering from was a dose of anti-semitism.

It’s a funny thing this affliction. For instance I have Jewish friends in Liverpool Friends of Palestine and they too have been called anti-semitic by people who support Israel.

You see Jewish people who support Israel and its wars of aggression are definitely not anti-semitic but Jewish people who protested against Israel’s 2014 war which killed 2,251 people in Gaza, many of whom were children, are apparently definitely anti-semitic.

Indeed I was called anti-semitic when I organised protests against Israel’s wars and for going on a convoy that delivered $5 million of aid to Gaza in 2010.

Zionists said our convoy suffered the worst form of it; the anti-semitic terrorist supporting strain, even though all we delivered was medicines!

Soon in this Orwellian world it’ll be illegal for pension funds to disinvest their monies in Israel and perhaps they’ll make it illegal to criticise Israel as that will be deemed anti-semitic.

Will this letter be accused of anti-semitism because it will be said I was not taking anti-semitism seriously? Should I see a quack?  

MARK HOLT

Liverpool

Terms like social inadequate have no place in these pages

I WAS appalled to read the term “social inadequates” in your editorial on Darren Osborne (M Star February 3-4).

It is a term of insult and denigration but is devoid of clear meaning.

It is a term which can only be associated with the worst characteristics of the gutter press. It can have no place in the pages of the Morning Star.

Osborne’s crime was heinous. He must accept his share of personal responsibility and the public at large must be protected.

Equally his crime must be placed in the context of the society in which he has lived and the particular state of that society and culture.

The Morning Star exists to present the realities of that society and culture, especially when the daily barrage of the corporate media is misrepresenting it and propagating the nastiest of attitudes to divide people and set them against each other.

Flippant and opportunistic use of populist language only detracts from the good work done elsewhere in the Star.

MALCOLM PARKER

Southend

EUROPEAN UNION

Let Corbyn take over the Brexit talks and sort all this mess out

If I can make a suggestion regarding Brexit: give Jeremy Corbyn the opportunity to renegotiate the terms of membership.

He can rescind all previous treaties – in which our past prime ministers happily signed our rights away – and formulate a new inclusive treaty that will return the rights and responsibilities of membership back to the citizens within the European Union, vitally needed in a thriving democratic state.

These requirements are glaringly absent within this current setup. It may help, and also show good faith, if the unjustified debts hung around the necks of the PIIGS countries are cancelled so that this new treaty starts off on a sound footing.

However, should this reasonable request be denied, then Corbyn will have the authority to withdraw from the EU, which will have been exposed as an unaccountable, despotic unprincipled group whose only motive is to hold on to power and wealth at any cost at the expense of the public and everything we all hold dear.

The mantra that we all should be following is co-operation, not competition, that is if we really care about this planet and all those on it.

We really can live well without the need to always refer to a corporate bottom line that benefits only those wealthy enough to have stocks and shares in these selfish business conglomerates.

EDWARD MURPHY

Co Antrim, Northern Ireland

OUR PAPER

Vegans can actually get fatter off the land

VEGANS can actually get fatter off the land.

A MORTON’s defence of meat eating is very muddled (M Star January 31).

“How much land will be needed to grow pulses for nec- 

essary proteins if everyone goes vegan?”

In reality, a vegan diet uses far less land than a meat-based diet.


“Heightened demand for meat and dairy products is putting pressure on agri- 

cultural land, two-thirds of which is already used for grazing or to produce crops destined for animal feed,” it notes.

“The report goes on to explain that ‘directly or indirectly, the production of ani- 

mals accounts for around 27 per cent of global consumption and pollution of freshwater resources.’

“With approximately five billion people expected to be affected by water stress by 2050, and the need for annual cereal production to rise by 900 million tonnes by 2050 to meet global demand, the continued diversion of finite land, water and food resources to meat and dairy production will become increasingly hard to justify”.

IAN SINCLAIR

London E15

MEAT

SOLIDARITY: Campaigners show their support for Palestine on the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

SOLIDARITY: Campaigners show their support for Palestine on the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

IVAN BEAVIS

The best tribute to our fallen comrades is a headlong rush towards our own revolution

THE tribute to our late moti- 

vator and fundraiser-in-chief, 

Ivan Beavis, have been truly 

impressive and moving.

The centenary of the Octo- 

ber Revolution has passed 

already, but perhaps the 

best compliment we could 

pay Ivan would be to hasten 

the arrival of our own social- 

ist uprising.

I’m put in mind of a short poem, The Root of the Trouble, 

written by Scottish communist 

poet Hugh MacDiarmid in the 

1930s: “There couldn’t be any 

war/If nobody went/There 

couldn’t be any poor/Without 

our own consent.”

It’s time, surely, for us to 

refuse point blank to accept 

the unacceptable and to set 

about bringing Ivan’s vision 

to fruition.

PETER GODFREY

Isle of Harris

EDWARD MURPHY

Co Antrim, Northern Ireland

MARK HOLT

Liverpool
Leeds Rhinos get off to a winning start as Hull see off Huddersfield at home

James Nalton recaps what turned out to be an exciting opening Super League weekend

A NEW season of Super League kicked off last weekend with a round of one-sided fixtures which did nothing to distract rugby fans’ attention from the highly publicised goings on across codes in the Six Nations.

Perhaps the most entertaining game of the round was the opening televised match between perennial contenders Warrington Wolves and last season’s Grand Final winners Leeds Rhinos.

A new-look Warrington side under Steve Price, who replaced long-serving manager Tony Smith at the end of last season, were full of ideas in the opening game against the Rhinos.

Warrington had chances as they raced into a 12-16 half-time lead, but Leeds boss Brian McDermott was happy with his side’s performance.

“Credit to Leeds, I thought they played really well. We gave ourselves enough chances but as I’ve said all along it’s going to take a little bit of time,” said Price.

“We need to be patient, especially with our new combinations. We were a little bit poor with our offence at times but there are plenty of positives to take going forward.

“We’ve got a lot of improvement left in us. It’s only round one and this is a starting point for us.”

Ryan Hall impressed for Leeds with two tries, one of which stood out as an early contender for try of the season. A display of pace and power saw him race through the Warrington defence who were left grasping at thin air, brushing off full back Stefan Ratchford grasping at thin air, brushing off full back Stefan Ratchford and Ben Westwood with ease on his way to the line.

It was a try which deserved to win the game.

Elsewhere, Hull will travel to Australia to face Wigan this weekend on the back of a 38-12 win at home to Huddersfield. Fetuli Talanoa’s 18-minute hat-trick gave them a good springboard ahead of the first Super League match to take place down under, which kicks off at 8.45 British time on Saturday morning.

Another hat-trick, for Wakefield’s Tom Johnstone, saw off Hull KR on their own patch, while St Helens and Wigan also recorded convincing victories against Castleford and Salford respectively.

In the last game of the round, Widnes Vikings were able to get off to a good start at home to Catalans Dragons, registering a 40-12 win.

“We are the only people who think we can do anything this season and we have set our own goals,” said Vikings coach Denis Betts, hoping his side are the surprise package in this year’s competition.
FORMULA ONE TURNS TO GRID KIDS IN 2018

With female models gone, Formula one turns to young drivers instead

by Our Sports Desk

FORMULA ONE announced yesterday that “grid kids” will be used this season after the sport abolished its long-standing association with grid girls.

The grid kids scheme, which will come into effect at the F1 season-opening race in Melbourne next month, will be comprised of competitors already in the junior categories of motor racing.

The youngsters will be selected by local motor racing authorities and F1 bosses hope the change will be of greater appeal to the sport’s younger fans.

“This will be an extraordinary moment for these youngsters,” said F1 US commercial chief Sean Bratches.

“Imagine, standing beside their heroes, watch as they prepare to race and to be there, alongside them in those precious few minutes just before the start.

“What an unforgettable experience for them and their families. An inspiration to keep driving, training and learning so that they can dream of one day being there themselves. What better way to inspire the next generation of Formula One heroes.”

Jean Todt, president of the F1 governing body FIA, added: “Formula One is the pinnacle of motor racing, training and learning experience for them and their heroes, watch as they come up to the grid placards.

Formula One is the F1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone was among those critical of removing the grid girls, but three-time world champion Jackie Stewart recognised the need for change.

“Sometimes it is better to take preventative medicine and that is what Formula One is doing,” Stewart said.

“Every day I read about a different scandal. F1 bluechip partners do not need to be involved with that.

“I don’t think it is a shame or a controversial decision and I understand what Liberty are saying. These are different times that we are living in.”

London Stadium to host inaugural athletics World Cup this summer

by Our Sports Desk

A NEW World Cup event featuring eight top nations will take place at the London Stadium on July 14 and 15, British Athletics said yesterday.

The format of the inaugural World Cup event will feature all field and track events up to and including the 1500 metres, with teams led by female captains.

The tournament follows on from London’s successful hosting of the World Athletics and World Para Athletics championships last summer.

As well as Great Britain, confirmed participants are the United States, China, Germany, France, Jamaica, South Africa and Poland.

The two-day event will see one male and one female athlete from each nation selected straight into a final contest held during evening sessions under floodlights at the London Stadium, venue of the 2012 Olympic Games, with a prize pot on offer of £1.45 million.

UK Athletics chair Richard Bowker said: “This is world-class competition where nation will face nation and fans will see an amazing feast of athletics over two days featuring many of the biggest global superstars in the world of sport.

“This will be an incredible event which we are thrilled to be able to launch on the back of a highly successful World Championships last summer.”

South Africa sprinter Wayde van Niekerk, who claimed 400m gold at last year’s World Championships to add to his Olympic title, feels the format will prove a big hit both on and off the track.

“It is great to see such an exciting head-to-head event confirmed to be taking place in London this summer. The concept is one that will excite everyone in athletics and is sure to attract new fans to the sport,” he said.