Deep down 500km under the Earth's crust there could be more water than in every ocean

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Messi and Alves break City hearts

NHS told to spend billions on reform or face oblivion

The National Health Service needs a 'change fund' on top of its existing £150bn annual budget if it is to survive the era of austerity, according to Sir David Nicholson

● Outgoing boss's budget warning ● Staff braced for 1% pay rise blow

Denis Campbell
Health correspondent

Billions of extra funding will be needed for the NHS to help push through "painful and unprecedented" changes during the next parliament, the outgoing boss of the health service warns.

In a frank interview with the Guardian, Sir David Nicholson said that whoever formed the next government would need to give the NHS extra cash because it could not survive if it had to remain in the straitjacket of austerity-era flat budgets after 2015.

The money would be needed so the NHS can dramatically rationalise hospital services, and concentrate its specialist and GP services – allowing an NHS Nicholson calls "unsustainable" to ditch its outmoded reliance on hospital-based treatment and switch to a new model of community-based care.

Nicholson declined to say how much more cash he believed would be required, but another senior NHS leader privately suggested it could be up to £5bn extra a year for several years.

The NHS chief executive's call for a "change fund" on top of the service's existing £110bn budget has sparked a renewed debate about whether the NHS should remain a special case for ministers confronting further years of tight public finances – and how much it needs to cope with the ongoing and future rise in demand for healthcare.

Hospital services would also have to be centralised on a huge scale, he warned. GP surgeries needed to give up their role as the NHS's equivalent of "corner shops" and a large proportion of hospital care should be delivered in community settings if the NHS is to cope with the pressures posed by the ageing population, rise in the number of patients with one or more long-term conditions such as asthma or diabetes, and demand for new treatments, Nicholson said.

In future there needed to be no more than 40-70 major centres of A&E care, while the number of organisations providing specialised services like cardiac care and transplantation had to shrink from 300 to just 15-30, he said. He declined to put a figure on what would be the ideal number of GP surgeries in a streamlined organisation.

"We know this change can be done," he said. "And we know that more preventive work in the community reduces demand on hospitals and that concentrating specialised services leads to better outcomes for patients.

"But it's hard to imagine doing all those things without some financial flexibility to enable us to do that, some kind of change fund that would enable us to do that", said the NHS boss, who leaves his post at the end of the month after eight years to be replaced by Simon Stevens, former adviser to Tony Blair and Alan Milburn.

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Continued on page 13 »

For sale: access to 1m students' personal data

Lucy Ward

Access to the data of more than a million teenagers and students and thousands of their parents is being sold to advertisers such as mobile phone and energy drinks companies by Ucas, the university applications body.

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service received more than £12m last year in return for targeted advertising and sales of the emails and addresses of subscribers as young as 16. The service, which controls admissions to UK universities and attracts 700,000 new applicants each year, sells the access via its commercial arm, Ucas Media.

Vodafone, O2, Microsoft and the private university accommodation provider Pure Student Living are among those who have marketed through Ucas, which offers access to over a million student email addresses and a market worth a claimed £15bn a year. The Red Bull energy drink firm promoted three new drink flavours by sending sample cans to 17,500 selected students deemed to be trend-setting "early adopters" in order to create a "social media buzz".

Applicants can opt out of receiving direct marketing, but only at the cost of missing out on education and careers mailings as well.

Meanwhile, the Ucas offshoot Ucas Progress, set up two years ago to serve pupils from aged 13 looking for post-16 courses, is also collecting data. Children who sign up for Ucas Progress via their schools are encouraged by the company to agree to receive marketing by email from "carefully selected third parties". Ucas Progress says it currently only takes advertisements from education and training providers to put on its website and does not mail children directly.

Data campaigners condemned Ucas's approach as "underhand".

Ucas Media promotes its services to potential clients by emphasising the unique richness and accuracy of its data and the trust associated with its brand. Almost every student applying to a British university from the UK or overseas must use the online Ucas application gateway, which requires them to provide up-to-date identity and contact details. "We help them reach uni – we help you reach them," Ucas Media tells potential advertisers.

There is no suggestion that Ucas Media

Continued on page 5 »

Block on release of prince's 'black spider' memos unlawful

Rob Evans

Three senior judges ruled yesterday that Dominic Grieve, the attorney general, acted unlawfully when he blocked the publication of letters written by Prince Charles to government ministers.

The ruling, led by Lord Dyson, the head of the civil judiciary in England and Wales, paves the way for the release of the letters, which reveal how the Prince of Wales lobbied government ministers to change official policies.

Under freedom of information legislation, the Guardian has for nine years sought to view the letters that Grieve says contain the prince's "most deeply held personal views and beliefs".

Grieve had refused access to the letters, arguing that they could cause constitutional problems. He had said their contents could seriously damage the prince's ability to perform his duties when he became king because they could cast doubt on his political neutrality.

Dyson and two colleagues in the appeal court quashed a veto that Grieve had used to override an independent tribunal which said the letters could be released. He also ordered the attorney general to pay the Guardian's £96,000 legal costs.

Three appeal court judges quashed the attorney general's veto on the release of letters written to ministers by the Prince of Wales

The attorney general has been given permission to seek to appeal against the ruling at the supreme court.

The freedom of information tribunal had previously ruled against the government and had ordered that the letters should be disclosed because the public had a right to see how the heir to the throne had sought to influence government.

Dyson, who is master of the rolls, said Grieve did not have reasonable grounds for issuing the veto "merely because he disagrees with the decision" of the independent tribunal.

Grieve "could point to no error of law or fact in the [tribunal's] decision, and the government departments concerned did not even seek permission to appeal it", he added.

A month after the tribunal's decision in 2012, Grieve, with the support of the cabinet, had used the veto because he said the public could interpret the letters sent to ministers in the last Labour government as showing Charles to be "disagreeing with government policy".

Grieve had said that a cornerstone of the British constitution was that the monarch could not be seen to be favouring one political party over another. But he had said that any perception that Charles had disagreed with Tony Blair's government "would be seriously damaging to his role

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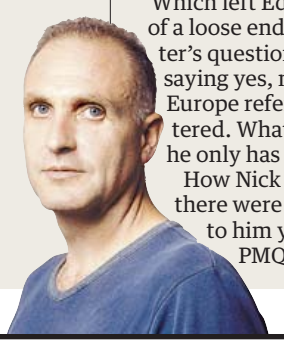
John Crace's sketch

Spot the joke: lapdog, flip-flop or deputy PM?



There seemed to be no obvious reason for David Cameron's absence yesterday. But all prime ministers like to fit in at least one trip to Israel during their time in office and Cameron was running out of time for his chance to claim direct descendancy from Moses.

Which left Ed Miliband at something of a loose end with no prime minister's questions. Hence his speech saying yes, no, um, maybe later, to a Europe referendum. Not that it mattered. Whatever he says these days he only has an audience of six.

How Nick Clegg must have wished there were so few people listening to him yesterday at deputy PMQs. Clegg now prefers to keep humans at the other end of an LBC phone line. Call it damage limitation. In the Commons he has no choice but to take the abuse head on.

With the Lib Dems having recently lost a council election to a bus-pass Elvis impersonator, the Labour backbencher Kevin Brennan feebly punned that Clegg "ain't nothing but a lapdog".

This wasn't particularly funny and missed the point. A lapdog is loved and cherished. Clegg is hated by almost everyone. Labour hate him, the Tories barely bother to conceal their contempt for him, and his own party recognise him as a complete liability, with Danny Alexander now openly mounting a leadership campaign against him.

Though why he should want to when the Lib Dems may barely exist after the next election, is anyone's guess. Will the last person in the bunker please put the cyanide back in the cupboard? Even Clegg's reflection probably hates him.

The main exchanges were between Clegg and his opposite number, Harriet Harman. The Labour deputy has far more presence than her leader and she briefly threatened to unsettle Clegg by challenging him on the Lib Dems' backing for the government's care bill that his party had initially opposed.

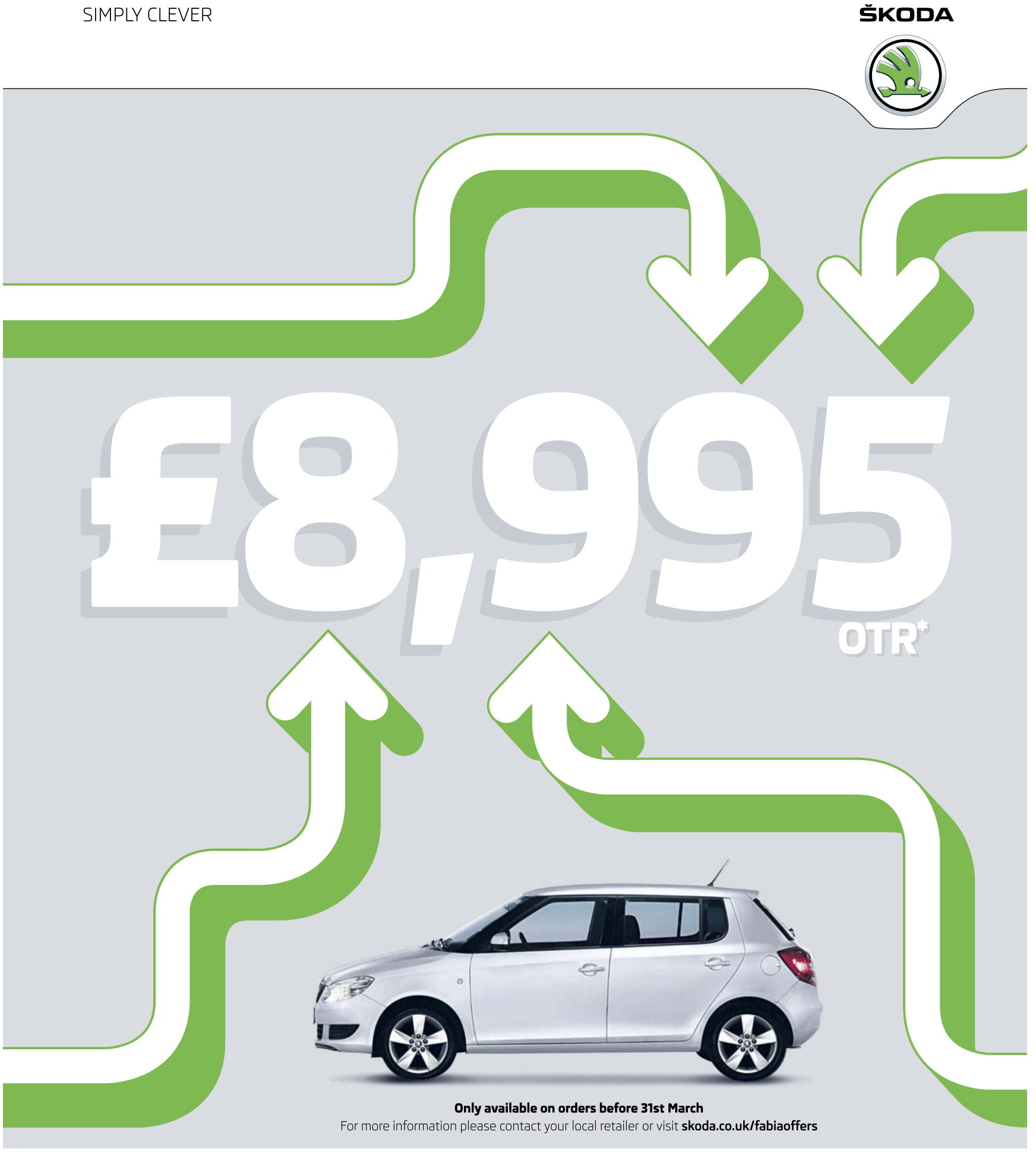
At which Clegg started to windmill his arms to appear manly, while insisting black was white, or if not white then definitely magnolia. Didn't work for me.

Then Harman blew it by trying to tell a gag that must have been written by one of the 12-year-old apparatchiks who now run large parts of the Labour party. "On Sunday the deputy prime minister shared with us everything that he loves about Britain," she said in a flat monotone. "He loves his cup of tea, he loves the shipping forecast and he loves … um … er … er … um … flip-flops."

Reading out Christmas cracker jokes must be a highlight of the year chez Harman. It was a crap gag even before she messed up the delivery. Still, unlike Ed, she did have an audience to lose.

There was just time for Clegg to answer a question on Ukraine. "To be honest, I haven't a clue," he didn't say, though probably should have. "I'm completely out of the loop. The PM doesn't consult me on anything any more. But my guess is that it's a bad thing and Russia needs to behave."

The only person to talk to Clegg on his way out of the chamber was George Osborne. Only a heart of stone couldn't have felt a bit of pity for him. Almost.



Block on 'black spider' memos ruled unlawful

« continued from page 1

as future monarch because, if he forfeits his position of political neutrality as heir to the throne, he cannot easily recover it when he is king".

The 27 pieces of correspondence between Charles and ministers in seven government departments between September 2004 and April 2005 "are in many cases particularly frank", Grieve said.

In the court of appeal judgment Dyson, along with Lord Justices Richards and Pitchford, said Grieve "had no good reason for overriding the meticulous decision" of the tribunal, which examined evidence from constitutional experts and arguments from barristers for the government and the Guardian. Dyson also ruled that the veto was unlawful under European commission law.

The prince has for many years been criticised for apparently exploiting his unelected position to promote his views and persuade ministers to change official policies through private letters, nicknamed "black-spider memos" because of his scrawled handwriting.

The tribunal, in its decision in September 2012, had come out in favour of publishing the letters, saying: "The essential reason is that it will generally be in the overall public interest for there to be transparency as to how and when Prince Charles seeks to influence government."

A Guardian News and Media spokesperson said: "We hope the attorney general will recognise he has reached the end of the legal road and that government departments will now publish the correspondence so that the public can judge for themselves."

A spokesman for the attorney general said: "We are very disappointed by the decision of the court.

"We will be pursuing an appeal to the supreme court in order to protect the important principles which are at stake in this case."

Tanya Gold, page 32 »
Leader comment, page 34 »

Test case judgment

Secret evidence cannot be used by the police to obtain court orders requiring journalists to hand over notebooks, photographs or digital files, the supreme court ruled yesterday.

In a test case involving BSkyB and the suspected leaking of information from meetings of the Cobra cabinet security committee, the judges dismissed a Metropolitan police request for media material. The case related to a Sky News story in 2011 that led to the arrest of two army officers on suspicion of having committed offences under the Official Secrets Act 1989.
Owen Bowcott

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News

Diamond geyser: tiny gem spat up from the deep reveals Earth's secret huge water store

Chance find of 5mm gem in Brazilian riverbed provides backing for long-held theory

Ian Sample
Science correspondent

A small, battered diamond found in the gravel strewn along a shallow riverbed in Brazil has provided evidence of a vast "wet zone" deep inside the Earth that could hold as much water as all the world's oceans put together.

The water is not sloshing around inside the planet, but is held fast within minerals in what is known as the Earth's transition zone, from 410 to 660km (250-400 miles) beneath the surface.

"It's not a Jules Verne-style ocean you can sail a boat on," said Graham Pearson, a geologist who studied the stone at the University of Alberta. The water-rich zone could transform scientists' understanding of how some of the Earth's geological features arose.

Tests on the diamond revealed that it contained a water-rich mineral formed in the zone. Researchers believe that the gem, which is oblong and 5mm long, was blasted to the surface from a depth of about 500km by a volcanic eruption of molten rock called kimberlite.

The battle-scarred gem has a delicate metallic sheen, but is pitted and etched from its violent journey, which probably took days and ended with the stone shooting up through the Earth's crust at a speed of about 70km/h (40mph).

"It's a fairly ugly diamond. It looks like it's been to hell and back," said Pearson, adding that the gem was worth $20 at most. It was found in 2008 by artisan miners working the Juína riverbeds in Mato Grosso in western Brazil.

Most diamonds used in jewellery form at much shallower depths, about 150km down. Those that form in the transition zone are called super-deep diamonds and are distinguished by their battered appearance and low nitrogen content.

Pearson and his team were testing the diamond to find minerals they could use to work out its age. But by chance they discovered a mineral called ringwoodite, a type of olivine that forms under extremely high pressure. The speck of mineral was too small to see with the eye.

Without the diamond – and the water-rich mineral inside it – scientists had no hope of confirming the make-up of material so deep inside the Earth. "No one is ever going to run a geological field trip to the transition zone 500km beneath the Earth's surface, and no one is ever going to drill down to the transition zone," said Pearson. "It was a total piece of luck that we found this."

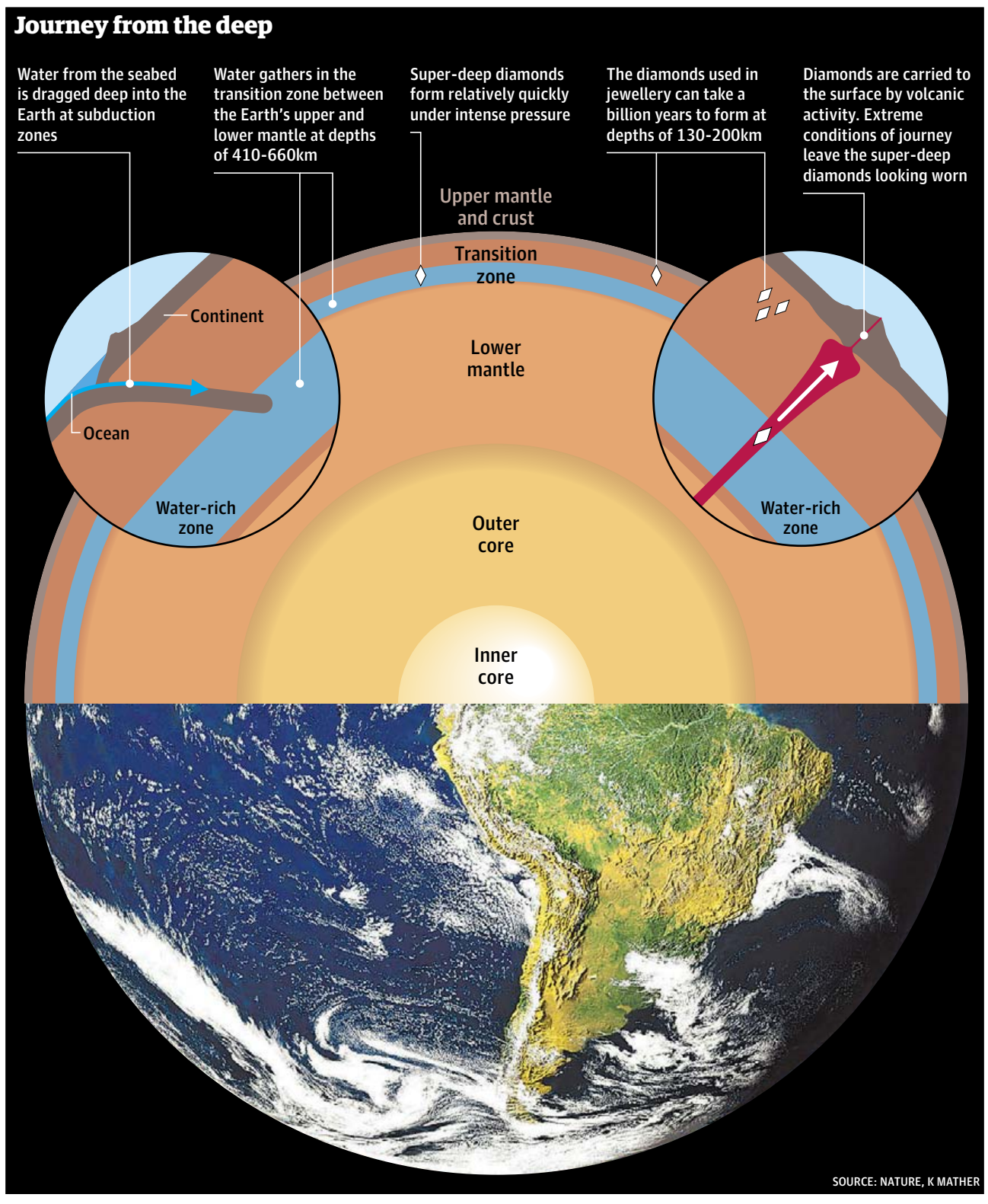
For decades, scientists have suspected that ringwoodite made up much of the deep Earth, because olivine is so widespread underground. But no one had found any ringwoodite from the Earth's interior that proved the idea. In the transition zone where the diamond and its ringwoodite was formed, the pressure reaches 200,000 atmospheres.

Tests on the mineral found that about 1.5% of its weight is water. "That doesn't sound like much, but when you calculate the vast volumes of ringwoodite thought to exist in the deep Earth, the amount of water might be as high as that contained in all the world's oceans," Pearson told the Guardian. That amounts to more than one billion billion tonnes of water.

At the very least, the scientists say, there must be local wet spots or "oases" in the Earth's interior. "The beauty of this diamond is that it gives us a real sample from those depths," Pearson said. The diamond is described in the latest issue of the journal Nature.

A huge water store in the Earth's mantle might explain some oddities seen on the surface. Water in the transition zone could dissolve in molten magma and reach the undersides of continental plates, where it would weaken the huge slabs of rock. That could create weak spots prone to volcanoes, and even cause "uplift", where the land rises up.

Hans Keppler, at the University of Bayreuth in Germany, said: "Until now, nobody had ever seen ringwoodite from the Earth's mantle, although geophysicists were sure that it must exist. Most people, including me, never expected to see such a sample."



The diamond 'had been to hell and back'

Tiny – for a tyrannosaur. Smaller variety of prehistoric killer unearthed in Alaska

Ian Sample
Science correspondent

The fossilised bones of a pygmy tyrannosaur have been discovered in a rocky bluff in Alaska, a diminutive cousin of the killer carnivore that is about the same height as human being.

However, though far smaller than other tyrannosaurs, the adult still measures around seven metres from snout to tail, and stands nearly two metres tall at the hips. An adult *T. rex* could grow to twice that size.

The newly discovered creature stalked the northern tip of Laramidia, a slender island continent that once existed when north America was divided by a stretch of water. Researchers said that fragments of the tyrannosaur's skull and jaws suggested that the creature inhabited the ancient Arctic island around 70 million years ago.

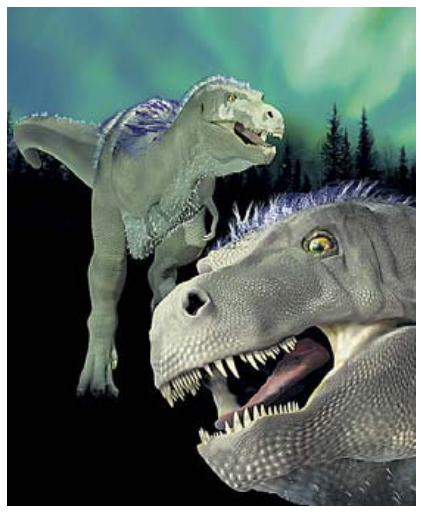
Scientists found remnants of the pygmy creature in rocks they had cleared by helicopter. They had shifted the rocks in 2006 to make way for a major excavation that uncovered the remains of a new species of horned dinosaur, *Pachyrhinosaurus perotorum*.

Tony Fiorillo, curator of Earth sciences, and Ron Tykoski, fossil preparator, at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas camped across the river from the excavation site. Each morning, they took an inflatable boat across the river, which is half a mile wide in places, then climbed the 76 metres to the top of the bluff to go fossil hunting at the remote site.

"We brought back as many of the rocks as the helicopter would carry, but we laid them aside while we got on with the quarry," said Fiorillo. "When we finally got around to these pieces, we discovered that we had a tyrannosaur on our hands."

The discovery, reported in the journal Plos One, will help palaeontologists build a picture of prehistoric life in the polar region, which has proved to be a rich trove of dinosaur fossils.

The bone fragments were unsual because they were small but almost certainly from an adult. Tykoski prepared pieces of skull, lower jaw and upper jawbone. The age of the beast was given away by distinctive sockets running along the edge of the upper jaw that are only seen in adults of other tyrannosaurs.



An artist's impression of *Nanuqsaurus hoglundi*, discovered in remote Alaska

"It wasn't until the past few years, with more work being done on growth rates, that we were able to look at these pieces in finer detail and realise that they weren't a youngster of a known species, but a mature individual of something new," Tykoski said. "It is absolutely a pygmy tyrannosaur."

It is unclear why the tyrannosaur was so small. Fiorillo and Tykoski speculate that the harsh Arctic seasons, with their long periods of light and dark, made resources scarce, which may have benefited smaller bodies. "We'd certainly like to know more about this animal," said Fiorillo. "And whatever else might be out there."

Roger Benson, a vertebrate palaeontologist at Oxford university, said the small size was intriguing. Most modern birds and animals are larger at high latitudes, because larger bodies have proportionally smaller surface areas, and so lose less heat.

"They propose that it's small because it lived in an Arctic environment. It wasn't as cold as it is today, but it was still dark for half the year, so they suggest the small size was due to resources being limited," Benson said.

The scientists have named the creature *Nanuqsaurus hoglundi*. "Nanuq" comes from the local Iñupiat word for "polar bear", and "hoglundi" honours Forrest Hoglund, a Dallas entrepreneur and philanthropist who helped raise funds to build the museum. "I've been called an old dinosaur a number of times in my life, but I guess now the name fits," said Hoglund, who is nearing his 81st birthday.

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National

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Payday lenders growing as banks cut back

One loan shop for every seven banks on high street

Research finds Lewisham has most stores per capita

Hilary Osborne

The UK's high streets now have at least one short-term loan shop for every seven banks and building societies, according to research prepared for the Guardian, which shows how moneylenders have become a common sight in many neighbourhoods.

Research by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism reveals that Glasgow is the payday loan capital of the UK, with 40 stores. On a per capita basis, the London borough of Lewisham has the most stores, with nearly eight high street lending shops for every 100,000 residents.

The data showed that the main lenders now run 1,427 shops in England, Scotland and Wales, and a further 49 in Northern Ireland. Many high streets have also seen smaller chains open for business since the start of the financial crisis, so the figures give a conservative picture of how many are now on the country's high streets.

In contrast to the payday lenders, banks have been shrinking their networks. Barclays recently said it was looking at closing up to 400 branches around the country. A recent report from the University of Nottingham found that there were 10,348 bank or building society branches remaining in 2012.

Paul Blomfield, the MP for Sheffield who has campaigned against payday lending, said: "These shocking figures show the scale of the payday lending epidemic. Their corrosive impact is then often exacerbated by the companies clustering their shops in areas of higher deprivation."

Since the financial crisis, the payday lending industry has boomed, with stores loaning a total of around £2bn to 1 million borrowers in 2012. Interest rates in excess of 1,000% APR are commonplace, and although loans are designed to be repaid after a matter of days or weeks, borrowers often roll over loans, meaning costs quickly mount up. One debt charity recently helped a client whose £200 debt had grown to £1,851 in just three months.

Most payday lending is done online, with the Competition Commission finding that internet lenders, including firms such as Wonga and QuickQuid, were responsible for 80% of loans. The watchdog also found that borrowers using high street firms were significantly more likely than online customers to be social tenants, in part-time work or unemployed, lone parents, unqualified or on low incomes.

The BIJ mapped lenders' branches – the first time this has been done – and the distribution of shops was compared with official government data on deprivation. The research focused on the seven biggest chains of short-term lenders – including the Money Shop, Cash Converters, Cash Generator and the Cheque Centre – and looked only at the branches advertising short-term loans alongside pawnbroking and other services.

The large lenders, many of which are owned by overseas firms, have expanded rapidly in recent years. The Money Shop, part of a US business, has grown from 168 stores in the spring of 2006 to 564 in 2013. Oakham, which is UK-owned, has gone from one store at its launch in 2007 to 22 today.

1,427 **The number of high street loan shops in England, Scotland and Wales. Interest rates of 1,000% APR are the norm**

While the Money Shop recently opened a store in well-off Muswell Hill in north London, the mapping shows that loan shops are clustered in areas of deprivation. Lewisham is the 16th most deprived of the 326 local authorities in England, according to the Department for Communities and Local Government's rankings.

Halton, a borough on the Mersey estuary, had the third highest number of stores for each resident, with just over seven stores for every 100,000 residents. The borough is the 32nd most deprived local authority in England. Nearby Liverpool, ranked the fifth most deprived local authority in England, came 12th in the ranking of stores per 100,000 residents.

In contrast, wealthy neighbourhoods such as Richmond, Kensington and Windsor have fewer than one shop per 100,000.

The Consumer Finance Association, the trade body for a number of lenders, denied that lenders were targeting poorer parts of the country.

Tiger feat Triplet birth at London zoo

Jessica Aldred

Endangered Sumatran tiger triplets have been born at London zoo to the mother whose cub drowned in the multimillion pound tiger enclosure last year.

The triplets were born to five-year-old Sumatran tigress Melati on Monday morning. The first cub arrived at 12.28, the second at 12.59, and the last at 1.18, with keepers monitoring the birth using remote camera technology. It is not yet known what gender the cubs are.

Melati and her cubs, pictured, remain inside the den away from the public, with the mother occasionally venturing out for food. The father, six-year-old Jae Jae, remains in the main tiger enclosure, away from the cubs.

Zookeeper Teague Stubbington said: "We couldn't be more delighted with our new arrivals, and with how Melati is responding to her three cubs … we've even been able to observe key milestones like their eyes opening and their tentative first steps.

"While we still don't know whether they're boys or girls, we're starting to see their personalities develop. We've nicknamed one Trouble, as it's much bolder than the others – it was the first to start exploring its den."

With Sumatran tiger numbers estimated to be as low as 300 individuals in the wild, the zoo says the birth of the cubs represents a huge achievement "for the global breeding programme of this critically endangered species".

In October last year, a newborn cub – the first to be born at the zoo in 17 years – drowned in the pool in the tiger enclosure. Only two weeks old, it had not yet been named or sexed. It is thought that the mother, Melati, carried the cub outside but keepers still remain unclear as to how the cub got into the pool.

A spokeswoman for the zoo said changes had been made to prevent a repeat of the situation.

"We've drained the pond and built a cub conservancy so that Melati has space to go outside with the cubs without going too far. The keepers are monitoring the situation 24/7 and taking turns to watch the cameras overnight."

London zoo's £3.6m Tiger Territory opened in March 2013 and was designed to encourage breeding of the endangered subspecies of tiger.

Chief whip 'huffed' when MP's alleged abuse revealed to him, jury told

Josh Halliday

A senior Conservative rebuffed demands for Nigel Evans to resign in 2009 over an alleged sexual assault because it would be "very difficult to explain" before the general election, a court heard yesterday.

Patrick McLoughlin, then chief whip, "sighed and huffed" when an aspiring politician complained that he had been groped by the deputy Commons speaker 10 months before the country went to the polls, jurors were told.

Giving evidence on the third day of Evans' trial for rape, and eight counts of sexual and indecent assault, the young man said the alleged incident was a "particular betrayal" because he had confided in the 56-year-old MP days earlier that he had been abused when he was younger.

The politics student told Preston crown court that he demanded that Evans resign immediately but was told by McLoughlin, now transport secretary, it was impossible.

The witness told the court: "Mr McLoughlin said, 'It can't be done. The time isn't right. I would find it very difficult to explain why an MP is leaving his seat at this point before a general election. He [Evans] has no immediate family I can pass it off on. It can't be done.'"

The complainant was told by the chief whip Patrick McLoughlin, left, the time 'isn't right' for Nigel Evans to resign

Mark Heywood QC, prosecuting, asked whether "pass it off" meant that the Conservatives could falsely claim Evans had resigned so he could spend more time with his family. "Exactly," he replied.

The meeting took place two days after the young man, an aspiring politician who was 23 at the time, was groped by Evans at the MP's constituency home in Pendleton, Lancashire, in July 2009, the court heard.

Evans put his hand into the young man's underwear and touched his genitals while he was asleep on his sofa after a night of heavy drinking at a pub called The Swan with Two Necks, the jury was told.

McLoughlin appeared "mainly irritated" throughout the 10 to 15-minute meeting and "sighed, huffed and blew the whole time", he told the jury.

Speaking in a loud, clear voice, the man described what happened at the meeting, which was held in the chief whip's Westminster office and was attended by McLoughlin, deputy whip John Randall and Iain Corby, the head of a policy unit.

Asked by the prosecutor about their reaction to hearing the allegation, the witness said: "Mr McLoughlin's was one of mainly irritation. He sighed, huffed and blew the whole time. After a period of silence, he said: 'What do you want to happen now?'. My response was that I thought Mr Evans should resign his seat as the member of parliament for Ribble Valley immediately."

The complainant said he told the senior Conservatives that Evans had a "massive problem" with alcohol and his homosexuality. He described the Ribble Valley MP as a "high-functioning alcoholic" whose condition "probably stemmed from his sexuality", the court heard.

The response of Randall, the deputy whip, was "completely different" to that of McLoughlin and he "seemed to genuinely be concerned about what happened", the witness told jurors.

The politics student, who cannot be named for legal reasons, is one of seven who allege they were sexually assaulted by Evans between 2002 and 1 April last year. The MP denies two counts of indecent assault, six of sexual assault and one of rape. The case continues.

For sale – access to 1m students' private data

Cash for access: marketing material used by the university admissions body Ucas to offer companies access to its vast database of personal information on more than 1 million students and teenagers

« continued from page 1

is breaking the law in selling access to data about university applicants and schoolchildren. It does not sell individuals' data directly, but markets access to it, using its own channels to deliver marketing - and keeping possession of a rich and highly valuable bank of personal information.

University applicants are given the option of refusing mailings when they register with Ucas. However, they have to opt out rather than in, and Ucas's application form does not disaggregate commercial mailings from information from education providers and employers.

As a result students who reject product mailings risk missing out on course information and potential career opportunities.

Teenagers using Ucas Progress must explicitly opt in to mailings from the organisation and advertisers, though the organisation's privacy statement says: "We do encourage you to tick the box as it helps us to help you."

Under the banner "Your gateway to undergraduates", Ucas Media's website states: "We're one of the most important organisations in the lives of any young person aspiring to get into university ... With years of experience building relationships with students and having worked with some of the UK's best-known brands - from multinationals to independents - we can help you reach current and future students, a market worth over £15bn a year."

Its million-plus email addresses can be "filtered by age, region, subject, domicile, gender or university", it tells potential advertisers, boasting of reaching 100,000 16/17-year-olds, 90,000 mature applicants aged over 21 and 100,000 overseas applicants. Ucas's website, which also hosts advertising, has more than 1.8 million unique users a month. The company also offers access to the details of 15,000 parents who have signed up with it for more information about higher education.

Emma Carr, deputy director of the privacy lobby group Big Brother Watch, said: "Ucas is perfectly within the law to sell on this information, but the way they are doing so, as is the situation with most data gathering organisations, is underhand. It goes far beyond what students would expect them to do with their data."

The revelation fuels concerns over whether young people are adequately protected against exploitation of their personal data. Data protection legislation does not treat young people any differently from adults, but a growing recognition that teenagers may be giving away highly commercially valuable information about themselves, potentially also risking fraud, has prompted moves to improve education on the issue.

A spokesman for the Information commissioner's office (ICO), set up to promote individuals' data privacy, said Ucas's activities did not appear to breach marketing rules. But the spokesman said: "It's crucial people are aware of how their personal information is being used by an organisation. Where a company wants to use that information for marketing, it should be clear from the outset, and ensure it has the individual's consent, which must be freely given, specific and informed."

There is no specific "age of consent" in the UK for sharing one's own data, though Scottish law states that young people can ask for data held on them at 12 and that age is broadly treated as, in effect, the point of "data responsibility".

Ucas's accounts say "the majority" of Ucas Media's profits are gift aided to the parent company, which is a charity as well as a company. It argues that the contribution keeps down applicant fees, currently £23 a candidate. Ucas, whose 2013 accounts show just over a third of its income came from Ucas Media last year, receives no money from the government.

An Ucas spokesperson said: "Ucas and Ucas Media comply strictly with all applicable laws and regulations, in the way in which we handle personal data. Ucas Media has strict guidelines for the different groups that we may cover, based on the age sensitivities of our audiences. For example, Ucas Media does not accept political, alcohol or tobacco related products for marketing."

Ucas Media could segment marketing campaigns by criteria such as geography, but "does not use sensitive data filters or any content from an applicant's personal statement".

The spokesperson said the number of mailings received would vary between applicants but was reviewed to ensure it was "reasonable" and applicants were told in each that they could opt out at any time.

Ucas Progress had no plans to make data from its school-age users available to third parties, and advertisements on its newsletters were "strictly vetted for relevance to help learners to make the right education and career choices for the right reasons with the right outcomes".

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National

Courts

Blakelock witness: 'all blacks look alike to me'

A key witness in the PC Keith Blakelock murder trial told a court yesterday that "all blacks look alike" to him.

The witness, known by the pseudonym John Brown, has told the Old Bailey that he saw Nicky Jacobs, 45, using a machete to stab Blakelock during the Broadwater Farm riots in October 1985.

The court heard that during one interview with the police in August 1993, Brown - who has admitted kicking Blakelock up to 10 times - was asked who he had seen during the attack.

He replied: "It's very hard for me because, like, I'm not a racist person but to me a black is a black, all right. I can't tell the difference between them. To me a black man is a black man."

Asked in court by Courtenay Griffiths QC, for the defence, if he still thought all black people looked alike, the witness answered: "More or less."

The court heard that before deciding to collaborate with the investigation, the witness asked police if he would get "a better house in a nice area" if he went into witness protection. "I was just looking for a better world to make sure my family was OK," he told the court.

He admitted kicking Blakelock up to 10 times only after receiving £240 to pay for repairs to his car, the court heard.

The jury has previously heard that he and another witness received around £5,000 from the Metropolitan police during a renewed investigation and were "made aware" of a £100,000 reward offered. Jacobs denies murder. The trial continues. **PA**

Tour d'Ambridge

Tour de France winner Sir Bradley Wiggins records a special storyline for Radio 4's The Archers for Comic Relief yesterday Photograph: Alex Walker/Comic Relief

Courts

Ex-Gladiator crashed van full of dead badgers

Animal rights campaigners have criticised police after a marksman involved in the badger cull said officers kept him informed of the location of protesters.

The claim was made during a court hearing involving David McIntosh, who was taken to court for crashing a van full of dead badgers into a bus stop during a cull in Gloucestershire.

McIntosh, 28, who played Tornado on TV show Gladiators, told Stroud magistrates the crash was caused when a radio he used to receive messages from police fell under his foot pedals. He admitted driving without due care and attention and was fined £91.

A police spokeswoman said: "At no point did Gloucestershire constabulary co-ordinate the resources of the company carrying out the cull." Jude Walker, of Gloucestershire Against Badger Shooting, said: "It goes against what we have been told about police being even handed." **Steven Morris and agency**

Low pay

Minimum wage should be £6.94, says report

The government should have a minimum wage target of £6.94 and create a powerful watchdog to help workers out of low pay, a nine-month inquiry chaired by Sir George Bain, the architect of the policy has suggested.

The report was published on the day Vince Cable, the business secretary, announced the minimum wage would rise by 19p - or 3% - to £6.50 an hour and signalled there would be bigger increases in future years.

Cable said a million people would see their annual pay increase by as much as £355 in the first real-terms cash rise since 2008.

However, in his report, Bain recommended a more radical overhaul for the minimum wage, saying the Low Pay Commission's role is currently too passive. George Osborne, the chancellor, has said he ultimately wants the minimum wage to rise to £7. **Rowena Mason**

Inquest

Coroner hears of safety fears for Bristol cyclists

A father-of-two drowned after plunging into a harbour, possibly after the wheels of his bicycle got caught in a railway track on an historic dockside.

Sean Phillips, 40, from Backwell, Somerset, was training for a charity ride along Bristol's harbour when his wheels apparently got stuck in crane rails. Two passersby jumped in to pull him from the chilly water but he died at the scene.

Avon coroner's court heard Bristol city council had been aware of concerns for the safety of cyclists on the harbourside for a decade. Coroner Maria Voisin, who reached a conclusion of accidental death, said Phillips' death had led to changes to make the area safer.

One witness estimated that from the late 1970s, about one cyclist a month had experienced their wheel becoming stuck in the tracks.

Phillips died in March 2013. **Steven Morris and agency**

Television

Tarrant in hospital after falling ill on flight

Chris Tarrant is in hospital after suffering a mini-stroke. His manager, Paul Vaughan, said he had been taken ill on a flight to London from Bangkok on Saturday 1 March and had been taken to Charing Cross hospital in London.

He said: "The doctors have confirmed he has had a mini-stroke, but he is made of stern stuff, Mr Tarrant, and hopefully he will be home by Thursday or Friday."

The broadcaster had been filming in Asia and South America. Vaughan said he would not be going straight back to work after he is discharged.

He bowed out from TV's Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? last month after a decade and a half in which the quiz show became one of the most successful programmes in the world, inspiring spin-off games and Danny Boyle's hit film Slumdog Millionaire.

Tarrant, 67, first found fame hosting the ITV children's show Tiswas. **PA**

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National

Gas was first used as a weapon of war by the Germans and the British in 1915. Below, a sketch shows the British tactic of 'Chinese attack' Photograph: Print Collector/Getty

Soldiers' stories: 1914-18 diaries recall bravery and bravado of western front

Poignant accounts of trench warfare made available online by National Archives

Richard Norton-Taylor

First-hand accounts of trench warfare, gas attacks and battles involving horses and machine guns, are contained in nearly 4,000 diaries released online today to mark the centenary of the 1914-18 world war.

The diaries, digitised by the National Archives in a joint project with the Imperial War Museum, reveal the sheer stoicism and black humour that helped troops - on both sides - survive the slaughter in Belgium and France. They include accounts of the battle of Loos in September 1915, a notoriously unsuccessful and bloody offensive in which the British army used poison gas for the first time and suffered more than 60,000 casualties in less than a month.

An intelligence report of the army's 12th division in northern France, dated 10 July 1915, records: "A brown paper kite was found on night 8/9th in front of the right section of our line ... covered with German writing, of which the following is a rough translation: 'You can fill your trenches with devils - we Germans fear nothing in the world, and we Germans await victory ... Englishmen, how badly you shoot! You will be served as the Russians'."

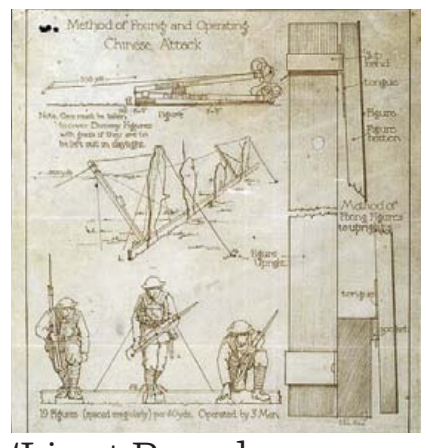
The message added that while German soldiers had "wine, sausage and meat", the British were "hungry and thirsty".

An intelligence report later that week reflects the eerie nervousness of the soldiers keeping watch at night and hearing every movement in the enemy trenches. "Two cats and a dog are under suspicion as they have been in the habit of crossing our trenches at night: steps are being taken to trap them if possible."

Some of the war diaries are almost swashbuckling in tone. An account of an attack by the Indian army's Mhow Cavalry Brigade, on 1 December 1917 in northern France after promised tanks had failed to arrive, records: "Lieut Broadway had already killed two Germans with the sword when he was treacherously killed by a revolver shot by a German officer who raised one hand in token of surrender keeping the other behind his back. This German officer was immediately killed by a lance thrust from a man following Lieut Broadway."

On the same day, a "patrol galloped up to the trench and crossed it, pretending not to see the Germans who let them go by. They then turned about and galloped back under heavy machine gun fire ... Too much cannot be said of the spirit and conduct of all ranks of the Central India Horse throughout the day".

William Spencer, military records specialist at the National Archives, said the diaries showed "advances in technology that made it the world's first industrialised war with many mounted troops going into battle at first with swords on horseback and ending the war with machine guns and tanks".



'Lieut Broadway was treacherously killed by a German officer who raised one hand in surrender'

'We have recovered no officers' bodies; it only meant lives lost to get them and I refused to allow it'

But the diaries also drive home the extent of casualties in battles of attrition where soldiers got nowhere. A record of the battle of Loos, by Colonel S E Hollond, notes: "The preliminary bombardment lasted 4 days. There was practically no reply."

But the British artillery failed to destroy the German defences. Moreover, "the wind was shifty ... The gas and smoke never went over the German trenches but came back over our own men and gassed a good many of them".

In their first assault British troops were "wiped out" by heavy machine gun and rifle fire. Out of 800 men and 20 officers of the 5th Camerons (Highlanders) 700 men and 18 officers are described as having been "knocked out". Three days into the battle, Colonel Murray Threipland of the Welsh Guards recorded that he had "no more sound men at the front". He added: "Either too bad to move, or Germans have got them. We have recovered no officers' bodies; it only meant lives lost to get them, and I refused to allow it."

The diaries include a sketch of dummy figures deployed by British troops in a tactic called "Chinese attacks" after deception techniques developed by Chinese military strategists.

The diaries are available online via the National Archives' first world war 100 portal.

Business leaders back Miliband over EU vote

Nicholas Watt
Patrick Wintour Tel Aviv

British and international business leaders praised Ed Miliband yesterday for his attempt to end uncertainty over Britain's membership of the EU after the Labour leader pledged an in-out referendum only if UK sovereignty is ceded to Europe in any future treaty revision.

As David Cameron accused the Labour leader of designing a policy by committee that would offer no choice and no referendum, the CBI, Siemens and the EEF manufacturers' organisation said Miliband's pledge would help investment into Britain.

In a sign of divisions among some businesses, the Institute of Directors (IoD) said a referendum needed to be held and called on Labour to do more to set out its plans to make the EU more competitive.

The main business organisations spoke out after Miliband said Labour would reject the "threat mechanism" proposed by the prime minister to hold an in-out referendum on Britain's EU membership by 2017 after negotiations to reform the EU. Miliband will instead offer a referendum only if UK powers are ceded to Brussels.

Miliband denied that his plans were unclear after the FT reported that he was knocking down an early referendum while the Daily Mirror said he was holding out the prospect of a vote. Speaking at the London School of Business, Miliband said: "If there is a transfer of powers from Britain to the EU, then there will be an in-out referendum. My priority for the next parliament, though, is tackling the cost-of-living crisis, protecting the NHS and jobs for our young people."

Speaking on a plane to Israel, Cameron said: "This is not a policy for an in-out referendum. This is a policy clearly designed by a committee that obviously could not agree what to do, and have come up with a policy that makes no sense whatsoever."

Miliband dismissed No 10's argument that the "threat mechanism" of an in-out referendum was the best way of protecting British interests in the single market when new eurozone governance arrangements are negotiated. He said: "If it was the case that this great threat mechanism would have had a really positive effect I think we would have seen it by now."

Sir Mike Rake, the CBI president, said: "Business will welcome Labour's decision to make its policy position on Europe clear. Any uncertainty is unhelpful when trying to secure long-term investment."

Juergen Maier, managing director of Siemens Industry UK, said: "We welcome measures to reduce uncertainty ... so a move to only call for a referendum if certain and well understood conditions are not met is helpful."

Terry Scuoler, the chief executive of the EEF, said: "Anything that reduces uncertainty about our membership of the EU will be welcomed by most businesses."

But Simon Walker, director general of the IoD, called for a referendum. He said: "IoD members are pragmatic, there is little appetite for withdrawal, but there is broad support for reform of its institutions and practices. They recognise that the EU has to change, and it makes sense to put such changes to the British people."

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Leader comment, page 34 »

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The only way is up for London skyline as land prices and demand for homes soar

More than 230 new tower blocks on the horizon

East and central London to see most development

Sam Jones

London's relatively clear skyline, once dominated by St Paul's Cathedral and, later, by Canary Wharf, the Gherkin and the Shard, is likely to get an awful lot more crowded over the coming years, with almost 250 tall towers proposed, approved or already under construction.

A survey by the New London Architecture (NLA) thinktank suggests that 236 buildings of more than 20 storeys could be on the way, 189 (80%) of which are intended to be residential blocks. Eighteen are planned as office developments, eight as hotels and 13 are due for mixed use, while one tower is to be an educational institute.

According to the study, which is based on local authority figures, 48% of the towers have been approved and another 19% are under construction. Thirty-three of the 236 will be between 40 and 49 storeys high; 22 will have 50 or more storeys.

At the heart of the new tower boom is Tower Hamlets, in east London, which is to be home to 23% of the new buildings. Projects in east and central London account for 77% of the total, although south London also faces vertical development. Between them, Tower Hamlets, Lambeth, Greenwich, Newham and Southwark will have 140 of the 236 towers.

Peter Murray, director of the NLA, said the survey had been prompted by remarks made by the London mayor, Boris Johnson as he announced his revised housing strategy at the end of last year.

"He said that we've got to build 42,000 new houses every year, but it won't mean towers are 'popping up all over London', as he put it," said Murray.

"But then we started looking at some of the statistics coming in from various boroughs as to the sorts of buildings they were giving permission to, and we realised that actually it does mean that: just like in the 1960s, when we had to build a whole lot of houses, we are going to go higher than I think a lot of people had imagined."

And, judging by his comments, higher than Boris imagined as well.

The survey is the thinktank's way of attempting to gauge the effect the new towers will have on the London skyline and the shape of the city as a whole.

Looking west from the City, how London will look with the addition of planned towers Image: Hayes Davidson/Jason Hawkes

"I've got nothing against towers at all, but we need to understand what the impact is," said Murray. "We need to have a planning system that is fit for purpose: to provide a vision for the city in the future and to control the way that development takes place in a reasonable manner."

Murray, who believes the current system could do with some "beefing up", points to the huge pressures on the Greater London Assembly and local authorities to deliver more housing at a time of very high land prices. Faced with such prices, developers are understandably keen to build high, he says. The situation is further compounded by increasing demand for housing in London from east Asia, where tall buildings have long been part of the urban landscape.

Sir Edward Lister, London's deputy mayor for planning, said a strategic approach was required to balance the protection of the skyline with the need to house 1 million more people and create more than 500,000 new jobs over the next few years.

"What we can't do is try to impose some kind of freeze on the skyline and suspend the capital in stasis," he said.

"The key issue in any discussion of London's skyline is whether a building makes a positive contribution to London's urban realm, protecting the things we value about our city while helping us meet the challenges of growth and ensuring the continued prosperity of London and Londoners."

British Museum £1.8m Roman cup is a forgery, expert claims

Dalya Alberge

A Roman silver drinking vessel that depicts two sets of male lovers is one of the most prized jewels in the British Museum, singled out by director Neil MacGregor for his critically acclaimed History of the World in 100 Objects.

But yesterday, 15 years after the British Museum bought the Warren Cup for £1.8m, it was denounced by a highly respected German archaeologist as a forgery.

At a public debate staged by King's College London, Prof Luca Giuliani challenged the museum's view that it dates from the 1st century AD and the reign of the emperor Nero.

The professor of classical archaeology at Humboldt University in Berlin dismissed it as a creation of the early 20th century, arguing that such explicit imagery is unprecedented in Roman silverware. He suggested instead that the cup was designed for the pleasure of its former owner – a wealthy American gay man, Edward Perry Warren, who bought it in Rome in 1911, and who also acquired other "counterfeit" pieces, he said.

Defending the British Museum in the debate, which was sponsored by the King's classics department and institute of classical studies, was Prof Dyfri Williams, author of The Warren Cup, published by the British Museum Press in 2006.

After Warren's death in 1928, the cup remained in private hands, too explicit to be shown in public for tastes at that time.

The Warren Cup depicts scenes of male lovers that a professor says are unique in Roman silverware and suggest it is fake

Giuliani's doubts were aired in Germany last year, but yesterday marked the first time he has addressed a British audience on the subject.

He acknowledges the high skill, but much of his doubt is raised by the fact the iconography suited Warren's specific taste – and the fact that this is supposedly a unique Roman item: "There is no other Roman silver tableware with a comparable subject matter. Silver vessels have a completely different iconography. Sexual escapades have no place here."

Speaking to the Guardian before the event, he said such explicit imagery is completely unknown from the Roman world. But it is comparable to pornography available in the 1900s, he said.

Williams paid tribute to his adversary, describing him as "a very intelligent, highly respected scholar, very important person in German scholarship". He told the Guardian: "I wouldn't want to attack him on a personal level at all."

But he disagrees with his theories. The fact that Warren bought other fakes is irrelevant, he said.

He added: "The real issue, which he has not addressed, is the object itself … If the cup was made around 1900, as he claims, they would be using virtually pure silver. They have been refining silver since the middle of the 19th century."

Fears of petrol price increases after Opec predicts higher oil demand

Terry Macalister

Fears grew of an increase in petrol prices last night after Opec raised its forecasts for world oil demand and the US revealed plans to release emergency supplies.

The Middle East-led oil cartel, which controls a third of world oil supply, said it now expected demand to increase during 2014 by 50,000 barrels a day to 1.14m as the world economy slowly picks up speed.

In its latest report, Opec said it was basing its revised assessments on the "gradual recovery" in the global economy, but added that "geopolitical events in the Ukraine as well as ongoing tensions in other regions supported crude oil prices generally."

The warning from Opec followed the announcement in Washington that it was planning a "test" sale of oil from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve for the first time since 1990's Iraq invasion of Kuwait.

The Department of Energy said it had planned the release of 5m barrels for some time to "appropriately assess the system's capabilities in the event of disruption."

The White House said the sale was not related to the dispute with Russia over Ukraine. But energy analysts saw its timing as a demonstration of American preparedness should the stand-off with the Kremlin over its involvement in the Crimea trigger some form of supply disruption.

Brent blend crude, the key product used in global pricing was steady at $107 a barrel last night but analysts pointed out that this is still very high by historic standards. Edmund King, president of the AA, said the price of petrol and diesel on the forecourt had been lower over the past six months than the half year before that but international tension was always bad news for the British motorist.

Rising petrol prices will put pressure on George Osborne to cut fuel duty in response. The chancellor, who presents his budget next Wednesday has promised not to increase fuel duty from its current level until the next election.

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National

Cameron urges Israeli parliament

PM denounces Iran and praises Israeli values

Knesset speech only the second by British leader

Patrick Wintour Jerusalem

David Cameron has made a passionate appeal to the Israeli parliament for its leaders to recognise the dividend of peace, as he vowed that Britain would steadfastly oppose any boycott of Israel.

He also denounced Iran as a despotic regime intent on arming Israel's enemies, adding that he would be fighting the threat posed by extremism all his political life.

But Cameron's differences with Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu were laid bare as the two leaders clashed over settlements on the West Bank, the wisdom of seeking a peace deal with Iran and the willingness of the Palestinian leadership to reach a compromise.

In his speech to the knesset - only the second ever made by a British prime minister - Cameron laid down few challenges to his audience and made only passing reference to the issue of Israeli illegal settlements on the West Bank, one of the biggest stumbling blocks to an elusive peace deal being sought by the US.

Speaking at a joint press conference Netanyahu insisted criticism of the settlements was built on a lie, but Cameron said they made a two-state solution harder to achieve. The Israeli PM warned Iran was still bent on arming those who wished to destroy Israel, claiming it was developing intercontinental ballistic missiles powerful enough to hit London. Cameron said he "understood the concerns of those who are sceptical of any agreement over Iran's nuclear programme", but said he "had a clear aim in the talks of an exclusively civil Iranian nuclear programme".

The disagreements underscore how even close supporters of Israel such as Cameron cannot avoid the roadblocks that lie ahead in reaching the outline settlement sought by the end of next month by the US secretary of state, John Kerry,

The Israeli prime minister said he "had frozen the construction of settlements for a year and it did not get Palestinians into negotiations - they just demanded more freezes". He also claimed he had released prisoners but this too had produced no concessions.

Earlier, in a 30 minute address designed to reassure the Israelis of his personal commitment to their security, Cameron found some Jewish ancestry in his great-great-great-grandfather, promised to defeat any attempt to ban kosher slaughter practices in the UK and claimed to have

Chatsworth taken over by artist in (very grand) residence

Mark Brown
Arts correspondent

A giant high-heeled shoe has been planted in the gardens of one of Britain's grandest houses, near the out-sized purple, orange and blue umbrellas.

The objects at Chatsworth house are the work of artist Michael Craig-Martin who yesterday recalled first being asked to stage an exhibition at the stately home. "I thought that would be nice, I'll just have a few sculptures. In the end it's become one of the most important projects of my career."

There are three strands to Craig-Martin at Chatsworth, the Derbyshire home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. In the gardens he has installed 12 giant sculptures of commonplace objects, all based on drawings - so they appear oddly two-dimensional. They include a pink pitchfork, blue scissors, a red wheelbarrow and the shoe.

He has also gone through the house's vast collection of old master drawings to curate a small display of head portraits.

And in the house he has clad all of the traditional sculpture plinths in magenta. The changes are most noticeable in the house's sculpture gallery where 20 stunning 19th century sculptures, including Sleeping Endymion by Canova, now have bright magenta bases. "You can see how it clarifies the sculptures," Craig-Martin said. "You can see them so much more easily than normal."

Craig-Martin, a former teacher at Goldsmith's, in London, who is often

PM: no tax cuts for middle income earners

Patrick Wintour
Nicholas Watt

David Cameron brushed off pressure from Tory MPs to target tax cuts at the growing number of middle income earners being dragged into the 40p tax bracket.

The prime minister argued that he was focusing on the low paid, on the same day that a member of the No 10 policy unit expressed sympathy for calls for slowing the process of "fiscal drag".

An extra 1.1m people have been pulled into the higher tax bracket since 2010 because the threshold at which people start paying 40p tax has been lowered.

This is designed to ensure that raising the personal tax free allowance - from £6,475 in 2010-11 to £10,000 from this April - benefits the low paid by taking millions out of paying tax altogether.

Speaking to reporters on a trip to Israel, Cameron hinted ministers will stick to their plans which will mean another real terms cut in the 40p threshold, this year and next. It is expected that the chancellor will announce in his budget next week that the threshold at which the 40p tax falls due will rise by less than the rate of inflation for the second year.

The prime minister suggested any money for tax cuts would again be focused on raising the 20p basic rate threshold, which brings only modest benefits for those on 40p tax.

Asked whether too many people are paying higher rate tax, Cameron said: "I am a tax-cutting Conservative - I want

45p **Tax rate proposed by campaigners on incomes of £62,000 instead of the current £150,000, to help middle-income earners**

to see us relieve people's tax burden. We have chosen to do that through raising the personal allowance, which helps everyone earning under £100,000."

Asked whether he was content to see as many as five million people paying higher rate tax, Cameron said: "As I say, we are a tax-reducing government. The only way we can do that is keeping control of public spending, which we are doing and other parties won't. "Raising the personal allowance to £10,000 - that benefits everyone earning under £100,000. This is a tax cut that helps low-paid people because we have taken so many people out of tax but it actually helps people all the way up the income scale."

The prime minister spoke out after the Times cited research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies which shows that an extra 1.1m people will have been brought into the 40p tax rate since 2010.

Nadhim Zahawi, the Tory MP for Stratford-upon-Avon who is a member of the prime minister's policy unit, said he understood why Conservative MPs are calling for action on "fiscal drag". He welcomed the proposal by Dave Skelton, head of the Renewal campaign group, to help middle income earners by scrapping the 40p tax bracket and imposing the 45p tax rate on incomes of £62,000 instead of the current £150,000. This means that people earning between £42,000 and £62,000 would pay a marginal rate of 32p rather than 42p. Zahawi said: "Skelton's suggestion that we abolish the 40p rate - and pay for it by lowering the 45p threshold - was a great way of starting the conversation."

to prioritise the push for peace

led the fight against antisemitism. He also recalled his own visit with his children to the Holocaust memorial in Berlin.

In remarks that won him praise, he also repeatedly referred to Israel as "the nation state of the Jewish people". Cameron promised that his belief in Israel was unbreakable and his commitment to Israel's security would always be rock solid.

The firing of more rockets from the Gaza Strip into Israel will also serve to raise Israeli anger at the way in which Iran appears to be arming Hamas fighters. Cameron condemned the attacks as barbaric and indiscriminate.

Kerry has set a deadline of next month to reach a framework agreement on a two-state solution, but there is no clear sign that he is on the verge of a breakthrough.

Cameron, aware of the delicate state of the talks being overseen by Kerry, deliberately steered clear of lecturing the 120 Israeli MPs on how to conduct the talks.

He asked his audience to imagine "mutual recognition of the nation state of the Palestinian people and the nation state of the Jewish people". His remark stopped short of the Israeli demand for Israel to be recognised as a Jewish state, a proposal rejected by Palestinians in deference to those who would remain in Israel after the creation of two states.

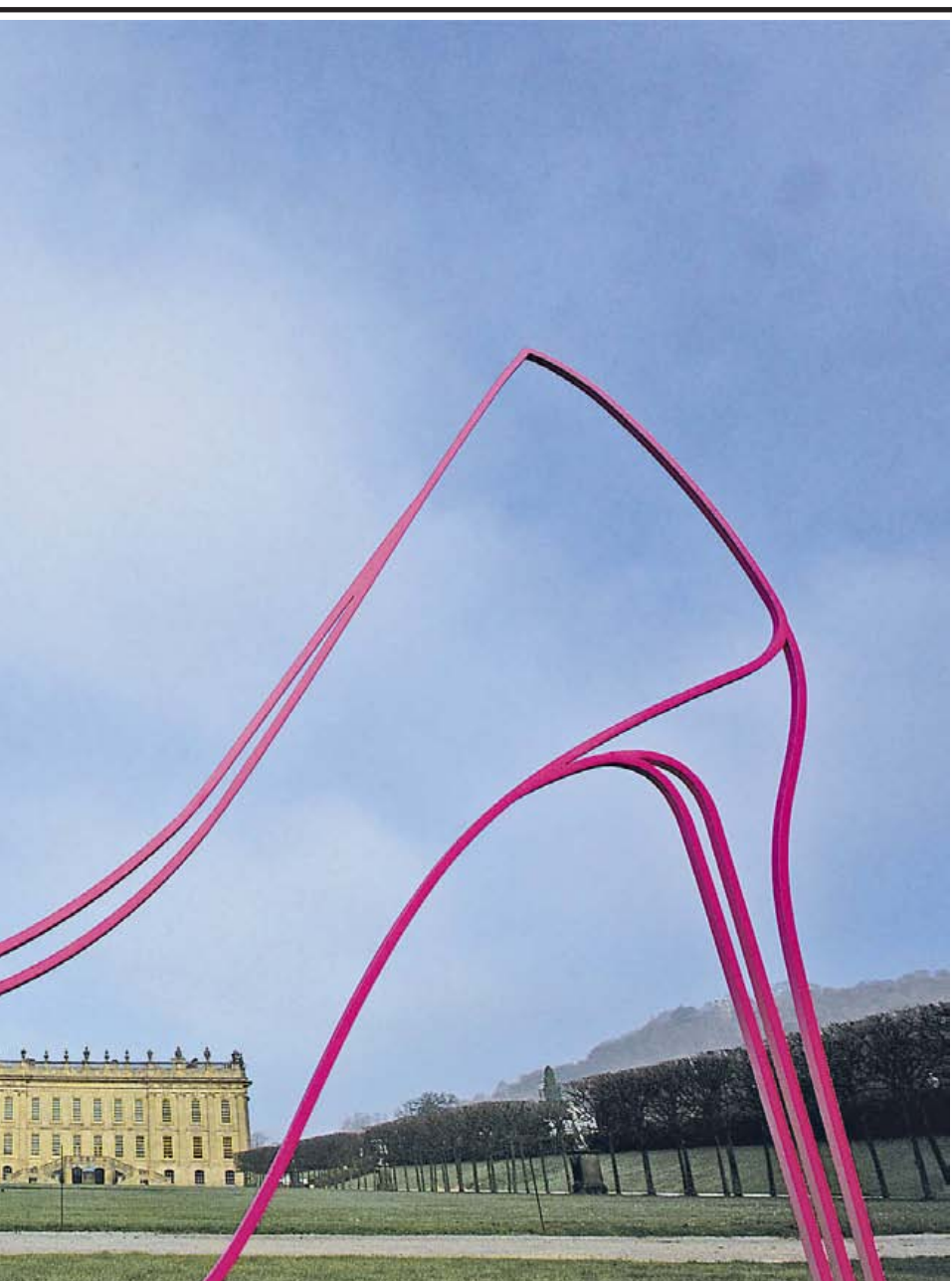
There have been suggestions that Israel might find itself subjected to trade boycotts and disinvestment if it is seen to be responsible for the failure of talks due to reach fruition by next month.

David Cameron told the Israeli parliament that Britain opposed any boycott and denounced Iran as a despotic regime

But Cameron said: "To those who do not share my ambition, who want to boycott Israel, I have a clear message. Britain opposes boycotts, whether it's trade unions campaigning for the exclusion of Israelis or universities trying to stifle academic exchange."

However Cameron's no boycott message does not sit easily with UK government advice highlighting problems and risks associated with doing business with illegal Israeli settlements and related activities in occupied Palestinian territory.

Published on the UK Trade & Investment website, the guidance warns that there are "clear risks related to economic and financial activities in the settlements, and we do not encourage or offer support to such activity". The document urges firms to take legal advice and consider "possible abuses of the rights of individuals" involved in doing business with illegal Israeli settlements.



If the shoe fits
One of the 12 giant two-dimensional sculptures of ordinary objects that have been dotted around the grounds of Chatsworth house as part of artist Michael Craig-Martin's exhibition at the stately home Photograph: Christopher Thomond for the Guardian

labelled as their godfather of the YBAs, has also been to work on a sculpture in the house by one of his former pupils, Damien Hirst. The work Exquisite Pain, which now also has a magenta plinth.

Craig-Martin said it had been a daunting project. "It is a challenging house. It is not easy to improve on it. It takes a bit of arrogance to change anything ... I felt very, very nervous."

He said the duke had said "what would you do without any constraint", but Craig-Martin had not expected him to say yes to making all the plinths magenta. The duke admitted he would miss them when they went.

Chatsworth and the Devonshires have a tradition of displaying contemporary art. Both the duke and duchess's parents commissioned contemporary artists and both have memories of works being extremely badly received by friends of their parents, they said.

"A great friend of my mother would not sit opposite a Francis Bacon portrait in the dining room," said the duchess. "She always sat so she didn't have to look at it she thought it was so hideous."

The duke said their experiences taught them it did not matter what other people thought, adding that if it got people talking that was a good thing.

Craig-Martin's interventions will be on display from Sunday 16 March until 29 June. The artist admitted it had become a much bigger project than he anticipated but one he was proud of. "It has allowed me to play with different aspects of the repertoire of things I do in an extraordinary place."

Top judge criticises male-heavy law firms

Owen Bowcott
Legal affairs correspondent

"Obsessive, testosterone-driven" men who work 24/7 may not be as effective professionally as women with more balanced lives, the UK's most senior judge has suggested.

Delivering a speech on diversity in public life, the president of the supreme court, Lord Neuberger, cautioned that lawyers who work fewer hours because of family responsibilities often lose out to "those sad people who have no life but their work".

Although his "Rainbow Lecture" speech at Westminster was primarily about minority representation, it was the way Britain's long working hours culture perpetuates inequality – and gender differences – which generated his most passionate observations.

The legal profession is notorious for the quantity of late night paperwork required by City law firms as well as the quantity of evening research barristers and solicitors conduct in preparation for court cases.

The excuse that only 12% or so of QCs or partners in City firms are women because senior appointments reflect the profession's intake 25 years ago is "an explanation that is wearing increasingly thin as time passes," Lord Neuberger said.

"The truth is that the top law firms require a virtually 24/7 commitment from their employees and partners." That was partly attributable to lawyers charging by hourly rates, he added.

"Solicitors with family responsibilities almost inevitably work fewer hours, and therefore do not carry the same heft as those sad people who have no life ... And, in our society, it is far more common for women to have the family responsibilities.

Lord Neuberger said women with family responsibility were often better lawyers

"What is needed is a change of culture ... Pressure from clients could prove very effective. In the US, I believe there are some big corporations who make it clear that they are reluctant, or even not prepared, to instruct law firms which are dominated by men.

"However, I fear that, when push comes to shove, many such corporations may decide that they want obsessive, testosterone-driven men rather than balanced, sensible women fighting their corner – even though it is often the balanced sensible women who will very often be more effective advisers and advocates."

Lord Neuberger also floated the idea that, in order to recruit from less privileged backgrounds, the competitive practice of rejecting those without a first class degree should be waived for those educated at state schools. "There are [barristers'] chambers which reject anyone who has not got a first-class degree; I have my doubts about that," he said.

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National

Parting boss offers tough medicine for NHS

Sir David Nicholson stands down as NHS England chief executive at the end of March, but is still passionate about maintaining its viability Photograph: David Levene

The only hope for the health service is massive change, says Sir David Nicholson. **Denis Campbell** hears his final, painful prognosis

After 36 years working for an employer he joined straight from university, Sir David Nicholson refers to himself half-jokingly as "an NHS lifer". The lifer, though, is about to gain some new horizons - reluctantly, one suspects - after spending the past eight years as chief executive.

These are his last days in office, as he stands down on 31 March. He gave few interviews during those eight years, despite being the boss of a £100bn a year organisation that has a unique place in British life, and became almost invisible in the wake of last year's public inquiry into the Mid Staffs care scandal that saw him branded "the man with no shame".

But as he prepares to take his leave, he is finally subjecting himself to public scrutiny.

In Manchester last week he recounted to an audience how, despite efforts to maintain his anonymity at the diabetes patient group he joined near his home in Birmingham after being diagnosed with the disease last year, another of those present seemed to have twigged who he was. "I know you, I'm sure I know you," she told him accusingly. "You're ... you're ... that butcher from Kidderminster".

Still only 58, Nicholson gives the impression of being nowhere near ready to leave his post; who, given his obvious passion for maintaining the NHS as a viable concept in the face of acute and growing pressures - demographic, financial and behavioural - would relish sticking around to administer the tough medicine he feels is needed to ensure the patient survives for years to come.

He is blunt in his assessment of the service: "The NHS in its current form is unsustainable." That is not, he quickly emphasises, an argument for it undergoing yet another major reorganisation. Far from it. He described the last one, the unpopular and barely-understood masterplan dreamed up and implemented by then health secretary Andrew Lansley in 2010-12, as "so big you could see it from outer space".

In his view the NHS needs to undergo massive changes, but to the way it delivers care rather than to its complicated architecture. "Massive change, on a scale we've never seen before, and over a shorter period of time than we've ever seen before in healthcare." The task, he adds, is "unprecedented".

Without transforming how it cares for patients it will face what he calls "managed decline".

"I don't think the wheels are going to fall off tomorrow. But we'll see a position where people have to reduce the number of nurses on the wards and have to reduce the drugs that we give to people. I can see all of those things happening unless we embrace this change."

So what change, exactly? Amid a blur of bulletpoints, a clear plan emerges. There would be huge centralisation of services that are currently provided in many hospitals in order to improve the quality of care. Instead of every hospital having a traditional A&E unit, for example, there would be "between 40 and 70 major emergency centres across the country, with all other centres feeding into them in a network."

That does not necessarily mean that those other hospitals lose their emergency department altogether, he stresses. They will just no longer deal with the most serious cases. "The others will [still] take 70% or 80% of the patients who currently turn up at A&E units and treat them as normal."

Similarly, the 300 different places which currently provide specialised NHS services, such as cardiac or cancer care or organ transplantation, should reduce to between 15 and 30, he says.

> 'We'll have to reduce the number of nurses on the wards and the drugs that we give to people'
>
> Sir David Nicholson

He recognises how controversial any planned change is locally. But, he adds, "with many strokes and heart attacks, ambulances will [already] go past their local hospital [to a specialist centres]. There'll be more of that."

He also understands but is frustrated by people's attachment to bricks and mortar. "For obvious reasons we get obsessed with buildings in the NHS, but they're not services. People are very proud of hospitals, but they need to look beyond them."

Much more care needs to be delivered in or near people's homes, he says, especially for the 15 million to 17 million patients with one or more long-term conditions such as asthma or heart trouble whose care already takes up 70% of the NHS's budget.

Technology will be pivotal, as will GP services that are available around the clock every day of the week.

It is vital, he believes, for the country to engage in a serious, urgent and difficult conversation - ideally with doctors as the chief persuaders of a reluctant public - about the future of the NHS.

"Public support in this country for our healthcare system is greater than in almost any other country in Europe. My worry is that if it gets worse, you get to a place where a minority of the people support it and then people who can afford to [do so] will go elsewhere for their healthcare. In those circumstances the question of how sustainable the NHS is becomes a much more difficult one to deal with. That's my worry."

'Spend billions on reform or face oblivion'

« continued from page 1

The extra cash would allow the NHS to run existing hospitals while new services in the community were created and built up with the intention of providing a large amount of care.

It used a "change reserve" when it moved mental health care in the 1980s from traditional asylums, which were closed, to new community-based services - and that proved successful, he explained. Without the NHS undertaking an overhaul in the way it delivered care it would face "managed decline over a period", with fewer nurses on wards, rationing of drugs, longer waiting times for treatment and a general decline in the quality of care, he said.

The changes required were vital but are also "huge, massive [and] unprecedented; industry-wide change", and would be "painful for staff" and difficult to persuade the public to accept. But failure to push them through could result in a decline in the quality of NHS care - triggering a boom in private healthcare and a collapse in public support for the service, he warned.

It is "unavoidable" that the next government would have to provide extra money to smooth that transition, he said.

> 1% **The pay rise promised to NHS staff last year by the chancellor - which many will learn today they will no longer be awarded**

Paul Burstow, a Liberal Democrat health minister in the coalition until late 2012, said that Nicholson's message was "a realistic assessment of what's needed to make change happen" but "will be unwelcomed by people in all the parties responsible for Treasury policies".

Nicholson's intervention comes as the tightness in the NHS's finances will be illustrated today when Danny Alexander, the chief secretary to the Treasury, announces that all NHS staff will not be receiving the 1% across the board pay rise from next month promised last year by the chancellor, George Osborne.

It is understood that the health secretary, Jeremy Hunt, decided to block the award because he believed the NHS could not afford the expected £600m cost involved. Some staff are still expected to get an increase.

Christine McAnea, head of health at the Unison trade union, said: "If this rumour is true, NHS staff will be very angry. Their pay has fallen behind over the past few years and they deserve a decent pay increase and not to be treated with contempt by the coalition.

"I cannot believe that the government would be so foolish as to deny even a paltry 1% to nurses, paramedics and therapists - it would be electoral suicide."

Professor Chris Ham, chief executive of the King's Fund health thinktank, also backed Nicholson. "Our analysis confirms that it is now inevitable that the next government will need to find additional funding for health and social care. The alternative is to accept significant cuts to services that will harm care," said Ham, a former adviser to David Cameron on the NHS.

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Trust's apology for care failings over children with serious heart defects

Sarah Boseley and Steven Morris

The families of 16 children born with serious heart defects did not receive the empathy and support they needed from staff at Leeds teaching hospitals trust and in some cases felt pressured to have terminations, an NHS investigation has found.

Leeds, where children's heart surgery was temporarily suspended last year over fears that death rates were too high, was given a clean bill of health for its clinical performance.

But the damning report into paediatric cardiology at Leeds general infirmary outlining the experiences of 16 families who complained of poor care at the unit has prompted apologies from both NHS England and the Leeds teaching hospitals NHS trust, which runs the hospital.

Parents felt they were being pressured to have terminations when the heart defect was detected in pregnancy, and were left alone and in distress after the diagnosis.

After the births, some say they were not told that doctors believed the baby would die. One couple waited three years for an operation only to discover that their child was not on the waiting list. Of the children involved, six are known to have died.

The review of the families' complaints about Leeds was carried out by the independent case reviewer, Professor Pat Cantrill. The complaints related to care between 2009 and 2013.

The mother of a baby called Tom told Cantrill: "They did the scan and then I went into a room where there was a doctor and a nurse. I was told my baby had half a heart.

"There was no compassion. I cried. The doctor said that the recommendation was

Parents said there was a lack of support at the Leeds general infirmary unit

to have a termination. I asked if there were other options and I was told I could go to full term and have the baby and then it would die or have the baby and then have surgery but that was not recommended. I was given a booklet and two days to make a decision.

"I was told not to look things up on the internet. I was sent to the antenatal clinic and waited from 2 o'clock until 5 o'clock. I was exhausted. My father went and asked for someone to see me. The staff had not been told about me.

"Then a doctor rang me at home on the Friday for my decision. I said I did not want a termination. I was told it was the biggest mistake of my life."

The families were sometimes given leaflets to take home but felt they did not have enough information to make a decision. "Some were left waiting in a distressed state, or in rooms on their own, and in one case left in a corridor," the report said.

Many were distressed by the lack of distraction when necessary tests were carried out. The mother of Sally said: "When they took blood it was awful. They would hold her down. They had 12 attempts to get blood by four different doctors. She was so distressed and so were we."

Some parents said they were not told that the heart could not be repaired and any treatment was only palliative – to relieve symptoms.

One mother said: "We had waited for three years for her surgery but when we saw the doctor she told us that Shona was inoperable and that she was not on the waiting list."

Not all the experiences were bad, the families acknowledged, but some said care from the cardiology service that had been good had deteriorated over the years.

Cantrill made a series of recommendations for the trust, other heart units and NHS England.

The trust apologised to the families and said it had already made changes, but the deputy director of NHS England, Mike Bewick, warned that lessons must be learned by all those involved in the care of such vulnerable children.

"Such experiences cannot be defended," he said.

Julian Hartley, chief executive, and Yvette Oade, chief medical officer at Leeds teaching hospitals trust said they were glad the children's heart unit had been found to be safe and running well. "We are very sorry however, that the 16 families who shared their stories with [the review] felt we did not provide the care they had a right to expect … we sincerely apologise to those families and will of course, ensure we learn from what they had to say and improve our services as a result of this."

Oil decline deficit blow to Scottish independence

Severin Carrell
Scotland Correspondent

Alex Salmond's economic case for independence endured a blow after it emerged that oil revenues are due to decline sharply for two successive years, deepening Scotland's spending deficit.

Scotland's annual accounts disclosed that the country had a deficit of £12bn last year, after the country's share of North Sea oil revenues fell by 41.5% in 2012-13, cutting those revenues by £4.5bn from the previous year.

The Treasury then disclosed that this financial year's oil tax receipts are currently 24% lower than last year's. That puts Scotland's geographical share on course to fall from £5.6bn in 2012-13 to roughly £4.2bn this year, implying an even deeper overall public spending deficit.

The figures, from the annual Government Expenditure and Revenues Scotland report, have come at a crucial time for the Scottish government, with six months to go before the independence referendum.

Alistair Darling, the former Labour chancellor who chairs the pro-UK Better Together campaign, said the figures raised critical questions about the Scottish government's heavy reliance on oil receipts to fund high levels of public spending.

"If Scotland was independent today we would have no option but to cut spending

Alex Salmond fended off attacks over the deficit figures, saying Scotland's finances were still in a healthy state

on services like schools and hospitals or put up taxes – or probably both. Today as part of the UK we don't have to do that," Darling said. "The drop in oil revenue is so big that it is the equivalent of the entire budget for Scottish schools."

The first minister fended off the attacks, insisting that last year's decline was a short-term bump. Thanks to several boom years with oil revenues, Scotland's economy had still been £8.3bn better off overall over the last five years than the UK's, he said.

Speaking before the Treasury released the latest HMRC tax figures, Salmond said even last year's deficit left Scotland one of the world's wealthiest nations.

He added that, despite the fact oil revenues fell by 40%, Scotland's net deficit was only 1% higher than the UK's, showing Scotland's overall finances in a healthy state.

"The figures show that tax revenues generated in 2012-13 were £800 higher per head in Scotland compared with the UK, meaning that now for every one of the last 33 years, tax receipts have been higher in Scotland than the UK," Salmond said.

However, the Institute for Fiscal Studies said the data for 2012-13 confirmed its view that Scotland faced even greater spending cuts than the rest of Britain if oil revenues continued to fall.

"The latest figures therefore illustrate how sensitive an independent Scotland's public finances would be to volatility in North Sea revenues," the IFS said.

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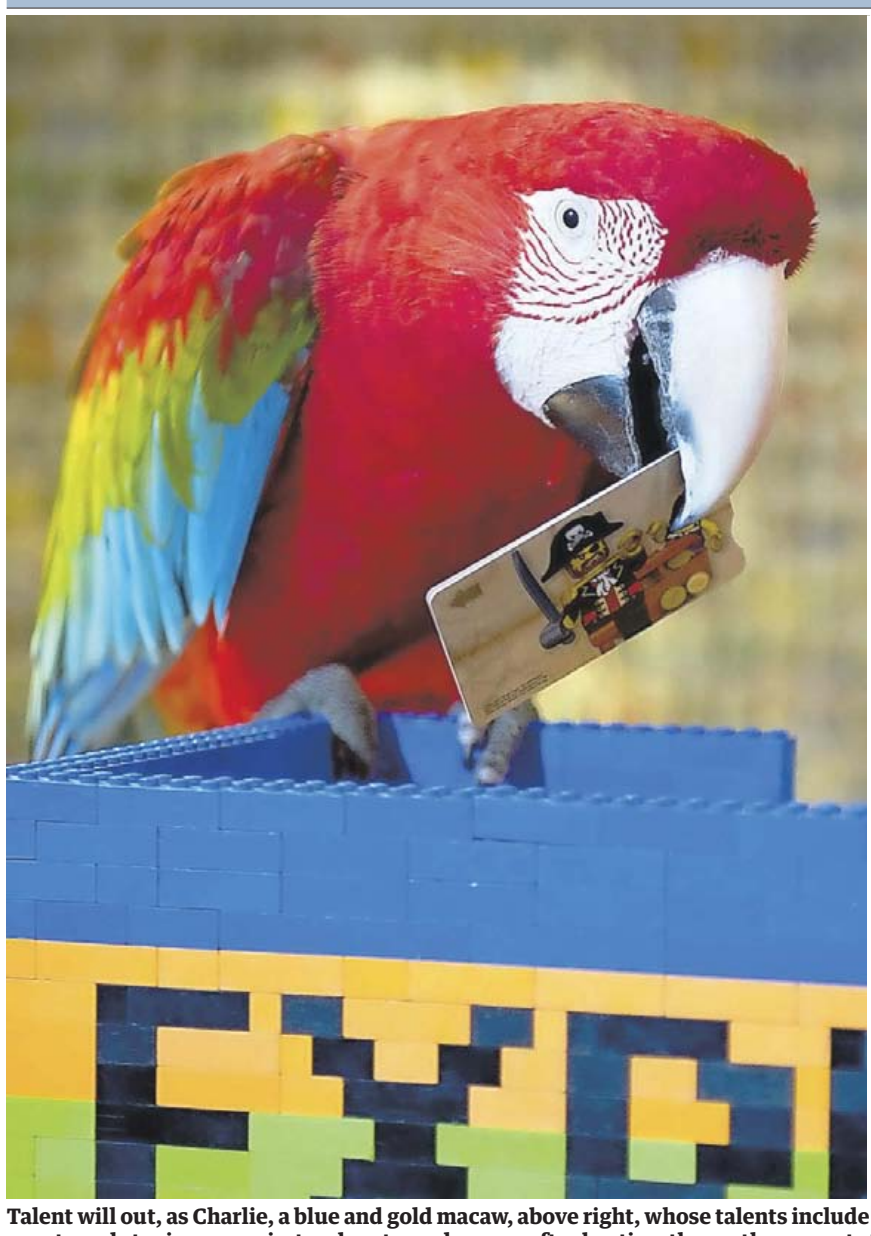
National

Whose a pretty toy then? Legoland signs a parrot



Talent will out, as Charlie, a blue and gold macaw, above right, whose talents include playing dead, demonstrated at auditions to become 'parrot-in-residence' at the Legoland hotel, Windsor. Charlie, 32, will greet guests and star in a new pirate adventure play area after beating three other parrots to the role. Her owner, Peter Bloom from Pickering, North Yorkshire, has had Charlie for 30 years Photograph: Mikael Buck/Rex

Brooks accused of using 'carefully prepared script'

Ex-editor says she did not know PA took evidence

Phone-hacking trial hears of supportive Blair texts

Nick Davies

Rebekah Brooks yesterday rejected a claim that her 13 days of evidence in the witness box at the phone-hacking trial have been "a carefully prepared and presented script that bears little relation to the truth".

The claim came on a day when the court heard how Brooks received a stream of supportive text messages from Tony Blair in final week as chief executive of News International in July 2011 while she contemplated seeking further advice from Peter Mandelson.

Ending his cross-examination of Brooks yesterday, Andrew Edis QC suggested that her 20-year career at News International had been a "meteoric rise in ... a really tough world" during which she had tried to get the best stories. "And you didn't much care how you got them."

"That's absolutely not true," she replied.

"Getting them was what mattered to you. Is that fair or not?"

"It's not fair."

He challenged her over the detail of the three offences with which she is charged.

On phone-hacking, Brooks said two of her executives at the News of the World – Greg Miskiw and Neville Thurlbeck – had never told her of the existence of the paper's specialist phone-hacker, Glenn Mulcaire. And that her managing editor, Stuart Kuttner, had never told her of the paper's annual contract with Mulcaire.

On the charge that as editor of the Sun she approved payments to a source at the Ministry of Defence, she said the journalist who asked for the money had never told her the source was a public official.

On two charges that as chief executive of News International in July 2011 she conspired to hide or destroy evidence, she said she had not known that her PA, Cheryl Carter, had removed from the company archive seven boxes that, the Crown claim, contained 12 years of her notebooks; and that she had not known that her husband, Charlie Brooks, had given some of his belongings to security staff before police searched their homes. "You were completely unaware of everything?" asked Edis.

"Yes" she said.

"I'm going to suggest to you that that is quite untrue. You were running your world – and not much happened in it that you didn't want to happen. Is that right? You were the boss?"

"I was the CEO."

"And before that you were the editor."

"Yes."

"You were very much aware of what these people were doing?"

"Which people?"

"Kuttner. Thurlbeck, Miskiw. Cheryl Carter. The journalist from the Sun. Even your husband. All these people."

"That's not true."

"In fact, Mrs Brooks, your evidence, I'm going to suggest to you, has been a carefully prepared and presented script that bears little relation to the truth about these offences."

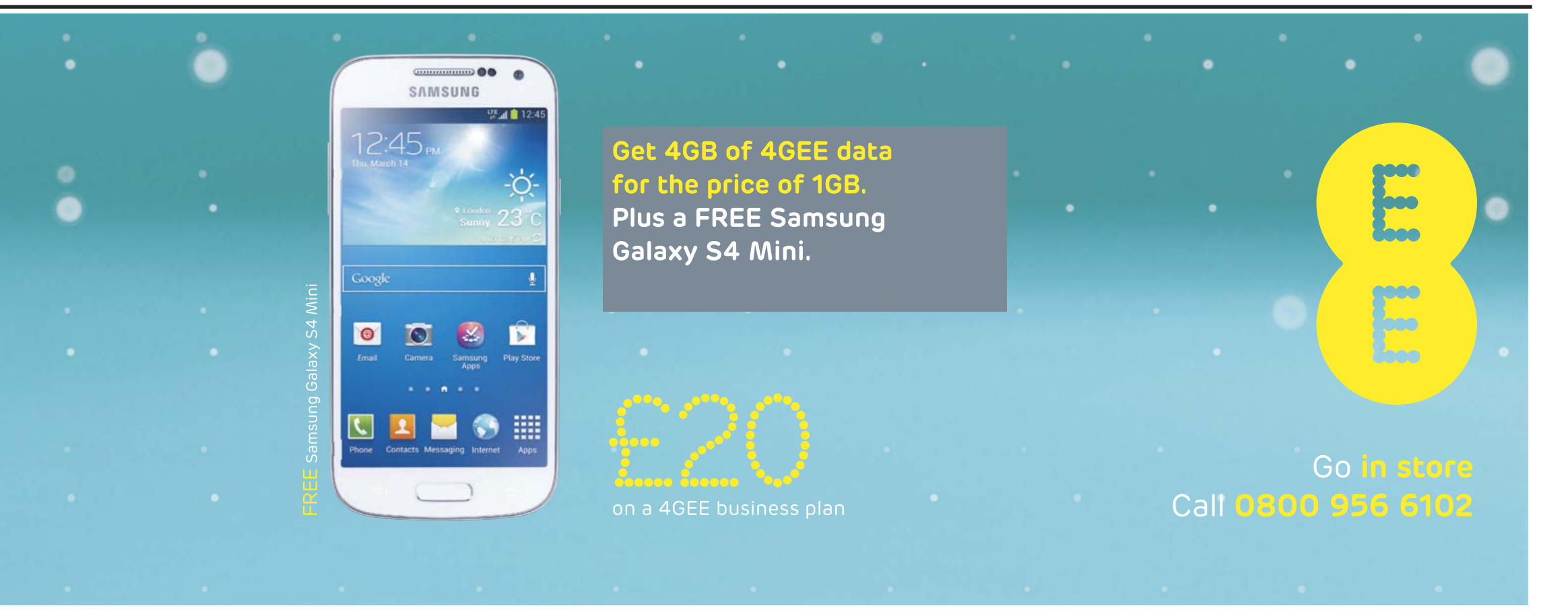
Rebekah Brooks said she was not told a paid contact was an MoD employee

"It has not," she said.

Earlier, the court heard that as the hacking scandal came to a head in July 2011, Brooks exchanged texts with Tony Blair. On the evening of Sunday 10 July, with the final edition of the News of the World on sale, Blair flew into Washington DC and texted her: "Hi it's Tony. I've just landed. Is it too late to speak or should we stick with tomorrow?" She replied that they should speak the next day, then added a second message: "Can't wait xx."

The jury has heard that on the following day she spent an hour on the phone with Blair, after which she emailed James Murdoch to report that Blair was suggesting that they should set up a "Hutton-style inquiry" and was offering to advise them generally on a "between us" basis.

Rebekah Brooks denies conspiring to intercept communications, commit misconduct in public office and pervert the course of justice. The trial continues.



on data speeds of 4 mobile networks as an average across 3G and 4G in 16 UK large urban zones, Jan-Oct 2013. Your experience may vary. The RootMetrics award is not an endorsement of EE. Visit rootmetrics.co.uk for details. Double speed 4G: Selected 4G areas only. See our website for latest availability.

Part pagan, part alien – the oddest pavilion yet?

Chilean architect Radic chosen to design this year's Serpentine 'folly'

Oliver Wainwright

A cow's udder stuffed with newspaper and wrapped in strips of masking tape might not sound like your average architectural model. But then Smiljan Radic, the Chilean designer chosen for this summer's Serpentine Gallery pavilion in London, is no ordinary architect. This bandaged bladder, along with hollowed-out pebbles and torn papier-mache doughnuts, has fed into the development of one of the strangest structures Kensington Gardens will have seen when it opens on 26 June.

Looking like an alien visitation to some ancient pagan site, the pavilion will take the form of a delicate white fibreglass cocoon, resting on a ring of boulders above a sunken grassy bowl.

"I want to bring back a sense of primitive space to the tradition of the folly in the park," said Radic, speaking from his studio in Santiago. "I like fragile constructions that have nothing to do with the history of architecture – like roadside fruit stalls, travelling circus tents and the simple shelters people build with whatever materials are to hand."

The 48-year-old, one of the youngest and least known architects yet selected in the Serpentine's 14-year programme, has forged a reputation in South America for building structures of startling originality that play on their material counterpoints, combining natural and artificial, roughly hewn with smoothly polished. From luxurious villas that cling to the cliffs of the Chilean coast, to larger museum and civic centre projects, his work contrasts raw geological power with the delicacy of things that feel woven or grown. It is organic, but in way that is as awkward and brutish as it is sumptuous and refined. It is touchy-feely – but you might get scratched.

A digital rendering of Radic's proposed Serpentine Gallery pavilion in Kensington Gardens, London, to open on June 26

Radic's extension to a charcoal burner's house in Culiprán is made out of the kiln itself, formed from a big ball of clay and straw that looked like the work of a dung beetle, then burnt out from the middle and chopped in half to form a craggy dome. His Mestizo restaurant in Santiago is composed of crisp black concrete beams resting on top of massive granite boulders, as if Mies van der Rohe had collaborated with the Flintstones.

Smiljan Radic said he wanted his pavilion to bring back 'a sense of primitive space to the tradition of the folly in the park'

For the Serpentine, the torus-shaped fibreglass shell will appear like the cast-off chrysalis of some bulbous insect, ripped open where its maker wriggled out. These are spaces to be experienced from within, not objects to look at from outside.

"I find contemporary architecture gives too much attention to the surface and the visual sense," said Radic. "I'm more interested in the ability of architecture to create an ambience, to give the air a certain quality, with noise, pasty light, suspended dust or an unusual temperature."

He represents a welcome direction in the Serpentine's choice of lesser known, more thoughtful architects for this annual commission, after a decade of big-name "starchitects" produced mixed results – from Frank Gehry's clumsy pile of collapsing beams in 2008 to Jean Nouvel's tacky red boudoir in 2010. Last year's beguiling cloud of white steel rods, by the relatively obscure Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, was one of the most visited pavilions yet.

Tycoon to back capital's electric car hire scheme

Gwyn Topham
Kim Willsher Paris

A point-to-point electric car-sharing scheme has been promised for London by the billionaire tycoon behind the Paris prototype, with thousands of new vehicle-charging points to be added in London this year.

The scheme, planned to start in March 2015, would allow drivers to book electric cars using smartcards and phones for short journeys between parking points in the city, based on the French Autolib' model.

Vincent Bolloré, whose Bolloré group has won the contract from Transport for London (TfL) to upgrade and extend the electric charging network, said: "We believe it could be equally successful in London, offering people a convenient and low-cost form of environmentally friendly transport."

About 100 Bluecars built by Bolloré will be in service at launch, with a view to 3,000 cars given public takeup and the agreement of London boroughs to provide parking space.

But Bolloré said: "Until now, the electric car is a toy of the happy few: it's very expensive and does not have the *autonomie* [range] of a normal car. We have designed a car that is cheap: a beautiful, real car, with four seats, but cheap."

Leon Daniels, head of surface transport at TfL, said it was "one more big step" in improving air quality in the capital.

He said: "London is in very serious danger of getting a €300m (£250m) fine from the EU for its breaches of air quality. We think electric vehicles are very much the right answer for London, and in particular when shared, reducing the total number of vehicles on our streets and drastically reducing emissions."

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International

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Members of Shia group Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, which supports Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, at the funeral in Najaf of a fighter killed in clashes with the Free Syrian Army Photograph: Alaa al-Marjani/Reuters

Controlled by Iran, the militia signing up Iraqi men to die in Syria's conflict

Martin Chulov in Najaf joins gravediggers in the world's largest cemetery wait for those killed fighting for a powerful Shia force

Each day for the past nine months, the bodies have been coming. Some are carried in simple wooden coffins strapped to car roofs. Others arrive with more ceremony, escorted by black-clad mourners or men in military fatigues to a hypnotic soundtrack of Islamic hymns.

The convoys turn into the lanes of the Valley of Peace cemetery, squeezing past tombstones weathered by millennia and stopping next to freshly dug holes in the desert soil. The newest inhabitants of the world's biggest cemetery were killed not here in Iraq but in Syria, where they fought under the green flag of the Middle East's most potent new Shia Islamic political force, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (League of the Righteous).

The militia has been busy readying for the afterlife, buying up more than 2,500 square metres of burial plots and erecting shrines for its fallen. In Baghdad, nearly 100 miles north, the group has been more occupied with the here and now, imposing its influence on Iraq's fractured political scene and steadily asserting its will throughout the city's Shia heartland suburbs.

Since the US military left Iraq in December 2011, and within two months of the first national election since then, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq has quietly emerged as one of the most powerful players in the country's political and public life. Through a mix of strategic diplomacy, aggressive military operations and intimidation – signature methods of its main patron, the Iranian general Qassem Suleimani – the group is increasingly calling the shots in two countries.

Its rise to prominence has disturbed many Iraqi political leaders. "Little more than seven years ago, they were just another Iranian proxy used to attack the Americans," said a minister. "Now they have political legitimacy and their tentacles in all the security apparatus. Some of us didn't notice until it was too late."

Until early 2007, few outsiders had heard of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, which emerged over several years from a split within the Mahdi Army, the then dominant arm of the Shia insurgency in Iraq. Its earliest incarnation – stealth tactics and the denial of responsibilty – was straight from the playbook of Suleimani, an elusive Iranian general whose influence over Iran's strategic interests has grown sharply in the past 10 years.

The group has a close connection to Lebanon's Hezbollah and ideological links to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Its debut as a strike weapon of Suleimani, who reports directly to Khamenei and commands the Quds Force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, came with an attack in January 2007 on a US military outpost in Karbala, another Shia shrine city, south of Najaf, that killed five US soldiers.

Several months later, the group's leader, Qais al-Khazali, his brother Laith al-Khazali and a senior Hezbollah member, Ali Moussa al-Daqduq, were captured by the SAS near Basra. Then came a series of events that gave rise to the group's claim to legitimacy.

In May 2007, a British IT consultant, Peter Moore, and four of his bodyguards were seized by Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq and Iraqi security force members from a government building in east Baghdad. Moore was released in late 2009 after the Khazali brothers were freed from US prisons in Iraq.

However, the Briton's guards were all killed, their bodies returned one by one as part of a choreographed exchange with Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq prisoners who were released from US and Iraqi prisons. Daqduq, one of the last to be freed, was returned to Lebanon in 2012.

Now, as Iraq approaches parliamentary elections on 30 April, the group is stepping up its political activism in Baghdad and its support for the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria. In speeches and interviews in the past two years, Qais al-Khazali has claimed a role for the group based on its military "defeat" of the US.

His message has galvanised thousands of Iraqi Shias who have volunteered to fight for the Assad regime in Syria. And it has worried many communities across the Shia heartland, who see their countrymen's involvement in Syria's battles as a costly investment in a sectarian conflict that increasingly respects no border.

In the Najaf cemetery, gravediggers say they can barely distinguish between the end of one war and the start of the next. "No sooner had the Americans gone than Syria exploded," said one worker, standing against a newly built shrine. "There have been more of their bodies coming back from Syria than ever before. There are easily around 500 of them buried here. We have been getting around three each day for the past month alone. They get driven to us from across the border in Iran. When they are killed in Syria, they are flown there."

The regular rhythms of life and death keep business ticking over in this graveyard of more than 5 million souls. But even by Najaf's standards, business has been brisk lately. A warm wind swirls soil from open graves nearby, and a newly etched tombstone spells out the short life of the Shia jihadist killed somewhere in Syria last November. His grave, and the 30-odd alongside it, all say the occupant died "defending the Holy Shrine Sayyidah Zaynab".

The mosque, on the south-west outskirts of Damascus, is said to be the resting place of the daughter of the Imam Ali, the prophet Muhammad's cousin, and is revered by the Shia faithful. Its defence has served as a clarion call for Shia fighters from around the Middle East who believe it to be under attack from Sunni extremists.

Hezbollah also claims its widespread intervention in Syria on the side of Assad is in defence of the shrine. So too does Kata'ib Hezbollah, another Iranian-backed Iraqi proxy, whose members are often buried alongside Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq fighters. Both Iraqi groups fight across Syria under the banner of Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas, which has been at the vanguard of attacks against the almost exclusively Sunni opposition across Syria.

They, along with the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, are helping turn the tide in favour of the Assad regime, which in late 2012 was losing control of Damascus to rebel groups who were finding serious cracks in the regime's inner cordon. "Then came a strategic decision by all the Shia groups to defend Assad whatever the cost," said a regional ambassador previously based in the Syrian capital. "You could see the turnaround in Assad almost immediately. Even in his speeches, it was like 'we can do this.'"

Estimates of the numbers of Shia fighters in Syria range between 8,000 and 15,000. Whatever the true figure, the involvement of large numbers of Iraqis is not the secret it was in the early months of Syria's civil war, which is now being fought along a sectarian fault line.

Outside Baghdad University, a large poster of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq's dead, superimposed on a photo of the Sayyidah Zaynab shrine, greets students. Similar posters stand outside other universities, and on prominent public squares. Security forces pay them no heed.

"The government has given them cover for their political and security life," said a senior Iraqi official with links to the intelligence community. [The Iraqi prime minister Nouri] al-Maliki is wary of them, but what can he do? His nature is that if he cannot deal with the issue he will turn his head away. He tried to set up a cell to monitor them in late 2010, but they found out and he was embarrassed. He paid them money and said sorry. They don't respect him now."

'If you are accepted, you will be taken to Iran for training and then be sent to Syria. It's the same way home if you die'

Iraqi intelligence officials believe Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq is receiving $1.5m-$2m a month from Iran. "They see themselves as the 'Soldiers of the Marjaeen' [the ultimate Shia religious authority]," the official said. "Their power is unchecked."

The gravediggers who sit waiting for business in concrete huts along the main road through the cemetery fear nothing in death, but admit to being scared of the threat faced by anyone who earns the ire of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq. "They are everywhere," said one. They're in the [official records] building. Don't go asking questions there. You will be arrested."

In Baghdad, homes and offices have been bought or, in some cases, commandeered by officials from the party who use them as recruiting centres for anyone looking to fight in Syria. Most locals seem to give them a wide berth.

"You need to be young and you need to have two written references," said a local man who had sat in on an interview between a would-be volunteer and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq officials. "Those guarantees are important. It is also better if you don't have children, or a wife.

"If you are accepted, you will be taken to Iran for around two weeks for training and then you will be sent to Syria. It's the same way home if you die there. And if someone dies, they will be looked after by Iran. The families of martyrs are paid up to $5,000 (£3,600) each. And if they are too poor to pay for the burial, that will be taken care of too."

The Najaf gravediggers were staying ahead of the market, digging holes in advance for the bodies that would soon follow. Tombstones were piled nearby for up to 30 Keta'ib Hezbollah graves waiting for engravers. On a corner, a woman in a burqa was cleaning dust from large plastic bottles of pink rosewater that family members use to wipe tombs, new and old. "We'll be back here tomorrow," said the gravedigger. "We will bury whatever they send us."

Heidegger notebooks show antisemitism at heart of thinking

Publication counters view that Nazism did not taint writer's philosophy

Philip Oltermann Berlin

He is widely regarded as one of Europe's most influential 20th century philosophers whose writings inspired important thinkers of the modern era. But 38 years after Martin Heidegger's death, scholars in Germany and France are asking whether the antisemitic tendencies of the author of Being and Time ran deeper than previously thought.

The philosopher's sympathies for the Nazis have been well documented: He joined the party in 1933 and remained a member until the end of the second world war. But antisemitic ideas were thought to have tainted his character rather than the core of his philosophy – not least by Jewish thinkers such as Hannah Arendt or Jacques Derrida, who cited their debt to Heidegger.

This week's publication of the "black notebooks" (a philosophical diary that Heidegger asked to be held back until the end of his complete work), challenges this view. In France the revelations have been debated vigorously since passages were leaked last December, with some Heidegger scholars even trying to stop the notebooks' publication.

In Germany, one critic has argued that it would be "hard to defend" Heidegger's thinking after the publication of the notebooks, while another has already called the revelations a "debacle" for modern continental philosophy – even though the complete notebooks were until now embargoed by the publisher.

The most controversial passages are reflections from the start of the second world war to 1941. While distancing himself from the racial theories pursued by Nazi intellectuals, Heidegger argues that *Weltjudentum* ("world Judaism") is one of the main drivers of western modernity, which he viewed critically.

"World Judaism", Heidegger writes in the notebooks, "is ungraspable everywhere and doesn't need to get involved in military action while continuing to unfurl its influence, whereas we are left to sacrifice the best blood of the best of our people".

In another passage, he writes that the Jews, with their "talent for calculation", were so vehemently opposed to the Nazi's racial theories because "they themselves have lived according to the race principle for longest".

The notion of "world Judaism" was propagated in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the notorious forgery purporting to reveal a Jewish plan for world domination. Adolf Hitler stated the conspiracy theory as fact in Mein Kampf, and Heidegger too appears to adopt some of its central tropes.

"Heidegger didn't just pick up these antisemitic ideas, he processed them philosophically – he failed to immunise his thinking from such tendencies," said the notebooks' editor, Peter Trawny.

The notebooks also show that for Heidegger, antisemitism overlapped with a strong resentment of American and English culture, which he saw as drivers of what he called *Machenschaft*, variously translated as "machination" or "manipulative domination".

Martin Heidegger in 1933, when he had already joined the Nazi party. Critics say his thinking is now 'hard to defend'
Photograph: Adoc-photos/Corbis

Heidegger argues that like fascism and "world judaism", Soviet communism and British parliamentarianism should be seen as part of the imperious dehumanising drive of western modernity: "The bourgeois-Christian form of English 'bolshevism' is the most dangerous. Without its destruction, the modern era will remain intact."

In a dig at English culture, he writes: "What, other than engineering and metaphysically paving the way for socialism, other than commonplace thinking and tastelessness, has England contributed in terms of 'culture'?"

Trawny, who is also director of the Martin Heidegger Institute, said he was "shocked" when he discovered the antisemitic passages a year and a half ago, but decided to go ahead with their publication in spite of the damage they could cause to the philosopher's legacy. "I still think you can engage with Heidegger constructively," he said. "These revelations will help that."

Other philosophers argue that the revelations are not a "smoking gun" of antisemitism, and should not lead to a dismissal of Heidegger's other writings even if they did. "Philosophy is about learning to be aware of problems in your own thinking where you might not have suspected them," said the philosopher Jonathan Rée about the black notebooks.

"The best of what Heidegger wrote – indeed the best of philosophy in general – is not an injunction to agree with a proffered opinion, but a plea to all of us to make our thinking more thoughtful."

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Death row man cleared and freed after 30 years

Court says new informant exonerated 64-year-old

'It feels good', says Ford as he walks out of prison

Ed Pilkington New York

A man sentenced to death 30 years ago has been freed from America's notorious Angola prison in Louisiana, making him one of the longest-serving death row inmates to be exonerated.

Glenn Ford was released after state prosecutors indicated they could no longer stand by his conviction. In late 2013, the state notified Ford's lawyers that an informant had come forward with information implicating another man who had been among four co-defendants originally charged in the case.

In 1984, Glenn Ford was convicted of the murder of Isadore Rozeman, largely on the false testimony of one witness

Ford was sentenced to death in 1984 for the murder the previous November of Isadore Rozeman, an older white man who ran a jewellery and watch repair shop in Shreveport. The defendant had worked as an odd-job man for Rozeman.

Asked as he walked away from the prison gates about his release on Tuesday night, Ford told WAFB-TV, "It feels good. My mind is going in all kind of directions. It feels good."

Ford, 64, said he did harbour some resentment at being wrongly jailed: "Yeah, 'cause I've been locked up almost 30 years for something I didn't do. I can't go back and do anything I should have been doing when I was 35, 38, 40, stuff like that."

Dr Phillip Rozeman, nephew of the victim, told the Shreveport Times that the family had been alerted that new evidence had been obtained. "We understand that and actually believe the DA is acting honourably. This is positive reflection on the criminal justice system that does the right thing for people."

Ford's conviction bears all the hallmarks of the glaring inconsistencies and inadequacies of the US justice system repeatedly found in cases of exoneration.

An African American, Ford was sentenced to death by a jury that had been carefully selected by prosecutors to be exclusively white. His legal representation at trial was inexperienced, with the lead defence counsel a specialist in the law relating to oil and gas exploration who had never tried a case in front of a jury.

At the trial, the state was unable to produce any witnesses to the crime, or a murder weapon. Instead, Ford was convicted largely on the testimony of one witness - the girlfriend of another man initially suspected of the murder.

Under cross-examination, the witness, Marvella Brown, admitted that she had given false testimony. "I did lie to the court ... I lied about it all," she said.

The testimony from all three expert witnesses was later shown to have been at best inconclusive, at worst wrong.

Ford becomes the 144th death row inmate to be exonerated over the past four decades.

Richard Dieter, an authority on capital punishment at the Death Penalty Information Centre, said Ford's case "reveals the fallibility of the death penalty and the risks we take with every death sentence. Some states are trying to speed up executions instead of addressing the underlying problems that have led to such mistakes."

Police colonel Gerhard Vermeulen seeks to prove the toilet door was hit by Pistorius on his stumps Photograph: Reuters

Bat-wielding moment could be crucial to Pistorius

David Smith Pretoria

Oscar Pistorius watched yesterday as the scene where he shot dead his girlfriend was reconstructed to discredit his defence to murder.

The bullet-pierced toilet door and the cricket bat the Paralympian used to smash it were brought to the high court in Pretoria. Police colonel Gerhard Vermeulen dropped to his knees and swung the bat to demonstrate that Pistorius was on his stumps when he hit the door, not, as he claims, wearing his prosthetic limbs.

The double amputee, 27, claims he shot through the locked door four times because he believed 29-year-old Reeva Steenkamp to be an intruder. Realising his mistake, he says he put on his prostheses, tried to kick the door down and finally broke it with the cricket bat.

"The marks on the door are actually consistent with him not having his legs on and I suspect they must be similar to the height that he was when he fired the shots," Vermeulen told the court. Swinging the bat several times he insisted that the angle of the marks and indentations on the door and bat could only have been made by someone much shorter than him.

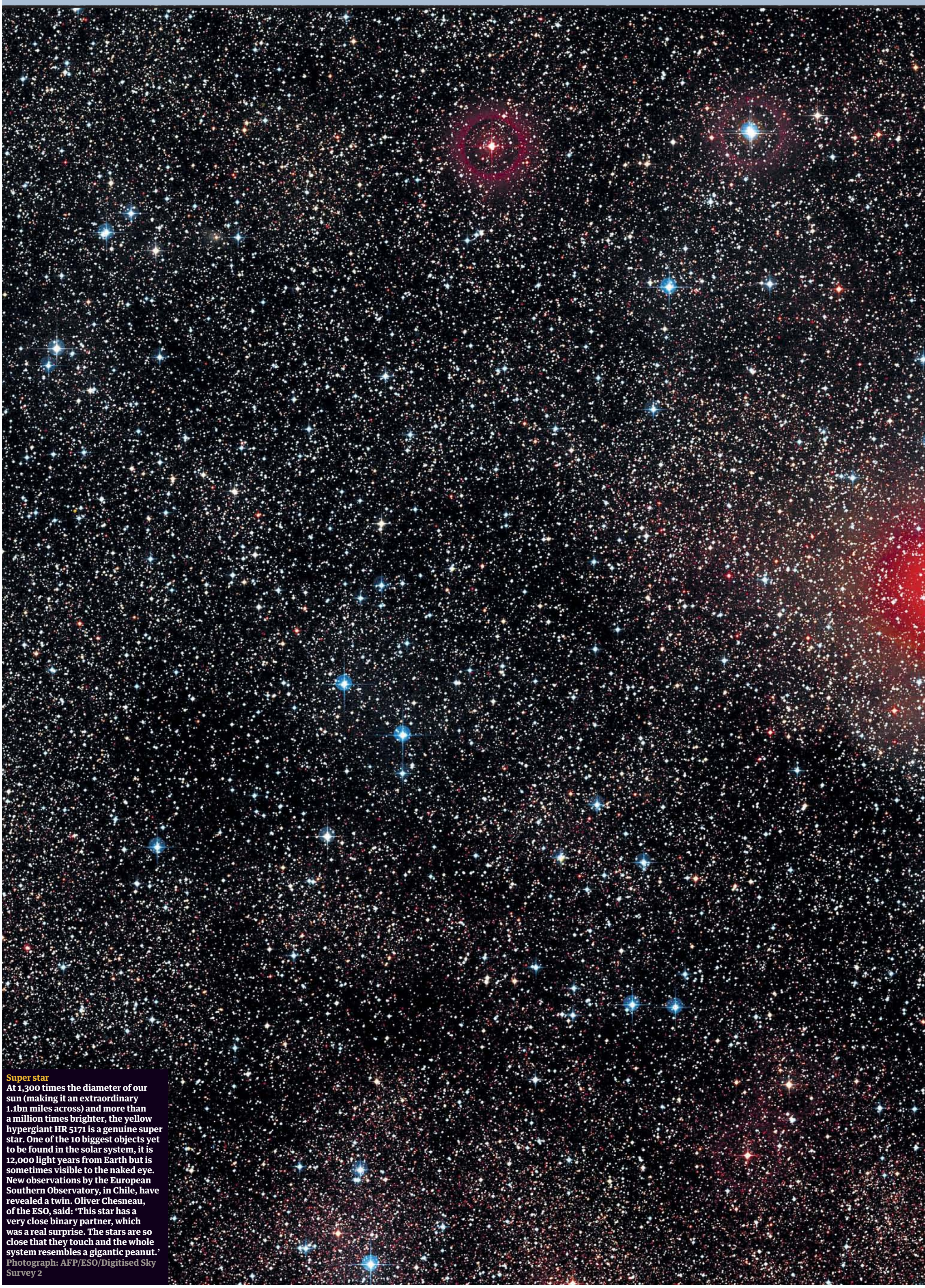
Pistorius's counsel, Barry Roux, countered by suggesting that even with his legs on, Pistorius would not be swinging a bat at the same height as an able-bodied person. He proposed that Pistorius hit the door with a "bent back" and the low marks were consistent with such a position.

Roux asked Vermeulen to kneel and lift his feet, which caused him to wobble. Roux claimed Pistorius therefore would not have been able to balance on his stumps and break down the door.

Journalist Phillip de Wet tweeted: "This may become known as the OJ-style 'if the glove does not fit' moment" - a reference to a turning point in the OJ Simpson trial.

Roux alleged police had contaminated the crime scene by stepping on the door during their investigation then later wiping the footprints off. The trial continues.

Eyewitness 12,000 light years from Earth



Super star
At 1,300 times the diameter of our sun (making it an extraordinary 1.1bn miles across) and more than a million times brighter, the yellow hypergiant HR 5171 is a genuine super star. One of the 10 biggest objects yet to be found in the solar system, it is 12,000 light years from Earth but is sometimes visible to the naked eye. New observations by the European Southern Observatory, in Chile, have revealed a twin. Oliver Chesneau, of the ESO, said: 'This star has a very close binary partner, which was a real surprise. The stars are so close that they touch and the whole system resembles a gigantic peanut.'
Photograph: AFP/ESO/Digitised Sky Survey 2

‘All right, good night’ – last words from MH370

China pushes Malaysia for information on missing jet

Oil rig worker claims he saw it descend in flames

Tania Branigan Beijing
Kate Hodal Songkhla

The last words from flight MH370 before it disappeared five days ago were “All right, good night” as the crew responded to Malaysian air traffic controllers, relatives of some of the 239 missing on board were told yesterday.

The crew were responding to information from controllers that the flight was entering Vietnamese airspace and that air traffic controllers from Ho Chi Minh City would take over.

The Malaysian government’s envoy to China revealed the last words after being pressed by relatives of Chinese passengers. The envoy said now was “not the time” to reveal the last transmission, Singapore’s Straits Times reported, but went on to disclose it anyway.

Last night it was reported that the missing flight had been seen going down in flames into the sea southeast of Vietnam.

The New Zealand Herald quotes a letter from an oil rig worker who claims he saw the Malaysian airlines plane descend.

Mike McKay told his employers, in an email made public overnight, that he had observed the plane burning at high altitude. “I believe I saw the Malaysian Airlines plane come down. The timing is right,” he said.

McKay said he was on the oil rig Songa Mercur, off south-east Vietnam. When he observed the plane it appeared to be in one piece, he said. “From when I first saw the burning (plane) until the flames went out (still at high altitude) was 10 to 15 seconds,” he wrote.

A woman searches the ocean off the south coast of Vietnam for signs of the missing aircraft Photographer: Kham/Reuters

ABC news reported that Vietnam officials confirmed they had received the email but found no wreckage in the area specified.

While the international hunt for the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 expanded to cover 27,000 square nautical miles yesterday and a third potential last sighting was reported, China’s foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang told reporters: “Right now there is a lot of information, and it’s pretty chaotic, so up to this point we too have had difficulty confirming whether [detection over the strait of Malacca] is accurate or not.”

Two-thirds of those on the Boeing-777 were Chinese and China has repeatedly urged Malaysia to speed up search efforts and has also sent more ships and aircraft to assist. It is under pressure as public concern grows about the state of the operation, and relatives have vented their frustration at Chinese officials.

The trail of information and misinformation can be traced to the day the plane disappeared from radar screens in the early hours of Saturday.

On Saturday 8 March, just hours after the 12.40am flight disappeared, Malaysian Airlines’ chief executive, Ahmad Jauhari Yahya, said the plane was still in contact with air traffic controllers two hours into the flight, pinning the last contact at around 2:40am at a point 120 nautical miles off the east coast of Malaysia. But FlightAware, a flight-tracking website, showed the plane climbing to 35,000ft before disappearing from records at 1am, 20 minutes after it took off. At 1.20am, the plane was scheduled to enter Vietnamese air space while flying between Malaysia and Ho Chi Minh City and did not. No distress signal was issued.

Twelve hours after the plane vanished, search and rescue teams from Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam began plying the waters off Vietnam looking for debris. China and the Philippines sent ships and aircraft to help. A Vietnamese admiral told media the aircraft “could have” crashed in Vietnamese waters near an island – with reports of a giant oil slick, and column of smoke, emerging.

On Sunday teams from the Philippines, China and the US began helping with search efforts. Malaysia’s prime minister, Najib Razak, said terrorism was a possibility as authorities began investigating reports that four people on MH370 may have been using stolen passports.

Later that day, a Japan-bound pilot from another Boeing 777 claimed to have made contact with MH370 at 1:30am, minutes before it disappeared – saying he asked the aircraft if it had entered Vietnamese airspace yet, but received only static and mumbling in return.

Vietnam claimed to have found more debris, while the acting Malaysian transport minister, Hishammuddin Hussein, told reporters the aircraft may have turned back towards Malaysia. Later that day it emerged that the Italian and Austrian men believed to be on the flight had had their passports stolen in Thailand in the past two years, leading to speculation that the men using their passports were terrorists.

On Monday Malaysia’s aviation chief, Aharuddin Abdul Rahman, added to fears of a terrorist plot when he said five passengers had checked in but never boarded the flight. Authorities denied Vietnamese reports that debris had been found, and the oil slick believed to belong to the plane turned out to be from a ship, while a “life raft” spotted off Vietnam was actually a moss-covered cable reel.

CCTV footage of the two men travelling on stolen European passports led to Malaysian officials describing them as resembling the black Italian striker Mario Balotelli, prompting prime minister Razak to demand a review of Kuala Lumpur’s airport security.

On Tuesday Malaysia Airlines said the pilots may have tried to turn the plane back towards Malaysia.

Malaysia’s air force chief Tan Sri Rodzali Daud, later retracted a claim that the pilots had flown back over the Malay peninsula

In a bizarre twist, Malaysia’s air force chief, general Tan Sri Rodzali Daud, said the plane was detected at 2.40am near Pulau Perak, an island in the Malacca Strait, meaning it was accounted for a whole hour later than previously thought. This claim he would later deny.

Interpol said that as more information emerged about two Iranians using stolen passports it sounded less and less like terrorism. Interpol named the two as Pouria Nour Mohammad Mehrdad, 19, and Delavar Seyed Mohammad Reza, 29. Reports suggested they were asylum seekers rather than terrorists.

Yesterday a third potential last sighting was mentioned when air force chief Daud said the last radar signal from the missing aircraft was received 200 miles north-west of Penang at 2.15am on Saturday. This would put the last signal 45 minutes after authorities had initially said they lost contact. However, Daud was unsure whether this information was entirely accurate as the data had not been received in real time, so it could belong to another aircraft.

There were still no confirmed reports of any sightings of passengers or debris as the night came to a close.

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Kerry to meet Lavrov as Crimea referendum looms

West will offer Moscow 'certain choices', US says

Ukraine insists it will not follow Kremlin scenario

Dan Roberts Washington
Nick Watt and agencies

The US secretary of state, John Kerry, will travel to London tomorrow to discuss proposals with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, for resolving the Ukrainian crisis, days before a referendum in the Crimea region on joining Russia.

The leaders of the G7, including the US and Britain, issued a statement yesterday insisting the referendum scheduled to take place this weekend "would have no legal effect" and would not be recognised by the international community.

"Given the lack of adequate preparation and the intimidating presence of Russian troops, it would also be a deeply flawed process which would have no moral force," they said.

Western diplomats are anxious to stress how the rushed referendum breaches international law and precedents for dealing with secession issues but there is increasing concern that separatists in Crimea will use it as a justification for a permanent split from Ukraine.

"In addition to its impact on the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea could have grave implications for the legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of all states.

"Should the Russian Federation take such a step, we will take further action, individually and collectively," the G7 nations - Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US - said in the statement.

Kerry was travelling to London at the request of Barack Obama, who met Ukraine's prime minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, at the White House yesterday to explore ways to calm the tensions with Moscow. Russia's bloodless seizure of the Crimea has brought US-Russian relations to one of their lowest points since the cold war, with no sign that tensions are easing.

"Our job is to try to present them with a series of options that are appropriate in order to try to respect the people of Ukraine, international law, and the interests of all concerned," Kerry told the House of Representatives appropriations committee on foreign operations.

"We will offer certain choices to foreign minister Lavrov and to President Putin, through him, and to Russia, with hopes, and I think the hopes of the world, that we will be able to find a way forward that defuses this and ... finds a way to respect the integrity and sovereignty of the state of Ukraine," he added.

Kerry met Lavrov twice in Europe last week. He gave the foreign minister a one-page paper laying out proposals for ending the standoff over Crimea, including the idea of a "contact group" bringing Russia, Ukraine and other countries together to forge a diplomatic solution. US officials said Lavrov was not authorised to make decisions and took the proposals back to the Russian president.

Crimeans voting in the referendum on Sunday are expected to back secession from Ukraine to join Russia, adding weight to calls for an international response.

Ukraine's prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk met Barack Obama at the White House to explore ways of calming the crisis

Ukraine's acting president said yesterday the country would not use its army to stop the secession. The interim leader said intervening on the south-eastern Black Sea peninsula, where Kremlin-backed forces have seized control, would leave Ukraine exposed on its eastern border, where he said Russia has massed "significant tank units".

"We cannot launch a military operation in Crimea, as we would expose the eastern border and Ukraine would not be protected," Oleksandr Turchynov told Agence France-Presse.

"They're provoking us to have a pretext to intervene on the Ukrainian mainland ... [but] we cannot follow the scenario written by the Kremlin."

The EU is poised to impose travel bans and to freeze the assets of Russian officials and military officers involved in the occupation of Crimea by next Monday if Moscow declines to accept the formation of a contact group to establish a dialogue with Ukraine.

But Russian leaders are currently refusing to communicate with Ukraine and refuse to accept Turchynov's legitimacy.

A meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels on Monday is being seen as an unofficial deadline for the introduction of the sanctions, which would exempt Putin and Lavrov as the EU tries to keep open lines of communication.

Teargas fired at mourners in Istanbul after boy's funeral

Constanze Letsch Istanbul

Riot police used teargas and water cannon to disperse mourners yesterday after the funeral of a 15-year old boy injured during anti-government unrest last year.

Tens of thousands joined the funeral of Berkin Elvan, who had spent 269 days in a coma after being struck on the head with a teargas canister when he went out to buy bread for his family.

At his funeral in Istanbul's Sisli district, mourners threw carnations and brandished loaves of bread. Others waved signs reading "Berkin Elvan is immortal" and "Murderers are amongst us".

News of Elvan's death prompted a new outbreak of violent street protests against a government and prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose reputation is being shredded by a corruption scandal implicating his family and political allies.

Violent clashes erupted in more than 30 Turkish cities on Tuesday night as anger boiled over at the teenager's death.

"He was just a child," said Eray, 18, a student who joined the funeral procession. "He should have been in school now, studying, just like us. But this government killed him. We don't expect any justice from them. We don't expect anything from them anymore."

As the funeral ended police trained teargas and water cannon on the mourners.

The renewed unrest is expected to add to the pressure on Erdogan, whose government is reeling from the large-scale corruption scandal which followed waves of anti-government protests all over Turkey last summer.

"We want freedom and democracy here, not violence and war," said Ayser Güler, 51. As a mother of two children, her main concern was about the future of the country: "Turkey is very polarised right now, but we are not afraid. We will keep on fighting for justice."

Gürkan, 33, a textiles worker, believed that the upcoming elections would sweep out the government: "We don't want violence. They came in via elections, and they will go out via elections. This government does not defend justice or democracy."

The government took no chances with the funeral, deploying riot police en masse. Many protesters and mourners were angry at the huge police presence.

A group of youngsters stopped by a pharmacy to buy dust masks and menthol rub against teargas, just in case. "They killed Berkan," one said. "They are killers. We have lost all trust in our government."

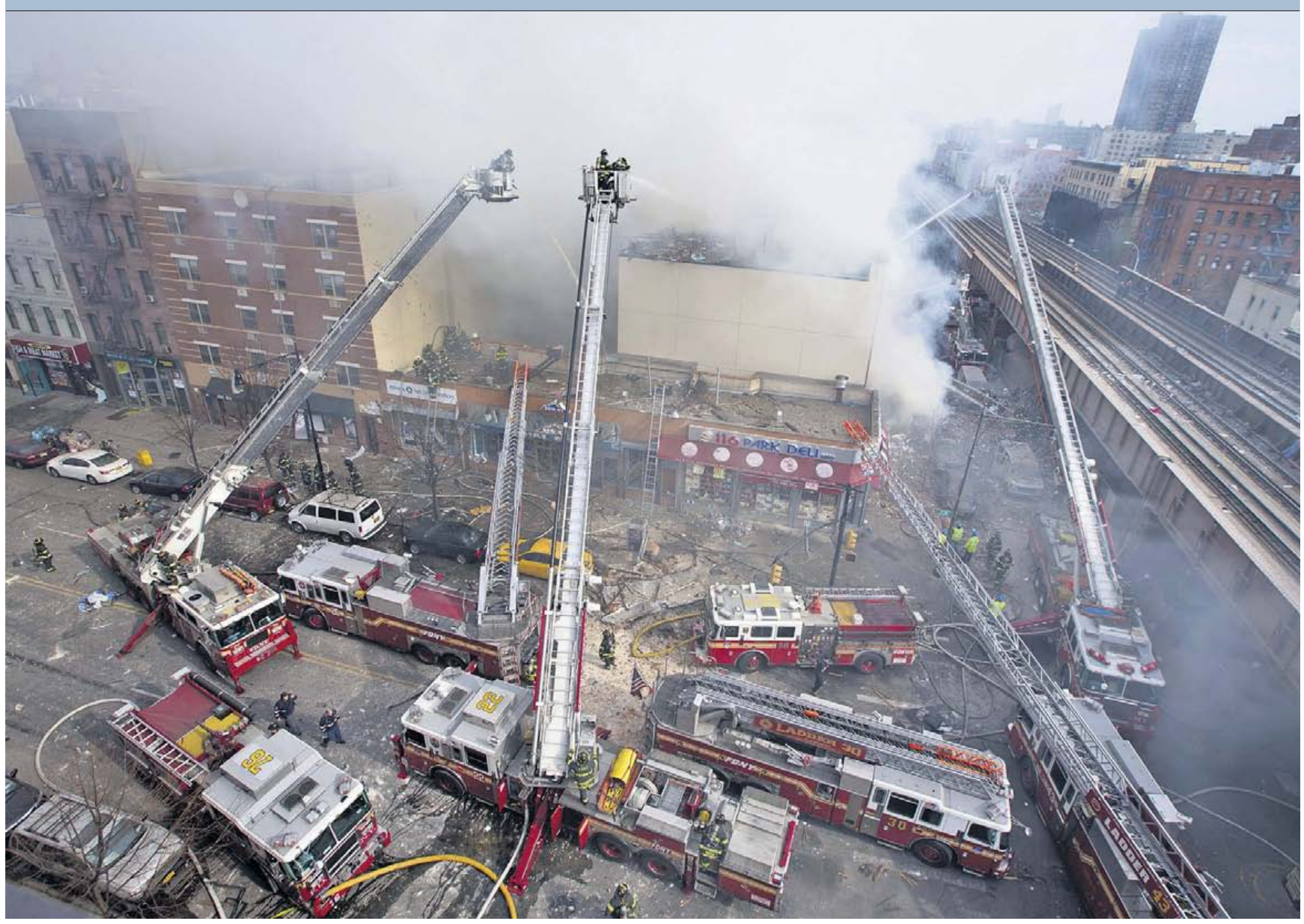
When a group of young protesters took down election campaign posters of the ruling Justice and Development or AK party to set them on fire, a woman walked up to stop them.

"There is no need to rise to their provocations," she said. "They are just waiting for a reason to use their teargas and their water cannon again."

An elderly man, sitting in a corner of the square, cradled a loaf of bread, a symbol of the teenager's death.

"At least I am still holding on to this bread," he said. "At least they haven't yet been able to steal that from me."

Fire in Harlem Buildings collapse after fatal gas explosion



Firefighters battling a blaze after buildings collapsed in the East Harlem neighbourhood of New York. At least two people died and more than 20 were injured following the explosion. Early reports suggest the blast was caused by a gas leak that utility companies had been trying to shut down Photograph: John Minchillo/AP

Doubts over 'clean coal' promise of first CO2 capture plant

Suzanne Goldenberg
Kemper County, Mississippi

The massive block of steel towers and pipes rises out of the morning fog like a sci-fi fantasy. But this coal-fired power plant could help save the climate, or at least that's the hope of the Obama administration.

The plant in east-central Mississippi was repeatedly invoked by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to justify sweeping new climate change rules. When it comes online later this year, Kemper will be the first power plant in the US capable of capturing and storing carbon dioxide emissions.

The EPA says the Kemper County energy facility offers a real example that it is possible to go on burning the dirtiest of fossil fuels and still make the cuts in CO2 to avoid a climate catastrophe.

But with staggering costs - $5bn (£3bn) and rising - and criticism from industry and environmental groups who say carbon capture and storage (CCS) is an unproven technology, now even the company that built Kemper is having second thoughts about the future of "clean coal". Meanwhile, Republicans in Congress are moving votes to overturn the entire set of EPA climate rules, based on the argument that CCS does not work, and yesterday the house of representatives' science committee looked at CCS technology.

The 582-megawatt facility is expected to burn through around 4m tonnes of low-grade lignite coal a year, all mined from the hills just behind the plant. But the plant will strip out about two-thirds of CO2 emissions, leaving emissions at about the same level as cleaner-burning natural gas, Southern Company said.

"The carbon footprint is essentially the same or maybe even less than a natural gas plant that doesn't have carbon capture," said Randall Rush, the Southern Company engineer who spent 25 years bringing the plant to life.

The diverted CO2, instead of going into the atmosphere, would be pumped to two Mississippi companies for use in enhanced oil recovery.

The EPA and other proponents of CCS say projects such as Kemper could help assure a future for coal under the EPA's new climate change rules, outlined last September.

"It would be pretty hard to argue that this technology does not exist when it is standing there on 55 acres and many many storeys towering above you," said John Thompson, who heads the coal transition team for the Clean Air Task Force, one of the few environmental groups endorsing CCS.

The EPA rules are the main pillar of Barack Obama's plan to fight climate change, by reducing the largest source of CO2: the country's power plants.

'The carbon footprint of Kemper [above] is the same or maybe less than that of a gas plant'

The proposed rules would limit future coal plants to 1,100lb of carbon dioxide emissions per megawatt hour of electricity. The average for the current fleet of coal-fired plants is about 1,700lb.

The standards would in effect require future coal-fired plants to capture and store a portion of the CO2 they produce.

The basic technology is not new, said Ian Yeates, who heads the carbon capture division at SaskPower, a Canadian firm that will deploy its own version of carbon capture later this year. "This is not a moon shot. It is being done in lots of other industries that have nothing to do with electricity," Yeates said. He said the oil industry has used carbon capture for years to prime failing oil fields.

But the economics are still not in favour of carbon capture, because of the high capital costs, industry analysts said. Meanwhile, environmental groups see CCS as an industry figleaf to shield the EPA from criticism of its climate rules that will still allow the use of fossil fuels, albeit with lower emissions.

International

Iran

UN chief raps Rouhani on human rights

The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, has rebuked the Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani, for failing to improve human rights since taking office.

Despite "commendable steps" under Rouhani, including the release of a limited number of political prisoners, violations had continued, Ban says in a report to the UN human rights council.

Execution, arbitrary detention and unfair trials, discrimination against minorities, mistreatment of political prisoners, and restrictions on freedom of expression, are among subjects that remain concerns, according to Ban.

The secretary general said he was particularly concerned about the increased use of capital punishment in Iran.

"At least 500 persons are known to have been executed in 2013, including 57 in public. Those executed reportedly included 27 women and two children," Ban said.

Ahmed Shaheed, the UN special rapporteur for human rights in Iran, said yesterday that, in Iran, at least 176 people had been put to death this year. Ban complained that Iran had not allowed Shaheed to visit and investigate the abuse claims on the ground. His report also urged Rouhani to consider the release of the two opposition leaders, Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, who have been under house arrest without trial since 2009.

Ban said that Rouhani's administration had not made "any significant improvement in the promotion and protection of freedom of expression and opinion". At least 35 journalists were also held behind bars, and two newspapers had been shut down recently.

The EU's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, has also raised concerns about human rights in Iran. Lady Ashton infuriated hardliners when she met a number of women's rights activists during a recent visit to Tehran.

Saeed Kamali Dehghan

Smouldering row Marlboro maker under fire

Sarah Boseley
Health editor

An advert in Switzerland shows a barefoot young woman on a parapet overlooking a city as the sun sets. "A Maybe never reached the top," says the caption. "Maybe never wrote a song," runs the caption on a German billboard beside a laughing young female performer, cigarette in hand. Other posters show young men riding stunt bikes. Each advert in the "Don't be a Maybe" campaign ends with the command: "Be Marlboro".

A report by anti-tobacco campaigners published yesterday accuses Philip Morris International, the maker of Marlboro cigarettes, of breaching its own ethical code in embarking on a campaign in 50 countries to recruit new young smokers. The campaign features adverts and events including concerts. The posters show young people apparently acting in radical, decisive and adventurous ways.

"Maybe never fell in love - Be Marlboro" says an advert featuring two young people kissing in a dark street, which ran in Germany in 2011. In October 2013, Germany banned the promotional images, ruling they were designed to encourage children as young as 14 to smoke. PMI has said it will appeal. Meanwhile the campaign has taken off in countries such as Indonesia, Brazil and the Philippines.

In their report, seven anti-tobacco organisations, including Corporate Accountability International, accuse PMI of trying to recruit a new generation of youngsters. The report, You're the Target, claims the campaign "exploits adolescents' search for identity by suggesting that - in the face of uncertainty - they should be a Marlboro smoker".

Anti-tobacco campaigners have filed complaints in Brazil, Colombia and Switzerland, as well as Germany, claiming the adverts breach local laws.

A spokesman for PMI said: "Our Marlboro campaign, like all of our marketing and advertising, is aimed exclusively at adult smokers and is conducted in compliance with local regulations and internal marketing policies. Allegations to the contrary are unfounded and based on a subjective interpretation."

France

Schumacher's family welcome improvement

Michael Schumacher's family is confident he will wake up after showing "small, encouraging signs" of improvement, according to a statement.

The former Formula One driver, who suffered serious head injuries in a skiing fall in the French Alps at the end of December, has been in an artificially induced coma in a French hospital for more than two months.

Doctors have been reducing the medication in the hope of reviving him.

Yesterday his agent, Sabine Kehm, said: "We are and remain confident that Michael will pull through and will wake up. There sometimes are small, encouraging signs, but we also know that this is the time to be very patient.

"The length of the process is not the important part for us," she added.

Kim Willsher Paris

Afghanistan

Taliban group says it killed radio journalist

A Taliban splinter group linked to the kidnapping of a New York Times journalist six years ago has claimed responsibility for killing a British-Swedish reporter in Kabul.

The Fidai Mahaz group said it had killed the radio journalist Nils Horner, 51, and accused him of being a spy for the UK government, in a statement posted on its website: "[Horner] was not a journalist, he was a spy of MI6, he was a special worker of MI6. He was targeted by Fidai movement.".

The group has weak ties to the mainstream Taliban, and is more hardline. It last made headlines two years ago as the Mullah Dadullah front - claiming responsibility for the assassination of the former Taliban official Arsala Rahmani, who was trying to broker a peace deal. **Emma Graham-Harrison** Kabul

China

Jackie Chan kicks off career of K-Pop band

The Chinese action-movie star Jackie Chan is turning his hand to pop music by recruiting, training and apparently producing a boy-band quintet called JJCC, according to reports.

Chinese media outlets, including the state newswire Xinhua, say the actor is a long-time fan of the South Korean K-Pop genre. "After [Chan] saw K-Pop's unlimited potential and possibility for development, he spent several years grooming JJCC," reported Xinhua.

South Korean music is popular across Asia and JJCC's name is a doubled acronym of the phrase "joining cultures". Besides one Australian-Chinese singer, the rest of JJCC are Korean.

The 59-year-old Chan has a long history with the Chinese music industry and has issued more than 25 albums.

Sean Michaels

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» Global development
OECD donors are considering ending aid to richer developing countries including Mexico and Venezuela

» Italy
The first hurdle is cleared for an electoral reform law championed by prime minister Matteo Renzi (pictured in caricature at the Viareggio carnival)

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Bashar al-Assad makes a rare public appearance outside central Damascus

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Religion

12 months a pope: how has he done?

Report card From Vatican reform and Anglican relations to women and gay people, the new papacy analysed

Lizzy Davies Rome
Sam Jones

A year ago today, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the archbishop of Buenos Aires, became the 266th head of the Roman Catholic church. His predecessor, Benedict XVI, had resigned the month before, citing a decline in his physical and mental strength, leading to an almost unprecedented handover of power. After the remote, intellectual German theologian came the church's first Jesuit leader, its first Latin American pontiff – and the first pope to take the name of Francis.

The pope was elected with a mandate to shake up the church in Rome and help turn the page on a fraught and scandal-bedevilled papacy. His many fans argue he has vigorously pursued a reformist agenda within the Vatican while radically improving the church's image outside it. But, as Rome marks his first anniversary, just how successful has this peculiarly popular pontiff been?

Good works

Image management
Since stepping on to the balcony of St Peter's on 13 March 2013 to joke that the cardinal-electors had been forced to cast their nets to "the end of the Earth" to find a successor to Benedict, Francis has scarcely put a humbly shod foot wrong PR-wise. Despite adhering to church teaching as closely as his predecessor, Francis has, through charm, humour and openness, turned many preconceptions on their heads. His decision to abjure the apostolic palace in favour of the modest Casa Santa Marta guesthouse has offered proof of his personal commitment to a humbler church, while his tender embracing of Vinicio Riva, a man terribly disfigured by tumours, underlined his hands-on pastoral approach.

Church governance
Francis's decision to appoint eight "outsider" cardinals to advise him on church reform was described by one observer as the "most important step in the history of the church for the past 10 centuries". The council, which includes cardinals from the US, Australia, India, Honduras and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has been dubbed the papal G8. "[They are] not courtiers but wise people who share my feelings," said Francis, who has often been scathing about the "introspective and Vatican-centric" nature of the Holy See. "This is the start of a church with not just a vertical but horizontal organisation."

Overhaul of the Congregation for Bishops
Francis has revamped the Congregation for Bishops, the department responsible for selecting bishops. By appointing 12 new members and not confirming 14 existing members, he rebalanced the department to make it more moderate and progressive. New members include Vincent Nichols, the leader of Catholics in England and Wales praised for his inclusive style, whom Francis made a cardinal last month. The papal historian Michael Walsh described the overhaul as a "tectonic shift" in governance.

Inclusivity
On Maundy Thursday, a fortnight after becoming pope, Francis exhorted his priests to get out "to the outskirts where there is suffering, bloodshed, blindness that longs for sight and prisoners in thrall to many evil masters". He washed and kissed the feet of two Muslims – one a woman – at a youth detention centre near Rome. It was the first time a pontiff had included women in the ceremony. For many, the greatest proof of inclusivity came on a flight back from Brazil in July. "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?" he told journalists.

Church of England
Francis's determination to "intensify dialogue among the various religions" has not been confined to reaching out to Jews and Muslims. Last June, he had lunch with the archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and the pair chatted for four hours. Despite frosty relations in recent years – caused mainly by the Church of England's decision to ordain women and Benedict's creation of an ordinariate to bring disaffected Anglicans into the embrace of Rome – Francis and Welby appear to have a genuine rapport. It has not hurt that Welby's personal spiritual director is a Benedictine monk, nor that the archbishop recently signalled a further rapprochement by inviting members of a Roman Catholic ecumenical community to take up residence in Lambeth Palace.

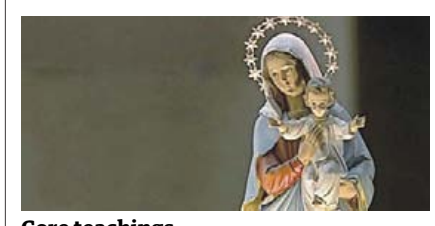
Political player
It was no accident that Francis chose a career Vatican diplomat, Pietro Parolin, as his secretary of state, a position often likened to the papal prime minister. The pope has shown a desire to put the Vatican back on the international stage, and his stance on Syria has been the clearest sign that under him its voice will be loud and clear. With an open letter to the leaders of the G20, repeated exhortations for a non-violent, mediated solution, and a day-long fast and mass prayer vigil, he provided a moral counterweight to the Obama administration and its proposed air strikes. His powerful criticisms of capitalist excesses have seen the church regain relevance in the debate on social justice.

'He's shown himself to be committed to doctrine but concerned with pastoral realities'

PHOTOGRAPH: REX FEATURES

The jury's out

Curia reform
The "outsider" pope was elected with a mandate to bang heads together. In the fading light of Benedict's papacy, infighting and corruption within the Curia – the Vatican's central bureaucracy – had dominated. Francis has announced measures to engender reform, most notably the creation of a secretariat of the economy – a kind of finance ministry – to centralise business and administrative affairs. The other key staffing decision was to replace the widely discredited Tarcisio Bertone as secretary of state – a move Francis must hope will draw a line under an era of scandal and incompetence.



Core teachings
Liberals who would like to see significant doctrinal shifts from Francis should alter their expectations. The pope has made clear his commitment to core church teachings on issues such as abortion and women's ordination. But that doesn't mean there will be no change at all. For one thing, Francis has said the church needs a "new balance" and a less condemnatory attitude to sexual morality. For another, he has shown himself to be a pragmatic conservative, committed to doctrine but concerned with how the church responds to pastoral realities. In concrete terms, speculation centres on whether he will announce a shift on the treatment of remarried divorcees, now banned from receiving holy communion.

Vatican Bank
All too often the cause of embarrassment for the papacy, the Institute for Works of Religion (IOR) is at the heart of Francis's reform – and ethical finance – agenda. He has set up a commission of lay experts and clerics to investigate the bank's running, and has replaced four of five cardinals appointed under Benedict on an oversight body. Under president Ernst von Freyberg, the bank is trying to improve transparency. But an Italian investigation into allegations of money laundering – which the bank denies – continues and a report by a Council of Europe body, Moneyval, in December said the IOR still had some way to go.

Must try harder

Clerical sex abuse
There are growing suspicions that this, more than any other issue, is emerging as Francis's blind spot. Critics say he has done little to ramp up the church's response to the scandal. Though he has said officials must "act decisively" on the problem – and in December announced a new commission to examine ways of better protecting children and helping victims – most advocates for abuse victims say another commission is not what is needed and criticise him for not making the deep changes they, and the UN, say are necessary. They have been left despondent by Francis's occasional comments on the issue, in which he has generally defended the church while condemning the abuse. An interview published this month in which he claimed that no other institution had acted with the same "transparency and responsibility" elicited particular anger.

Andrew Brown, page 34 »

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Rate £	1.1942	Rate £	1.6605
Change	-0.0049	Change	-0.0023

SOURCE: INTERACTIVE DATA

QC to lead forex inquiry into Bank staff

Grabiner to investigate officials' role in price fixing

Independent review of evidence 'now essential'

Jill Treanor

The Bank of England has called in one of the most respected figures in the legal world, Anthony Grabiner QC, to investigate allegations that some of its staff may have been involved in manipulating the £3 trillion-a-day foreign exchange markets for almost 10 years.

Lord Grabiner was hired by News Corp to chair its standards committee in the wake of the phone-hacking scandal. He is thought to demand £3,000 an hour for his time though he is likely to be charging the Bank a lower rate.

Grabiner has been appointed by the Bank's oversight committee, which was created in 2012 to police the central bank and is composed entirely of non-executive directors of the Bank. The committee last week began a formal investigation into whether any bank staff knew about attempts to rig the foreign exchange markets. Allegations about potential fixing of foreign exchange markets emerged last year. The Bank then began an initial inquiry into whether its officers were aware of or had condoned the potential manipulation of a "fix" which takes place daily at 4pm.

The Bank's governor, Mark Carney, told MPs this week that the scandal had the potential to be bigger than the rigging of Libor, which has resulted in big-name banks being fined billions of pounds on both sides of the Atlantic.

The focus is on the benchmark known as WM and which is used to set daily prices, through a "fix", on large number of currencies. The allegations are that rival traders shared information about their clients' positions which may have influenced the price of the fix and that the Bank of England may have known about this.

Grabiner will look at information dating back to 2005 when foreign exchange dealers from the top firms around the City first began to meet officials from the Bank three or four times a year.

Minutes of these meetings released by the Bank last week showed that they met in restaurants around the City and, it appears, began to raise the topic of possible manipulation of the foreign exchange markets in a meeting in July 2006.

Paul Fisher, deputy governor of the Bank who appeared with Carney faced MPs this week, said that his reading of those minutes "did not convey to me that markets were being rigged."

The Bank initiated a review of its role in potential rigging of the markets after newswire service, Bloomberg reported that the traders had told the central bank in 2012 they were exchanging information about their clients.

The outcome of the internal review was announced a week ago when the Bank of England revealed it had suspended a member of staff. That move came after the law firm Travers Smith had analysed more than 15,000 emails, 21,000 Bloomberg and Reuters chatroom records and more than 40 hours of telephone call recordings.

At the time the Bank said no evidence of collusion with foreign exchange traders at banks around the City had been found but the oversight committee decided to launch a formal inquiry after the employee was suspended.

Grabiner, who acted for Liverpool Football Club in its victory over previous owners Tom Hicks and George Gillett, is now going to lead the inquiry with the assistance of Travers Smith. Sir David Lees, who chairs the court of the Bank - akin to a board of directors - said the oversight committee which he also chairs had first been informed of the allegations in November.

> 'This is as serious as Libor, if not more so - this goes to the heart of the integrity of financial markets'
> **Mark Carney**

"The committee believes that it is essential that matters raised by the Bank's review should be independently examined and that the Bank's executive should act on any lessons learned," Lees said.

It is not clear what timescale Grabiner has been given and the Bank warned that while it would publish the report it may not do so until the Financial Conduct Authority has completed its investigations into the market.

Twenty people have been suspended or fired from big City firms as the investigation - also being conducted by US regulators - continues. The FCA is continuing to investigate the rigging of Libor after fining five firms - starting with Barclays in June 2012 - and is still thought to be looking at the activities of three others.

Carney said of allegations about the foreign exchange markets: "This is as serious as Libor, if not more so because this goes to the heart of integrity of markets."

The trader

Odds stacked in favour of the smart operator

Simon Goodley

"Banks don't have to beat the market to make money. They just have to beat their customers."

So says Caspar Marney, a foreign exchange trader of about 20 years' experience, including spells at major City banks such as UBS and HSBC.

The former paratrooper has been playing those markets using his own statistical methods on behalf of private clients since 1999, and gives lectures to others keen to learn how this impenetrable scene really works - which seems to be in a very different way from how most of us imagined.

On Tuesday, Bank of England governor Mark Carney admitted that allegations of exploitation in foreign exchange markets could prove to be a bigger scandal than the manipulation of Libor, following last year's revelations that the £3tn-a-day global trade in currencies might have been rigged.

"A bank's spot [currency trading] desk doesn't generally beat the market," Marney added. "They extract profit from their orders. Orders are information. Every bit of information stacks the deck. And the closer you get to 4pm, the less the risk [of the price moving against you]."

That time is crucial in currency trading and it is where investigators are said to be focusing. The market uses a benchmark price at 4pm - called the "fix" or the "fixing" - which is the price many clients request, chiefly because it is considered to be transparent.

That seems clear enough, but how can a few traders manipulate "the fix" when the currency markets are so huge? The answer, according to Marney, is that the trade is rigged, but not in the way you might think.

Traders cannot really command prices to go higher or lower - as was ostensibly the case in the Libor rigging scandal when a few bankers manipulated benchmark interest rates. But in foreign exchange, the market is heavily biased towards the professionals sitting on trading desks, who gain an edge by automatically receiving information far superior to that used by outsiders.

Marney's example involves a trader who gets a call from a major corporate client wanting to exchange US dollars for £600m in sterling. "That's big, but not absurdly huge," he said. "You perhaps get one of those a month but when you do, all other things being equal, you know the price is going up as you have an order for a market moving amount."

Knowing that there is going to be a large order for dollars against the pound, the trader could buy pounds for the bank's own trading account (unlike in equity markets, this is not against the rules in foreign exchange). He might also stage the purchases of the £600m so that the bank is likely to pay less for the pounds than the price at 4pm - which is what the client ends up being charged for.

While Marney said he has no evidence of collusion between foreign exchange traders at different banks; he adds that many of them know each other. He speculates that if a few of them did speak and discovered they all had large orders likely to push the market in one direction, it might prove too tempting an opportunity.

Even so, Marney has some sympathy with his colleagues - who have not been shown to have broken any laws. "A bank has no choice but to trade before 4pm - otherwise they'd lose money," he said.

Casper Marney, a foreign exchange trader, has been playing the markets using his own statistical methods since 1999 Photograph: Frantzesco Kangaris for the Guardian

Inside information

Step by step: how to make $1.8m in 15 minutes

3:45pm An international client calls the foreign exchange desk of a bank to convert some of its US dollars into £600m of sterling. It asks if the trade can be settled at the market benchmark price - established at 4pm each day and dubbed by the markets as "the fix" or "the fixing".

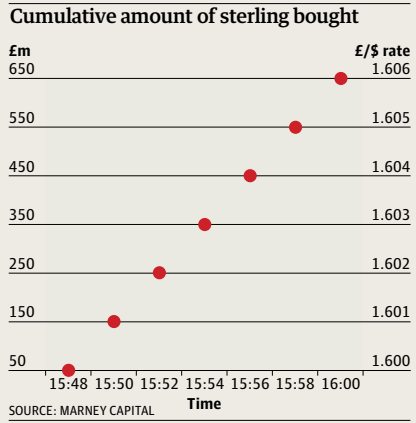
3.48pm The trader immediately buys £50m for the bank's own trading account at the market price of 1.6000 pounds to the dollar. He does this as he knows he has a very large amount of pounds to buy over the next 12 minutes meaning there is a good chance that the price will rise.

3.50pm The trader has now made sure that his bank has been looked after. His £50m trade has caused the price of pounds to tick up to 1.6010 and the trader buys £100m at that price. He repeats this trade every two minutes, which drives the price higher each time. He stops when he has bought a total of £600m for his client by 4pm at an average price of 1.6035.

4pm The "fixing" states the price of the pound to the dollar is now 1.6060. The trader has filled his client's order and can also sell the £50m he bought for the bank. As the client has asked to pay the fixing price, he receives his £600m at a cost of $963.6m (£600m x 1.6060). But the bank has paid $962.1m (£600m x the average price of 1.6035), meaning it has made $1.5m out of the client's transaction. Add in the $300,000 won on the £50m side bet, and the trader has just made $1.8m for his bank in 15 minutes. Give the boy a bonus. **Simon Goodley**

Rising price

Cumulative amount of sterling bought



SOURCE: MARNEY CAPITAL

Financial

House prices

Rain dampens down the property market

Britain's property market "furore" is showing the first signs of dying down, according to figures from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) which suggest that buyer numbers are levelling off. But it warned the slowdown might be temporary, due to the impact of flooding on parts of the country in January and February, and that further price rises could be expected.

The number of would-be buyers is still increasing, said RICS, but at the slowest rate for a year. "The initial clamour from those previously shut out of the property market [has] started to relent," RICS found in its February residential market survey. The slowdown in buyer numbers was seen across most areas of the country with only Yorkshire and the Humber bucking the trend, according to RICS.

Simon Rubinsohn, an RICS economist, said: "The growth in buyer numbers that we've seen for some months started to slow in February. It does suggest that the pent-up demand generated throughout the downturn is gradually exhausting itself. One other factor influencing behaviour over the past month may be the weather as rain, wind and, in particular, floods, tend to mean fewer people are willing to actually get out there and view houses."

Any easing in the property market will bring relief to the Bank of England, with the governor, Mark Carney, under pressure to prevent a house price bubble wrecking the economic recovery. But the RICS figures contrast with data from the Halifax, which suggested house prices roared to their highest February rise on record.

Many potential buyers are balking at the prices sellers are demanding, particularly in London, says the RICS. James Crawford, of Knight Frank, in London, said: "We are struggling to apply reality to vendors' market aspirations at the top end of the market." **Patrick Collinson**

Retail

Tesco chief talks down plunge in market share

Tesco boss Philip Clarke has played down the supermarket's fall in market share to a near decade low, saying he is building the health of the business for the long haul.

The chief executive admitted Tesco had an image problem, shared by many big institutions in the wake of the credit crunch, but said he was determined to bring about a "reappraisal" of Britain's biggest supermarket.

He told the Retail Week conference in London: "I know our business is getting better and there is a lag between it being better and people talking about it."

Tesco's market share dropped to 28.7% in the 12 weeks to 2 March compared with 29.6% - the lowest since late 2004 according to data from Kantar Worldpanel. At its peak Tesco controlled 31.8% of the market. Clarke said: "It's not about market share in the short or medium term. The industry is going through a profound change. The only way I can see we can have a sustainable business in this period is by creating, innovating and differentiating."

He highlighted Tesco's array of new services, including a digital version of its Clubcard and an e-book service.

Clarke appeared to indicate that he wouldn't have a long tenure at Tesco. "You only have a job like this for a few years," he said. "I'm not a young man. I'm 54 - I've given it 40 years." **Sarah Butler**

A few dollars more Added bonus for Wall Street traders

The average Wall Street bonus rose 15% last year to the highest level since the 2008 crisis and was the third largest on record Photograph: Brendan McDermid/Reuters

Energy

E.ON reports rise of 26% in UK retail profits

Concern over the cost of energy was renewed yesterday when E.ON, one of the big six power companies, reported a 26% increase in profits from its UK retail business, after pushing through a 9% increase in bills at the start of last year.

Figures showed that profit margins for the UK domestic supply business over the past 12 months have risen from 2.3% to 4% since the price rise. E.ON made just under £300m in profits from the UK, and its parent group in Düsseldorf reported global profits of £7.7bn.

John Robertson, who sits on the House of Commons energy select committee, said the industry regulator, Ofgem, should not have the "wool pulled over its eyes" by the E.ON results, and should continue its investigations into excessive profits in the sector.

Tony Cocker, chief executive of E.ON UK, said the 2013 supply profits had been driven by the cold weather at the start of last year and internal cost-cutting, and denied they were the result of exploiting customers. **Terry Macalister**

Science

Cheshire drug site to be biotechnology campus

AstraZeneca has agreed to sell its Alderley Park research site in Cheshire as it moves drug discovery to a new global centre in Cambridge.

New owner Manchester Science Parks - a public-private partnership - plans to keep the 400-acre Alderley Park site as a biotechnology campus.

The sale follows a decision last March by AstraZeneca's chief executive, Pascal Soriot, to move drug research and development to a new site in Cambridge - a world-class centre for life sciences.

Shifting research to Cambridge and creating a new global headquarters for the company in the city is the centrepiece of a major restructuring plan unveiled by Soriot last year, which also included a 10% cut in staff numbers by 2016. **Reuters**

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Business analysis

Research

More money is needed to pump-prime innovation, says Larry Elliott

The phrases are familiar enough: innovation is critical to a modern economy; Britain's future lies in harnessing new ideas; competing on price is a dead end.

So how are we doing in the cut-throat struggle to be a hi-tech, high-productivity, high-wage economy?

Not that well, if the government's latest figures for spending on research and development (R&D) are to be believed.

The latest data shows spending down by 2% in real terms in 2012, and falling as a percentage of GDP.

Five years ago the last Labour government set a target of R&D spending reaching 2.5% of national output by 2014. The fall, from 1.77% to 1.72% of GDP in 2012, means there is not the remotest prospect of this target being met.

There's more: Britain is in the bottom half of the EU league table for R&D spending and a country mile behind states, such as Germany and Finland, where they do more than talk about the need for innovation.

R&D in the UK is heavily concentrated among a handful of sectors, led by pharma (25% of the total), and among big companies. Innovation is pitifully low among independent small companies employing fewer than 250 people.

What we invest in R&D is a good, if not exact, proxy for innovation. And a smaller percentage of the nation's output goes into R&D than it did in the mid-1980s.

Little wonder that the productivity figures look so grim.

But things may not be quite as bad as they look.

The recession and its protracted low-growth aftermath clearly dampened the animal spirits of business. There are reasons to believe investment in pharma will boost the figures in future years. It will take time for some of the government help for innovation, such as the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the catapult centres to bring together business and academia, to make a difference.

That said, addressing the weakness of R&D spending should be a priority. Lee Hopley, chief economist at the manufacturers' organisation, the EEF, puts it this way: "The policy landscape is right. It just needs to be put on steroids."

Quite right. The government should aim to pump-prime innovation in new and potentially lucrative sectors ,such as green technologies.

Ministers need to understand that decent initiatives such as the TSB would be more effective at reaching smaller firms if they were given a bigger budget. That, though, means more money both for science and for the spin-offs of that research.

Scottish referendum

Oil plus freedom may not mean higher spending, says Larry Elliott

George Soros was blunt. It would not be practical for an independent Scotland to keep the pound. Nor did the man who broke the Bank of England see much prospect of Alex Salmond going it alone with an independent currency. Speculators would have a field day.

But this was not the most pressing problem for the pro-independence camp yesterday. A bigger problem was figures showing that Scotland ran a bigger budget deficit than the rest of the UK in 2012-13, even when including North Sea oil and gas revenues. True, there were mitigating circumstances. Oil production was weak.

Higher investment in new fields will lead to higher tax receipts from the North Sea. In part, Scotland's bigger deficit can be explained by higher capital investment than in the rest of the UK.

But the deficit numbers are a blow for the yes camp. They illustrate how volatile North Sea revenues can be. Nor are the 2012-13 figures a one-off: receipts peaked in the late 1990s and have been declining. And oil and gas revenues would make up a bigger part of tax receipts for an independent Scotland than for the UK. So, oil plus freedom does not necessarily equal higher spending. It might equal cuts.

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Financial

Candy Crush firm sets float price at £4.6bn

New dotcom fever boosts value of King Digital

Games studio will be most valuable internet listing

Juliette Garside and Sean Farrell

King Digital Entertainment, the London games studio behind the mobile hit Candy Crush Saga, is set to become the most valuable British internet company to join the stock market after pricing its initial public offering at $7.6bn (£4.6bn).

The new dotcom fever, together with buoyant stock markets, have boosted King's valuation by $2bn in less than a month. At $7.6bn it will be valued more than four times higher than Take-Two Interactive, the company behind Grand Theft Auto. Analysts had valued King at $5.5bn in February, but the company said yesterday its shares would be priced at between $21 and $24 each.

The popularity of King's confectionery-themed smartphone and tablet game will make multimillionaires of its chief executive, Riccardo Zacconi, whose 10.4% stake could be worth as much as $745m, and its chairman, Melvyn Morris, with an $875m holding. Zacconi and Morris, a former director of Derby FC, first worked together at the Midlands-based matchmaking site uDate, which they sold for $150m to Interactive Corporation in 2002.

Between them, the company's 11-strong management team own shares which at the upper end of the range could be worth almost $2.2bn. Most are selling a small percentage of their holdings, although staff will be free to sell more shares six months after the float. No formal date has been set, but leaks suggest King will come to market on 25 March.

The King pricing came as retailers Pets at Home and Poundland also debuted on the stockmarket. Poundland was priced at the top of its initial range, valuing the company at £750m, but the shares still soared 19%, adding £150m to the value of the business. Pets at Home performed less well, closing down 4% from its offer level of 245p. At last night's shares price the company was valued at £1.2bn.

The King investment is one of the most successful ever for British private equity firm Apax, which in 2005 invested around $63m. It now owns more than 48% of the shares, making its holding worth nearly $3.5bn.

King's latest filing with the US markets regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission, reveals that a minimum of 22.2m shares will be sold in the float, raising $530m, of which around $326m will be kept by the company to invest in growing its operations around the world. The balance will go to stockholders.

King Digital of Candy Crush fame (above), and Poundland (below) - two new floats Photograph: Andrew Harrer/Bloomberg

It remains to be seen whether the British taxman will benefit from King's success, however, because the company moved its tax registration from Malta to Ireland last year. The role of its British subsidiary, which houses games designers and administrative functions in offices near Tottenham Court Road in London, has been defined as the "provision of management services to other companies" in company accounts.

King makes its games available to download for free and most of its money is raised from purchases made during play. Millions have been persuaded to part with £1 for what are called "paid boosters" including lollipop hammers, coconut wheels and extra lives.

Unlike many internet firms joining the stock market or being snapped up by bigger rivals, King has been profitable for four of the last five years, making nearly $570m after tax in 2013 on revenues of $1.88bn.

New data shows that in February, around 144 million people were active daily players of King games.

King's valuation, which is based on 315m shares priced at $24, comfortably outstrips that of fellow games company Zynga, which was worth $7bn at its 2012 stock market float but has seen its fortunes go into reverse.

Ageing western states cannot fund pensions from taxes – IEA

Angela Monaghan

UK taxpayers were being kept in the dark about the scale of spending cuts or tax rises needed to fund future pension and social obligations for an ageing population, the Institute of Economic Affairs said.

The country faced a stark choice between total spending cuts of more than a quarter, health and social protection spending cuts of 50%, or "significant" tax hikes if long-term obligations were to be met, the free-market champions said.

In its report, the Government Debt Iceberg, the IEA said the measure of debt among western governments including the UK should include the extent to which all future spending plans could not be financed by the current tax system.

Taking into account commitments that have been made under social security and healthcare programmes, the UK fiscal imbalance – or the gap between tax and spending – was 13.6% of the estimated present value of UK GDP, the IEA said.

On that basis, the UK had the choice of raising the equivalent of 13.6% of GDP with extra tax revenues, over and above existing taxes, which would be levied each year to ensure that government spending commitments could be met from taxation.

Or it has the choice of cutting spending by more than a quarter – or halving spending on health and benefits.

The IEA said the government's planned measures – including a proposed rise in the state pension age to 68 by 2046 – were not enough to deal with the challenge.

Professor Philip Booth, of the IEA, said: "Without reform, today's young people are likely to be disappointed, either in terms of higher tax rates or in terms of reduced future benefits provided by government. The quicker the government changes policy, the more painlessly the situation will be resolved. For too long people have voted themselves benefits to be paid for by the next generation of taxpayers, not by sacrifices that they will make themselves."

The IEA argues in the report that Europe and the US "will soon begin to encounter fiscal constraints the like of which we have never seen before" because governments have developed unfunded social insurance programmes where retiree benefits are paid for from the taxes of the working-age population.

"Politicians have known about population ageing for around 50 years but ignored the problems it will create," the IEA said.

Board meets for first time since chief quit 'ungovernable' Co-op

Jill Treanor

The feuding board members of the Co-operative Group met yesterday in their first face-to-face gathering since the resignation of chief executive Euan Sutherland.

Under the chairmanship of Ursula Lidbetter, the board had held an emergency session late on Monday to agree on changing the structure of an organisation that spans supermarkets, funeral homes and pharmacies.

But yesterday the 20-strong board – made up of members of the co-operative movement and a newly appointed independent director, Labour peer Lord Myners – met in Manchester for a scheduled meeting.

When Sutherland quit, he branded the mutually owned organisation ungovernable and pledged to waive £3m of "retention" pay. The payment was leaked to the Observer and helped spark the 45-year-old's decision to walk away from a role he had been in for just 10 months.

He told the BBC that he feared the Co-op board would "talk the talk" but not back the necessary changes for reform at the group, which owes £1.2bn to its banks and is preparing to announce losses of £2bn for 2013.

"The senior democrats talk the talk of reform, but in practice they won't do it," Sutherland said. "My hope is that from the resignation will come healthy reform."

His resignation exposed rifts in the boardroom between those keen to back reforms put forward by Myners and those wanting more time to think through the changes. At Monday night's meeting Myners is said to have convinced the board to recommend to the seven million member-owners of the Co-op that the organisation changes to a plc-style board.

This would include executive and non-executive directors and a regional management committee to represent members.

While the board members agreed to changes, some are believed to have done so reluctantly. Any changes still require the support of regional boards – which would be eradicated under the plan – possibly at the annual meeting in May.

The Co-op convinced Richard Pennycook, the finance director who was expecting to be promoted to chief operating officer, to take on the chief executive role temporarily.

Former Co-op chief Euan Sutherland told the BBC that the board might 'talk the talk', but would not back the necessary reforms

Pennycook, who is best known for turning around the Morrisons supermarket business, is thought to not want the top job permanently. He addressed the 150 top staff in the Co-op headquarters – opened by the Queen last year – yesterday following his elevation to the top job.

He was part of the team assembled by Sutherland and among the eight offered the retention packages that are provoking controversy and which have doubled the wage bill for the management team to £12m a year.

G4S to repay £109m for tagging scam

Alan Travis
Home affairs editor

The private security firm G4S has agreed to repay £109m plus VAT for overcharging the Ministry of Justice for the electronic tagging of offenders – but still remains barred from bidding for fresh contracts.

The repayment follows a similar £70.5m settlement with the outsourcing group Serco. The two companies have now agreed to repay nearly £180m for overcharging on tagging and prisoner escort contracts.

In November justice ministers rejected an offer by G4S of a £24m "credit note" after it admitted overcharging on its electronic monitoring contract. The MoJ has said the overcharging practices stretched back at least to 2005. The company said the £109m repayment would be made up of a cash payment of £76m and £33m of credits for services previously provided.

Both companies are still facing a criminal investigation by the Serious Fraud Office into their tagging contracts. The overcharging is believed to include billing for monitoring the movements of 3,000 "phantom" offenders, including some who had died.

The justice secretary, Chris Grayling, described the settlement with G4S as "a welcome step, which recovers in full the money owed to the taxpayer. Discussions between the Cabinet Office and G4S on corporate renewal continue. This process is not complete." He said the settlement was a good deal for the taxpayer.

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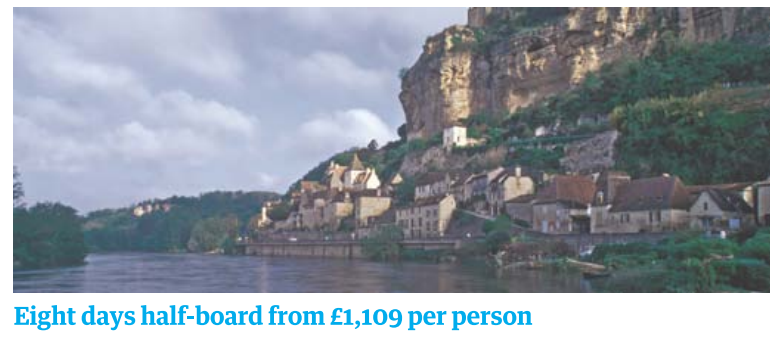

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Financial

Exiting EU would push firms out, says Soros

Billionaire warns of lost jobs and stagnation

Ukraine crisis is 'wake-up call' to work for unity

Larry Elliott
Economics editor

Billionaire speculator George Soros yesterday waded into the political row about Britain's membership of the EU with a warning that a decision to quit would lead to an exodus of foreign-owned companies.

Soros said the argument for Britain remaining part of the EU could be summed up in one word – jobs – as he outlined his concerns that Europe could be pulled apart by decades of slow growth and Japanese-style deflation.

The man who helped to force the pound out of the exchange rate mechanism on Black Wednesday in 1992 stressed that Britain had the best of all worlds by being part of the EU but not the euro.

Asked about the potential consequences of Britain's withdrawal from the EU, Soros said: "I will leave it to the British business community, particularly the multinationals that set up factories here as an entry point into the common market, to explain to the public what they stand to lose. But in one word – jobs."

Soros, in London to publicise a new book – The Tragedy of the European Union – made his remarks after the Labour leader, Ed Miliband, won plaudits from business groups for playing down the chances of an in-out referendum should the opposition win next year's general election.

But despite his insistence that Britain would be damaged by leaving the EU, he expressed concerns that Europe might not survive a long period of stagnation.

Soros said he had abandoned his idea that the euro should split into two – a stronger, northern euro led by Germany, and a weaker, southern euro led by France. Germany, he said, had ensured the future of the euro, but without solving any of the underlying problems.

"Germany has fulfilled my worst expectations. The financial and economic policies Germany is advocating and imposing on Europe are the wrong policies. It is a counter-productive policy – austerity in a time of deflation."

He predicted dire consequences should any of the single currency's 18 members decide to leave the euro in favour of a go-it-alone strategy.

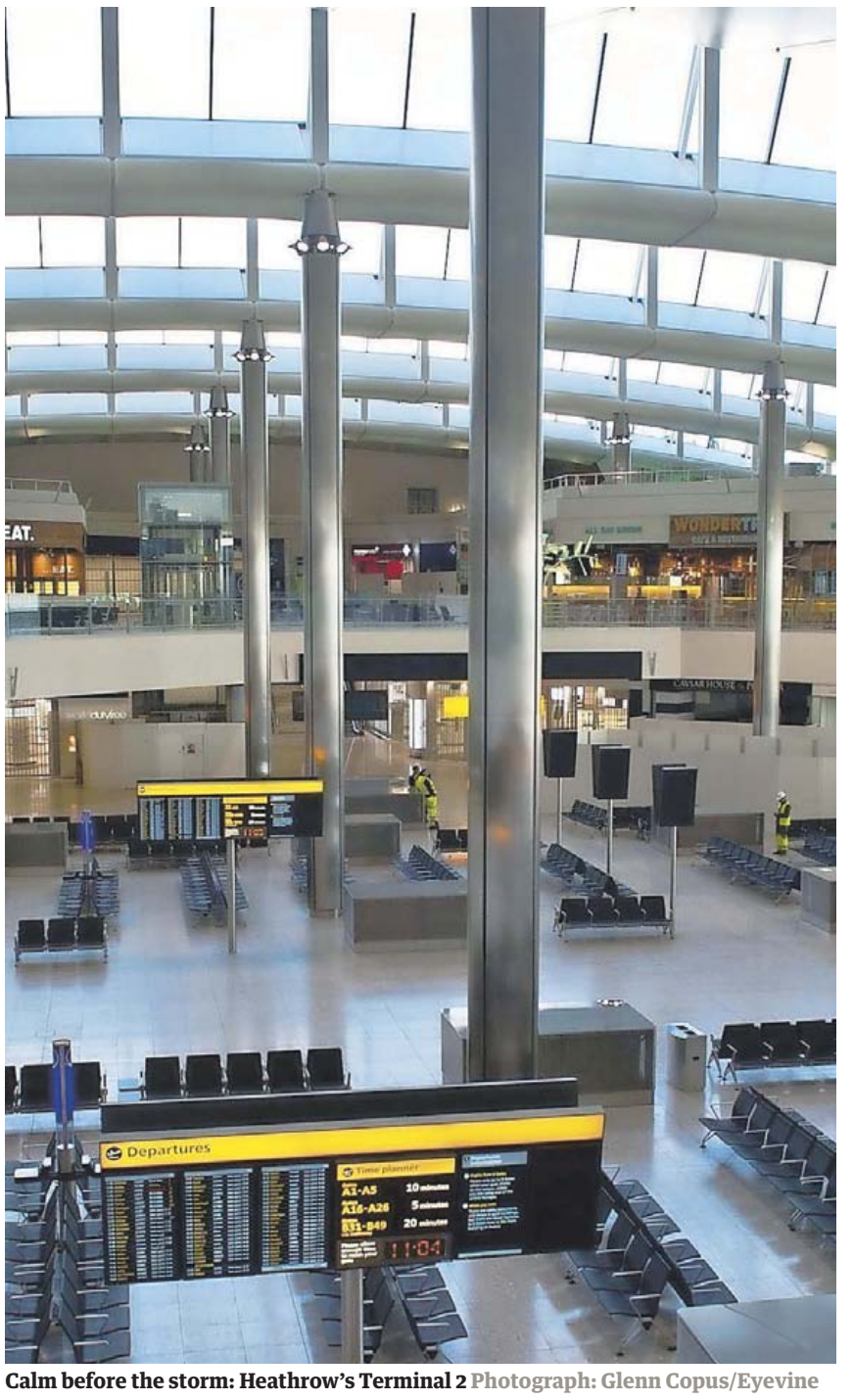
"If the euro disintegrated in a disorderly manner it would not have solved the problem, it would have created an even bigger problem – a real meltdown," Soros said. "The problems of the euro don't have a national solution. Leaving the euro is a disaster. It would mean defaulting on a country's debts. That would have very severe consequences for financial stability. It might be beyond the powers of the authorities to control."

Soros described the crisis in Ukraine as a "wake-up call" to Europe – and called on the union to concentrate on doing what was best for the EU as a whole, rather than focusing on the needs of individual member states.

He said: "Ukrainians have effectively proven they are willing to sacrifice their lives to be closer to a Europe that is at the same time in the process of disintegration.

"Europe now faces this issue. Are they going to respond to the invasion of Crimea based on their narrow national interests, or are they going to act on a united basis representing the interests of the whole European Union?

"It is a challenge and I hope that Europe will respond to it and actually rediscover its original mission."



Calm before the storm: Heathrow's Terminal 2 Photograph: Glenn Copus/Eyevine

Terminal 2 may face problems, bosses admit

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

Heathrow bosses yesterday admitted there is a very high risk of something going wrong on the opening day of the new £2.5bn Terminal 2, but they insist lessons have been learned from the 2008 debacle when Terminal 5 opened.

With less than 12 weeks until the first passengers pass through, the terminal's operations team has embarked on a series of 180 trials with 14,000 volunteers testing the workings.

The disastrous opening day of T5 saw dozens of British Airways flights cancelled, queues of disoriented staff and a new baggage system that separated passengers from their luggage. This time the 24,000 staff will each spend at least three days in the terminal training before transferring. Only one airline, United, will move in on day one and only 2,500 passengers will pass through on the first day, rising to 26,000 a day by the end of the month, and eventually 17 million a year.

The T2 baggage system is tried and tested. John Holland-Kaye, Heathrow's development director, yesterday said: "I actually carry a copy of the transport select committee report into the T5 debacle with me, to make sure we learn the lessons of last time round."

The airport will feature British themes: T2 will be officially entitled the Queen's Terminal (with royal blessing) and feature top brands that have steered clear of airports, including John Lewis and a Heston Blumenthal restaurant, while brewer Fuller's is opening its first London Pride pub.

The revamped Terminal 2 will have common check-in desks – the first in the world for a major airport. This allows any passenger to check in at any desk or machine, though airlines will retain special desks for premium passengers.

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The Guardian roundtable in association with Janssen

In search of healthy collaboration

How can the pharmaceutical industry work alongside the NHS to improve patient care through the provision of innovative joint services, while at the same time maintaining public trust? **Denis Campbell** reports on a seminar

With existing models of healthcare under serious pressure from ageing populations, increasingly common long-term illness and rising patient demand for often expensive new treatments, relationships between those inside and outside the business of delivering care have never been more vital, especially with money so tight. New and effective relationships need to be forged between patients, commissioners, providers, charities, commercial organisations - such as technology, private healthcare and pharmaceutical companies - and established care providers. Without them, the sustainability of the UK's National Health Service and other health systems internationally will be at risk.

Britain's pharmaceutical industry is keen to expand its relationships with healthcare providers - to be an insider; no longer an outsider, as it is at present. A recent roundtable, hosted by the Guardian and held in association with Janssen, brought together leading experts to examine to what extent the pharmaceutical industry is, or can be, a trusted partner of health professionals and organisations in the delivery of care. "I have a mission in my journey, which is not just to be a purveyor of medicine but to help bring about good outcomes for society. To be able to do that we need to participate more as an industry than just handing the medicine over to healthcare providers and leaving them to that," said Jane Griffiths, company group chair (Europe, Middle East and Africa) of Janssen. "In a perfect world there would be perfect collaboration between pharmaceutical companies and healthcare providers. Could there be better ways to collaborate in healthcare?," she added.

Patients who do not take their medication as prescribed cost the NHS £300m, could pharmaceutical companies help tackle the problem by redesigning some drugs? Alarmy

An unfair reputation?

Griffiths, though, acknowledged a major obstacle to a closer relationship: "a sense of mistrust of the industry that gets in the way of full collaboration and participation". Stephen Whitehead, chief executive of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, agreed with her that the industry has an unfair and outdated reputation. "We've solved the issue of HIV. We've come up with new drugs for cancer. A lot of the latter years in life have been contributed to by this industry. So why do people hate us?" he asked. A Martian arriving on Earth would not understand why a sector that has helped bring about huge progress in health in recent decades is still mistrusted in some quarters, he said.

Dr Jo Roberts, of NHS South Devon and Torbay clinical commissioning group, said the industry had cleaned up its act since the days when it would wine and dine doctors in a bid to promote certain drugs. "In terms of trust I think we're getting there", he said, though added there was a "lag" in the public's perception of it. But other speakers cited a reluctance by some drug firms to publish the results of clinical trials into new products or the data underlying them as a reason for continuing concern. Should companies not publish the results of all trials ever done for drugs that went into use, asked Bokani Tshidzu, of Vertigo Ventures? Sir Peter Dixon, the chair of Diabetes UK, agreed, warning that people will not believe that drug firms have changed "until everything is out there".

Participants at the roundtable agreed that action was needed to tackle the fact that 50% of patients on medication do not take it properly. Even some people who have recently had an organ transplant do not do so, despite the serious risks they are running, Dixon pointed out. Neal Patel, head of corporate communications at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, highlighted the £300m a year cost to the NHS of wasted medicines and the impact on people's lives. "If we add up the numbers for just asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, vascular disease and schizophrenia, we could save £500m of costs through fewer hospital admissions and fewer days away from work", if patients could be persuaded to take their medication as prescribed, he said. "There needs to be a push to give people the information they need to understand why they have been given tablets and why it is important that they take them," suggested Dixon. Both the pharma industry and the government should help improve the education of patients about drugs, he added.

There was also consensus that the "real world use" and performance of medicines needs to be improved through a greater focus on the way a patient needs to fit treatment into their life, rather than the patient simply being given the drugs and left to take them, even if they are experiencing problems such as side-effects. Patel and Prof Nick Barber, director of research at the Health Foundation, argued that for both pharmaceutical companies and the NHS to truly realise the full social and health benefits of medicines there needs to be a shift away from evaluating the effectiveness of drugs on the basis purely of clinical trials and more to how they actually affect recipients. Even some patients on life-saving cancer medication do not take it, stressed Barber. "There's an ignorance about this. About half [of the non-taking] is intentional and half is non-intentional. This is an important area of challenge for the pharmaceutical industry. People who are having side-effects can't be forced to keep taking the medicine," said Barber. Pharmaceutical firms could design drugs better, and produce lower doses, to help maximise uptake of their products, he added. However, John Ansell, a senior partner in TranScrip Partners, said that lower doses of drugs could potentially be less profitable for manufacturers. Tim Heymann, reader in health management at Imperial College Business School, said that with people living longer it was in the industry's interest to help ensure better uptake of drugs as "a healthier society delivers more profits to pharma companies in the long run".

Patel highlighted the useful role pharmacists play in this through the NHS's recently launched New Medicines Service. Under it patients in England with certain common conditions, such as Type 2 diabetes or chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, receive three one-to-one appointments with a local pharmacist, in a private consultation area, who advises them on concerns they may have.

Some pharma companies are already rising to this important task, though. Griffiths highlighted a project in which Janssen is working directly with the NHS to improve care. Its collaboration with the South Essex Partnership University NHS foundation trust to improve the management and care of people with mental health problems, such as by spotting early signs of a relapse of schizophrenia, has led to a 50% drop in hospitalisation rates among such patients, she pointed out. The link-up has proved so successful where it started in 2011, in Southend, that the trust has decided to roll out the Care4Today Mental Health Solutions scheme to all patients in its area. It has led to impressive levels of medication adherence and patient satisfaction. "So that shows that you can be involved [as a pharmaceutical company] in a dispassionate way," said Griffiths.

In Salford, another drugs company, GlaxoSmithKline, has teamed up with both the local NHS and Manchester University in a trial of new medicine with 4,000 patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and another 5,000 with asthma. GSK got involved with the Salford Lung Study to show their commitment to developing innovative medicines. Dixon also highlighted the development by Abbott, the pharmaceuticals and healthcare firm, of a small sensor that when scanned will let diabetics monitor their glucose levels without having to undertake the traditional self-administered fingerprick blood test - a potentially important and very patient-friendly advance for the growing number of diabetics.

The ABPI's member companies between them employ 73,000 people, generate a turnover of £29bn and are part of a global industry worth $961bn (£41.4bn). Its recent Delivering value to the UK report described the sector as "an important partner for the NHS, academia and the research community", particularly in the adoption of innovation in the health service. That is true, though not yet widespread. As the roundtable showed, healthcare providers, health professionals and patient groups seem more willing than ever to undertake collaborations with medicines manufacturers, though quite how deeply they can be involved in the formation and delivery of care remains to be seen.

At the table

Oliver Balch (Chair)
Journalist

John Ansell
Senior partner, TranScrip Partners

Prof Nick Barber
Director of research, The Health Foundation

Sir Peter Dixon
Chair, Diabetes UK

Jane Griffiths
Company group chair, Janssen EMEA

Tim Heymann
Reader in health management, centre for health management, Imperial College Business School

Dr Hans Hofstraat
Vice president, Philips Research, Philips Healthcare

Mick Keyes
Senior technologist, enterprise business group, Hewlett Packard

Neal Patel
Head of corporate communications, Royal Pharmaceutical Society

'We could save £500m through fewer hospital admissions and fewer days away from work'

Jo Roberts
Clinical lead for innovation, NHS South Devon and Torbay clinical commissioning group

Bokani Tshidzu
Co-founder and chief operating officer, Vertigo Ventures

Sabina Syed
Managing director, Visions4Health

Stephen Whitehead
Chief executive, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry

Karen Manson
Director of global citizenship and sustainability, Janssen

Roundtable report commissioned and controlled by the Guardian.
Discussion hosted to a brief agreed with Janssen. **Funded by** Janssen.
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The pope: one year on
Andrew Brown on Francis's revolution in the Vatican » Page 34

Tristram Hunt

School inspections must be free of political meddling

Gove's intimidation of Ofsted shows that the system has to be clearly independent. Too many heads have lost faith

"Political considerations are in my opinion too much suffered to influence the whole working of the system of public education." So the chief inspector of schools said. In 1868. Matthew Arnold's words will come as no surprise to the current chief inspector of schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw – who is being subjected to a relentless political assault by Michael Gove and his unmarked irregulars at the Department for Education.

It began with the summary removal of the chair of Ofsted, the widely admired Baroness Sally Morgan. Then backstairs briefings against Sir Michael for having dared to advocate policies – such as the inspection of academy chains – that are out of line with Michael Gove's thinking.

This intimidation necessitates a renewed commitment to affirming the importance of an independent schools inspectorate system, which operates without fear or favour and is protected from ministerial whims.

But what the political sniping should not do is prevent teachers, parents and educators beginning a debate about how Ofsted relates to the kind of schooling we want to see in modern England.

First of all the politics. Michael Gove's free school policy was a pile 'em high approach, implemented at breakneck speed for ideological, rather than educational, reasons. Quality was sacrificed for urgency with the introduction of a chaotic system of market provision, based upon Schumpeterian principles of creative destruction.

Some of these schools have prospered – such as School 21 in Newham and the Bilingual school in Brighton. Sadly, too many have failed – from the Al-Madinah free school in Derby to the Kings Science academy in Bradford, undermining the education of hundreds of children in the process. This is a result of dangerous political interference with the evaluation of free school applications; too many unqualified teachers in the classroom; and in some instances high levels of financial irregularity.

Unsurprisingly, Ofsted is beginning to report on these systemic faults and the Tories don't like it. In the Daily Telegraph, the journalist Fraser Nelson (a long-time advocate of for-profit schooling) has got Gove's excuses about IES Breckland, an underperforming Suffolk free school, in first. All the reasons behind a struggling school that Conservatives like to dismiss in the case of local authority providers – change in leadership, difficulties with teachers – have been deployed. Government supporters want to hide underachievement from the gaze of accountability, but Ofsted is quite rightly asking searching questions of all schools.

Beyond the free school controversy, however, a broader conversation about Ofsted is needed. I welcome the strong, independent leadership of Wilshaw. I welcome much of the new inspection criteria, his focus on the quality of early years' provision, his willingness to have difficult conversations about attainment for disadvantaged white boys, and his determination to get Ofsted more engaged in dealing with underperformance.

Indeed, I would grant Sir Michael the power to inspect academy chains. Yet there are also tensions with the existing system. First, we need a clearly independent Ofsted to scotch rumours about politicisation – that fear among teachers that inspectors are somehow doing Gove's bidding, especially when it comes to forced academisation.

However, the real concern comes down to classroom observation and the quality of inspection. Time and again, headteachers express their frustration that too many Ofsted inspectors use their time in the school classroom to affirm what the results already show. We need a clearer line between judgments about achievement and teaching, between the data of past performance and what inspectors see for themselves. As Michael Cladingbowl, Ofsted's director for schools, told the Guardian, the organisation should be looking to make more frequent, lighter-touch visits to focus on teaching and leadership.

For while every good headteacher welcomes a thorough inspection, there are doubts about the capacity and judgments of some inspectors who don't have enough relevant school experience themselves.

So it is time to think carefully about the balance between in-house inspection staff and private contractors. When so much rests upon an Ofsted inspection in today's high-stakes schooling system, having confidence in the quality of inspection is vital.

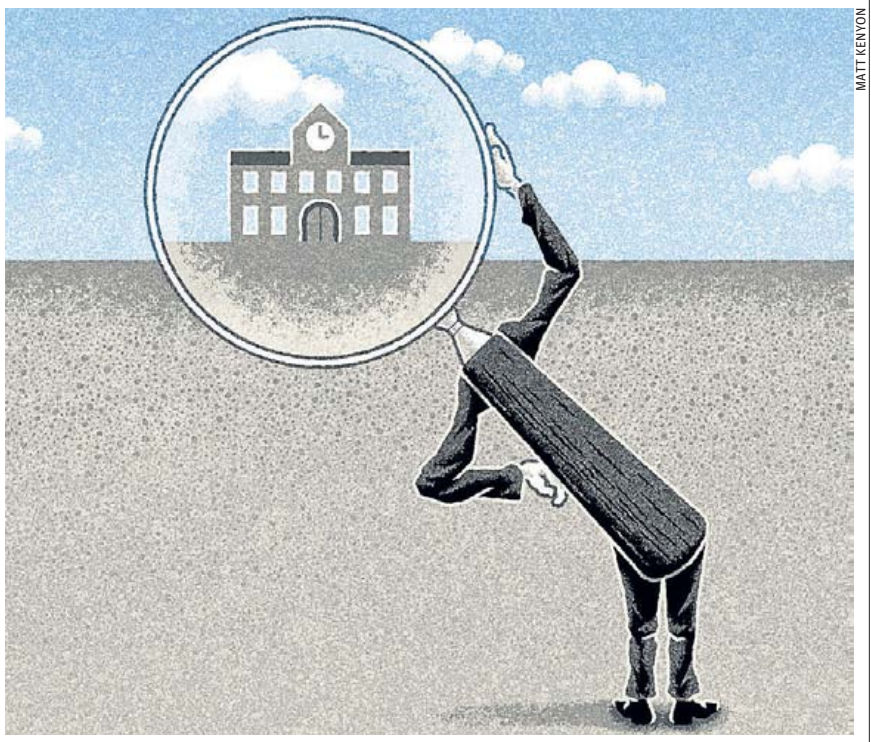
The more interesting challenge is to work towards an inspectorate system that seeks to judge the broader criteria of education we in the Labour party want to develop. There can be no slippage in holding heads and teachers to account for the quality of leadership, teaching, discipline and attainment. But we also need to disaggregate curriculum from qualifications; question the breadth of provision; and highlight the broader function of schooling in building character and resilience in young people. The Labour party is consulting on plans for a national baccalaureate covering project skills, personal development, English and maths to 18 alongside core academic or vocational qualifications.

Matthew Arnold perhaps put it better: publicly funded schools should not be "mere machine[s] for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, but a living whole with complex functions, religious, moral and intellectual."

And to build that kind of school demands an inspectorate system of Arnoldian rigour, independence and creativity to hold it to account.

Tristram Hunt is the shadow education secretary

The sniping should not stop teachers, parents and educators beginning a debate about the kind of schooling we want to see



MATT KENYON

Our place in a new world

Mark Leonard

The Labour leader can't just react to Cameron. He must craft a story that makes sense of Europe

Ed Miliband has now ended the speculation about Labour's plans on an EU referendum: he will not hold one unless he signs a new treaty moving power from Westminster to Brussels. He rightly refused to match David Cameron's promise of a plebiscite in 2017 – a pledge driven by party disunity rather than public choice – and deftly ended the current uncertainty before May's European elections, while putting himself on the right side of public opinion.

But tactical interventions need to feed into a wider strategy. Labour only wins big when it manages to root its progressive aspirations in the national story. Miliband's Europe speech was a recognition that the political cycle is once again being framed by arguments about international issues. But the Labour leader has not yet developed an adequate critique of Cameron's story about a "global race", nor put forward an alternative Labour one. The combination of Blue Labour, Euro-realism and the opposition to the war in Syria have led some to portray the party as isolationist. On the other hand, when Labour acts out of principle on foreign policy – as it did on Syria and the EU budget – it faces charges of cynicism.

Miliband needs to build a more positive story about what he wants for Britain in a changing world. The unifying theme should explain how Britain can prepare for Chinese-led globalisation, how a reformed Europe can help Britain succeed, and how we should respond to the new turmoil and openings in the Middle East.

Labour needs to acknowledge that, while globalisation has benefited Britain, it has speeded up deindustrialisation, costing jobs and wage growth for many. Rather than defending the status quo, Miliband has an opportunity to explain how a reformed Europe can be a passport to success in this new world. He could offer a new reform agenda for Europe: a post-crisis growth and social policy; a new approach to migration; and an agenda of self-government in Europe.

Labour's response to migration is necessarily defensive. It could go beyond domestic measures such as boosting the living wage and benefit abuse to explore how a reformed EU budget could help ease pressure on public services. But the key is to reframe the debate to move growth in a multipolar world. This could include a European strategy for reindustrialisation and fair trade.

Most important, Labour must claim the mantle of self-government. The key is to reframe the debate so it is not just about being in the EU, but about the ability of governments to be sovereign over their own affairs.

To complete his international strategy – and heal party wounds – Miliband also needs an account of intervention after the Iraq war. It is rare for an opposition party to have an impact on its country's foreign policy – let alone the wider world. However, Labour got little credit for a vote on Syria that opened the path for an extraordinary turnaround in global politics because Miliband did not anchor his decision in a wider strategy. Now Miliband needs to link his approach to a region trapped in an ever-escalating cycle of sectarianism and violence to this wider international vision.

The world has changed dramatically since Labour last won power in 1997 – even since it lost power in 2010. But the party lacks a compelling voice. It continues to be split between globalisers, liberal interventionists and pro-Europeans, and the Blue Labour apostles of localism and disengagement. If Miliband is to present himself as a credible prime minister in waiting, he will need to craft a story that makes sense of the world that he will be governing in, as well as an aspirational account of what a Labour government might seek to do.

Mark Leonard is director of the European Council on Foreign Relations

Rich, lazy and secretive

Tanya Gold

The royals will only ever allow public scrutiny when it serves the family's interests

Maldives, say my notes; the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are in the Maldives, that spit of idleness in the Indian Ocean. Which hotel, you may ask? The expensive one, of course: a muted cashmere hole owned by high fashion conglomerate LVMH (Louis Vuitton/Moet Hennessey), makers of handbags and shoes.

This is nothing to surprise us. The Queen has managed, by some breathtaking act of psychological contortion, to establish a reputation for thrift, even as her income has risen. Perhaps it was her presence in London during the Blitz that makes us imagine bomb craters when we look at her, although the late Princess Margaret, who was ultimately disappointed by her birthright, would say it was her dress sense. But this is spin of the most powerful and duplicitous kind. The Windsors still live like – well, the word, of course, is – kings. When the poorest Britons suffer under austerity, this is bitter. Where is their empathy? Why even type the words? Their significant act of charity seems to be to spend more on themselves as if, by osmosis, this cheers the rest.

They have in recent years affected to "modernise" but have they? I cannot see it. Prince Harry is, the bookmakers think, to marry an aristocrat called Cressida Bonas. Those who call the former Kate Middleton "middle class" and rejoice at the "democratisation" of the royal family are wrong; on her marriage she was, strictly speaking, "newly rich". The royal family has employed competent PR officers, published charming brochures, opened the palace doors an inch for the prosperous (a guided evening tour of Buckingham Palace is £75) and they did not, as was so disastrously mooted in the musical The Slipper and The Rose, try to marry Prince William to a foreign princess. The law is changed and a female can inherit the throne if she is first born, except there is no female first born. I cannot blame them for that, even if I suspect the joint royal subconscious deliberately conjured a boy; in truth, I do not care – to speak of equality and royalty is to laugh at both.

They also lost a yacht. But what else? Nothing, and why not? A monarchy can never be progressive, but while the royal family is exempt from the Freedom of Information Act – a shameful gift from New Labour – we will not hear how they lobby for themselves. Yesterday the Guardian won the right to view 27 pieces of correspondence between Prince Charles and seven government departments between 2004 and 2005, which is politely called "advocacy correspondence". What is in them? We don't yet know – and may never know. The government will appeal.

So the royal family goes on, indolent but secretive. Their website is not efficient (they have Princess Margaret down as still alive in the court circular), but it says that in 2014 the Duchess of Cambridge has performed just three engagements. Why so few? She is often on holiday, it is true; she was in Mustique last month while the duke was in Spain, shooting something – a boar, I think. Why so many holidays? I think the duchess is being "eased" into what we must call "work". Royal status is, for her, some kind of terrible predicament that fell on her: a price for true love, a fairytale might say, that can only be soothed with eternal holidays and a life lived predominantly under a hair dryer. But they all do this. They spend like plutocrats and look like victims.

Still in the Maldives, the Cambridges are without Prince George, who is at home with his nanny, because their well-publicised resolution to do without staff lasted about two weeks. This excites some columnists, but not this one. I have many objections to the royal family – principally that they are the enemy of a fair society, in the same way that they used to be the enemy of Napoleonic France or imperial Germany – but I do not think that they do not love their children.

Even so, is it curious that George will miss the Maldives, where there is no PR campaign, but will be present for the three-week tour of Australia and New Zealand in April? The baby must not be photographed, it seems, except when it is in this family's interests – and then there are the letters. Sometimes privacy is essential; at other times, less so.

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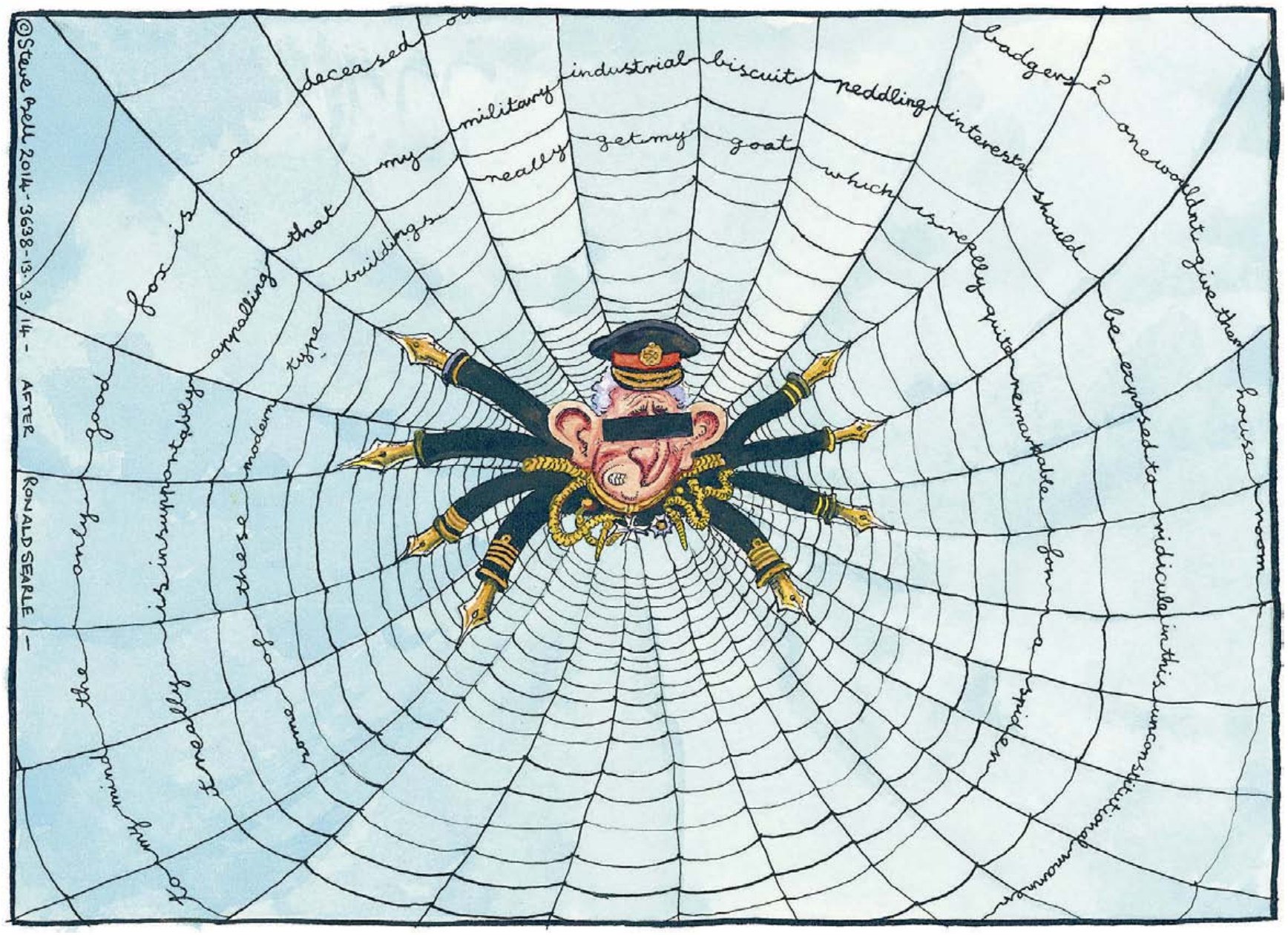

Seumas Milne

Now we see what was really at stake in the miners' strike

Thirty years on, the costs of the gutting of trade unions are obvious. That's why demonising Bob Crow was a failure

As a rule, the most effective trade unionists have to die before the mainstream media and politicians will say anything decent about them. That's certainly what has happened to the rail and seafarers' leader Bob Crow.

Instead of the industrial dinosaur, political throwback and strike-happy hypocrite demonised for more than a decade, it now turns out that Crow was in fact a modern and effective workplace champion. The scourge of the London commuter didn't just drive up rail workers' living standards, we are told, but fought successfully for low-paid contract cleaners into the bargain.

Part of that is about not speaking ill of someone cut off in their prime, of course. But it also reflects establishment awareness of the chord that an authentic workers' leader strikes with a public living the reality of the race to the bottom in pay and conditions – and a public life purged of working-class figures and populated by plastic political and corporate professionals.

As it happened, Crow died on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the start of the miners' strike. It is doubtful that even death will win Arthur Scargill the national treasure treatment currently being given to Crow, given the scale of his vilification and the extent of the challenge he represented to political and economic power from the 1970s to the 1990s.

But the 1984-5 strike, the decisive social and economic confrontation of Britain's postwar era, is how we got where we are today. A generation on, it is now even clearer than it was at the time why the year-long struggle over the country's energy supply took place, and what interests were really at stake.

The Thatcher government's war on the miners – her chancellor Nigel Lawson described preparations for the strike as "like re-arming to face the threat of Hitler" – wasn't just about class revenge for the Tories' humiliating defeats at the hands of the miners in the early 1970s. It was about using the battering ram of state power to break the single greatest obstacle to the transformation of the economy in the interests of corporate privilege and wealth that Margaret Thatcher was determined to carry out. The offensive ushered in the full-blown neoliberal model that has failed to deliver for the majority, generated inequality and insecurity on a huge scale, and imploded with such disastrous consequences five-and-a-half years ago.

For the miners, the strike was a defensive battle for jobs and communities. But it also raised the alternative of a different kind of Britain, rooted in solidarity and collective action. The crippling of the country's most powerful union opened the way for the systematic deregulation of the labour market – and the zero-hours contracts, falling real wages, payday loans and food banks we are living with today.

Every couple of years, evidence emerges to underline the unparalleled nature of the state onslaught and ruthless rule-breaking to overcome resistance in the mining communities, bought at a cost of £37bn in today's prices.

In January, newly released cabinet papers confirmed that, just as Scargill had warned at the time, there was indeed a secret hit list to close 75 collieries with the loss of 75,000 jobs when the strike began. Thatcher lied about it and planned to send thousands of troops into the coalfields, as her government faced imminent defeat.

In media and establishment mythology, of course, it was the insurrectionary incompetence of the miners' leadership that led to the breakneck destruction of the mining communities, rather than the government that ordered it. That is abject nonsense.

There was simply no option of a gentle rundown of the industry in 1984, with or without a national ballot, as the treatment of pits that worked during the strike demonstrated. The only choice was between the certainty of mass closures and the chance of halting the assault.

To achieve its goal, the government unleashed the full force of the state: a militarised police occupation of the coalfields, a commandeered and manipulated criminal justice system, mass sackings and jailings – and the use of MI5, GCHQ, the NSA and special branch to bug, infiltrate, smear, manipulate the media, and stage dirty tricks against the union and its leaders.

Since the Guardian first reported leaks about security service operations against the miners in the 1990s, much more has emerged and been confirmed by former officials. MI5's "counter-subversion" role has been largely transferred to a string of notorious undercover police units, now the subject of an official inquiry; global blanket surveillance by GCHQ and the NSA is on another scale entirely from their then unprecedented operations against the miners' strike; while state collusion with mass corporate blacklisting of trade unionists has continued, despite the enfeebled state of the labour movement.

Thirty years on, the argument about coal is now focused on the threat of global warming and carbon emissions, rather than the tiny workforce that still mines it or the social wreckage in the coalfields left behind by Thatcher's social vandalism.

But the battle over coal in the 1980s was in any case really about power and class, not fuel – just as the argument about its legacy is more about the future than the past. Success for the miners could not, of course, have turned the neoliberal tide, which was a global phenomenon. But it would certainly have at least weakened Thatcher, reined in her worst excesses, and put a brake on Labour's rush for the "third way", which eventually turned into New Labour's embrace of the Thatcherite settlement.

As the strike fades into history, the miners' stand has been vindicated by the experience of that failed model. Profound economic change means such an industrial conflict will never be repeated in that form; but its experience can speak to our times.

Among its lessons are that you can't always fight on terrain and at times of your choosing; division can be fatal; and the higher the stakes, the dirtier that employers and governments will play. And as Crow demonstrated, militancy may not guarantee success – but passivity will asphyxiate unions when the workforce needs them to be stronger than ever.

An updated edition of Seumas Milne's book, The Enemy Within – The Secret War Against the Miners, is published this week and is available from Guardian Books

"The government used MI5, GCHQ and Special Branch to bug, infiltrate, smear and stage dirty tricks against the miners"

Diary
Hugh Muir

The lines they blur, but a reminder that politics is politics, business is business, and civil servants retain their scepticism for politicians. Amid the condemnation of Russia and promises to curtail Putin's influence on energy supplies, there are continuing plans to have the Russians build a nuclear power station in the UK. Hergen Haye, the head of new nuclear development at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, outlined the scheme to Edinburgh University students. He arrived in truth-telling mood. "I hope no one is recording this," he said. "You can't really trust a politician for longer than five years, as that's when the next election is." Politicos, they constantly change tack, Haye complained, citing Angela Merkel after Fukushima. This discourages investment. Haye, who is German, told of a hostility to nuclear in his homeland and said his role promoting it in the UK means he is never fully embraced there, even by his own family. "They throw things at me and call me immoral," he said. "But they still love me." Debatable on its face, but he must know.

Much debate in parliament about our response to Russia and Putin and his apparent annexation of Crimea. With that in mind, MPs voted on Wednesday for a new chair of the all-party parliamentary group on Russia. Labour's Chris Bryant, who served in that capacity before being ousted in a Conservative coup, was expected to seek a robust line. His new rival, the former Tory whip John Randall, was seen as less confrontational. And after a vote, and a spirited Tory whipping operation, MPs chose the Randall path – by 126 votes to 96. The significance will not have been lost on Putin's diplomats in London. Panic over. As you were.

Biographer John Campbell's revelation that 1960s Labour intellectual heavyweights and womanisers Roy Jenkins and Tony Crosland also managed a youthful affair with each other came as less than a shock to peers of the world. Some this week recalled the occasion when Lib Dem lords were agonising over the right attitude to sex in the armed forces. Former army captain Lord Jenkins, by then a Lib Dem grandee, couldn't understand the fuss because so many great British generals had been gay. "Being in the army is like parading in front of debutantes," he told them. He led many departments - the Home Office, the Treasury. Wise heads kept him from defence.

Happy days, meanwhile, for Margaret Hodge, whose public accounts committee serves as public executioner to those who waste taxpayers' money. The great and good come before her and, like the end-of-days scene in the book of Revelations, all depart shorn of grandeur. The public benefit is clear, but what does Hodge get out of it? She gets what is thought to be the biggest office available to a backbencher in Westminster. Spacious, airy, practically imperial, it grandly overlooks the Thames. She sees all sin from there.

Guy Garvey of thoughtful rockers Elbow discusses artistic integrity in ShortList magazine. Many stars prostitute their oeuvre to commercialism and Mammon; Garvey is wary. He reveals that Hovis asked to use one of the band's songs in an advert. Garvey refused. "Peter Jobson, the bass player from I Am Kloot and my very good friend, said, 'What's going on? Fucking good northern brand – what's the matter with you?' I said I wasn't comfortable with it – it's a big song, and it means a lot to people." Jobson replied: "For as long as I can remember it's been Dvorak's 9th Symphony on those adverts." No one calls Dvorak a dirty sellout, Jobson observed. True enough. But they might have, given the chance.

Let's end with a cap doff to GCHQ. It's been a difficult time with Edward Snowden having hung all that dirty washing out to dry. Its work is highlighted by the organisation Reporters Without Borders. The category, Enemies of the internet. And others thus highlighted: the Central Scientific and Technological Information Agency of North Korea, China's Internet Information Office, and the Vietnamese Ministry of Information. Many are called, few are chosen. Well done, GCHQ!

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Europe

Ins and outs of a Labour dilemma

Ed Miliband faces the prospect of a tight election. Even so, yesterday he proved that he is looking beyond it – and grappling with how he can secure a serious crack at governing.

When David Cameron promised an in/out EU referendum last year, the Labour leader quickly grasped that the temptation to match this eye-catching offer was a lethal trap. Most voters always say they would favour a referendum on Europe (or on anything else for that matter), and the EU is undoubtedly in the throes of a crisis of legitimacy. Yet questioning membership jeopardises international relations, trade and – a particular concern of former energy secretary Miliband – hopes of tackling climate change. Worse, whereas a Conservative prime minister might be able to build an "in" alliance of the centre, that would be harder to do for a Labour PM who would probably be ranged against a Tory party traumatised by defeat, and agitating for Britain to quit. Trying to avert an "out" vote would drain all energy from anything else a Miliband government might want to do; enduring one would sink it entirely.

The force of this logic is as plain as the flippancy of the Cameron proposal for 27 sovereign nations to fall into line with what amounts to a party management plan. Even if all 27 acquiesced, this plan would soon come unstuck, with Tory irreconcilables denouncing any deal, irrespective of content, and campaigning for the "out", which was for them always the referendum's real point. Mr Miliband's instinct was evident in the Commons last year, where he rejected the PM's playboy pledge as a dangerous "gamble". But hours later, after some colleagues panicked, came a "clarification": Labour now merely rejected the Cameron pre-commitment to rolling the dice at this particular time.

Leaving "options open" is seductive in politics, but had things continued to drift into the pre-election spring of 2015, the ambiguity would have encouraged a Europhobic campaign of irresistible force, and all options but capitulation would have disappeared. Aided by Douglas Alexander, Mr Miliband slowly built the strength and the argument to do what he'd always wanted to do, and in a speech yesterday ruled out a purely arbitrary plebiscite, while committing to one only in the event of treaty changes, which – with commendable honesty – he conceded were most "unlikely".

Ardent pro-Europeans may fear that even this gives too much ground, and contributes to Europe's general sclerosis. Barring the anomaly of the 1975 referendum, itself a political fix, popular consent for treaties is supposed to come through representative rather than direct democracy. But such constitutional purities ignore many realities, including the fact that the coalition has already legislated for referendums on future transfers of power. The Miliband tweak is simply that this would no longer be a vote on the treaty specifics, but a higher-stakes – and more winnable – in/out vote. Besides, there is indeed an urgent need to inject more direct people power into Europe; it is just that arbitrary snap votes in stagnant economic times are doomed to become vents for frustration on other matters, and so will fail to deliver on this. Without any imminent prospect of deepening Europe-wide democracy, Mr Miliband's hopes of strengthening certain roles for national parliaments represents a decent second best here.

Yesterday's announcement is not an immediate vote-winner, although – since few British citizens are Euro-obsessives – it will not lose much support either. It should build Labour a few useful bridges into the business community, and – much more than that – it reveals something about the character of a prospective prime minister, something that should earn respect in the end. From breaking with his brother over Iraq in the leadership election to opposing military intervention Syria, Mr Miliband has a habit of hesitating before doing the right thing. By finally getting there in relation to Britain's future in Europe, he emerges as a more plausible candidate to lead it.

Freedom of information

The blacked-out prince

The attorney general Dominic Grieve's bid to hide Prince Charles's ministerial lobbying from public eyes was rebuffed in the court of appeal yesterday when three judges agreed that he had no good reason in law or fact to veto the publication of the so-called "black spider memos". This is an important but not yet a final victory in a long-running Guardian campaign to uncover the Prince's apparent attempts to influence government. It is a fight that raises important questions about constraints on the freedom of information, the relationship between politicians and the law, and the proper limits to the monarchy.

The letters, all 27 of them, were written to seven different government departments between September 2004 and April 2005, in Prince Charles's trademark black ink. They were letters of advocacy so blunt that Mr Grieve has argued they have to be repressed in order to avoid compromising the public perception of the prince's political neutrality. In October 2012, the information tribunal declared that the letters should be published. Mr Grieve, rather than launching an appeal against the tribunal and arguing through the case, simply vetoed its conclusion on the grounds that he disagreed with it. He supported his decision with reasons that had already been considered and rejected by the tribunal in a six-day hearing resulting in a long and, in the words of the master of the rolls, Lord Dyson, "meticulous" judgment. Yesterday Lord Dyson ruled that a politician cannot overrule the findings of a court by what amounts to ministerial fiat.

If upheld in the supreme court, that will mean ministers will find they cannot use the veto unless they can produce new evidence or information that was not available to the tribunal. That is an important improvement, but the veto itself remains in force, despite being, in the words of one senior judge, a constitutional aberration. Meanwhile, an appeal is pending in a separate case, where the transport secretary vetoed the release of the project assessment report on HS2. In a significant development for green campaigners, the appeal court decision means that the veto cannot be used at all for information requested under EU environmental regulations.

And still the fundamental question remains: how far was Prince Charles trying to influence government policy, and how effective was his lobbying? There was no doubt that Whitehall put his communications at the top of the pile. Mr Grieve described them as "particularly frank". It is clear that it is in the public interest to know whether, and how far, the concerns of Clarence House influenced public policy. It is harder to see that it is in the public interest to continue to use secrecy to protect the prince, substituting speculation and innuendo for truth and transparency.

In praise of...

picking up the phone

"Oh feck!" was Father Ted's response when he picked up the phone to find his boss Bishop Brennan on the other end, and one can but imagine the paroxysms a phone call from the Vatican would induce on Craggy Island. In the year since he assumed the Catholic church's top job, the pope is said to have taken pleasure in making surprise calls to members of his flock, and it has become an engaging signature of his common-touch papacy, along with carrying his own bags, living in a hostel and being driven around in a Ford Focus. People who have received papal calls say his style is informal – one Italian woman who is called monthly says he greets her with "Ciao, it's Pope Francis" – but sometimes even God's representative can't get through. Nuns at a Spanish convent were surprised to find a message from Francis on their answering machine on New Year's Eve. They hadn't picked up because they were engaged, talking to his boss.

Comment & Debate

The pope is planning for a revolution to outlast him

Andrew Brown

In his first year Francis has done all that one man can do. He must ensure his successor cannot undo all his progress

In his first year in office, Pope Francis has transformed the image of the papacy. His demonstrative lack of ostentation has been an extraordinary contrast with almost all his predecessors. From the moment he signed out of his own hotel room after being elected pope, rather than sending a flunky to do it for him, he has shown a remarkable gift for public humility.

He has refused to live in the papal apartments. He has described himself as first and foremost a sinner. He washed the feet of Muslim immigrant women to make a traditional gesture of humility reach out into the modern world. He has refused to criticise gay people, asking "Who am I to judge?" and then confirming the appointment of a man thought to be in a prolonged gay affair to a key job cleaning up the Vatican. But what, in substance, has he actually achieved?

The transformation of the image of the papacy is a real achievement. It does not in itself attract people back to the church, but it does remove a gigantic obstacle to their return. It's also clear that he thinks he was elected to do a great deal more than that.

However, so far everything he has accomplished is personal and could die with him. He is 77 and has only one lung. If Francis lives long enough, he may well follow his predecessor's example and retire when the job becomes too much, after which his successor could undo everything in a year. So he needs to make large and lasting changes in policy and in culture. These will be extraordinarily difficult and have only just begun, but we can see already the direction he is heading in.

The temptation for observers is to look at the policies of the church and ask which of these he will change. But policy in the long run matters much less than culture: written rules matter less than unwritten ones. A clear example of this is the experiment of married clergy undertaken by Pope Benedict XVI with the so-called Ordinariate of Anglicans who left their churches after women were ordained.

For the Roman Catholic church to lift the compulsory celibacy of a whole class of parish priests – for the first time since some Orthodox-rite churches in the Ukraine were absorbed in the 17th century – was a monumental change of policy. But because the new groups had essentially sold themselves to Rome on the basis of a fantasy – there were claims at the time that hundreds of thousands would follow them – they have had no effect on the wider culture of the church, and have recently been rebuked by the cardinal in charge of them for backbiting.

Celibacy among the clergy is one of the policy challenges that Francis must deal with: it comes after the treatment of remarried divorcees, who may not at present take communion even though this ban is fairly often ignored, and of course the ban on artificial contraception.

> Francis believes in obedience but was cured of a belief in autocracy by his experiences in the Argentinian dirty war

Only human ... Pope Francis AFP/Getty

All these are instances of policies that the Vatican imposed, or attempted to impose, on a church that does not believe in them. It is not just the laity who reject them but large parts of the clergy and the bishops, even if almost all have been too frightened to say so until now. The Roman Catholic church is, after all, an autocracy in which the punishment for disobedience can be arbitrary and cruel.

Francis believes in obedience, but he was cured of a belief in autocracy by his traumatic experiences in the Argentinian dirty war, when he was the young leader of the Jesuit order there and enormously unpopular with his subordinates for attempting to override their judgments. But how does an autocrat dismantle the structures of autocracy? How can he turn the Vatican bureaucracy into the servant of the wider church rather than its master?

This is where he reaches the limits of one man's power and it is also where he has been recruiting allies all around the world. His appointment of a group of eight cardinals – variously liberal and conservative but all equipped with dislike and suspicion of the Vatican based on personal experience – promises lasting institutional change, of the kind that will be hard for any successor to reverse.

Later this year there will be a huge conference of bishops from around the world on Catholic sexual teaching – the Synod on the Family. Here too the preparations reveal the shape of an alliance that can repeal some of the mistakes of autocracy. Questionnaires sent out to churches around the world have once more revealed the extent to which the laity have completely rejected the official line on artificial contraception and on remarriage after divorce. Both are prohibited in official teaching, though in both cases there are workarounds: rich or well-connected Catholics can get their failed marriages annulled, which leaves them free to marry in church again, while the official church promotes a frankly incomprehensible distinction between natural and artificial birth control.

The bishops' conferences have responded either by publishing the results, as the German and Japanese have – which shows the extent to which the laity reject the teaching – or by suppressing the results, as the English have.

There is fierce traditionalist opposition to softening the line on contraception and remarriage. But Francis understands that the church can only be governed by consent – and also that it can only be changed by consent. In his first year he has done all that one man can do. Now we will see if he can get his church doing it too.

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Reply

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Letters and emails

We young feminists are political too

I was horrified when the Women's section of G2 decided to alienate a significant portion of the female population (and your readership) by declaring teenage girls apolitical and only interested in social media (Malala, Page 3 and Top Gear, 11 March) - and declaring that, as Malala Yousafzai is not any of those things, she is some freakish exception. This, from the paper that backed Fahma Mohamed's anti-FGM campaign! I know that at the WoW conference Yousafzai spoke at there were some very political teenage girls present and that there are many, many politicised teenage girls in this country (I am one of them), but that is not the point. The point is that many adult feminists patronise and silence teenage girls for being political, and then call politically ignorant young women stupid in the very next breath. It is not something Malala would appreciate; twisting her words so you can attack teenage girls. I think I can speak for Yousafzai by saying that encouraging solidarity between feminists of all ages is one of the most important things you can do, unless you want to have to win the suffrage back every 50 years.

Then again, all this is not terribly surprising, as the liberal media has exalted Yousafzai purely as an anti-fundamentalist, feminist campaigner, ignoring her actual politics (which is far closer to Marxism than the media wants to admit), which is a essential part of her campaigning. When you aren't a political teenage girl (which every teenager has a right to be), you are patronised; when you are a political teenage girl, your politics are ignored so the western liberal media can hold you aloft as a figurehead and an exception.

Laura Cooper (16)
Stockport

Bob Crow spoke for working people

In his obituary for Bob Crow (12 March), Christian Wolmar states that Bob "was not a member of a political party when he died". However, Bob sat with me on the national steering committee of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), which stands in general and local elections, from its foundation in 2010. Indeed, it was only a few days ago that we were discussing what public meetings he could do to support TUSC's 2014 local elections campaign, in what will be the biggest left-of-Labour challenge in such elections since the second world war.

Bob was also the national leader of No2EU - Yes To Workers' Rights, a political party registered to fight the 2014 European elections. He was going to be the lead candidate for London. Bob couldn't have been clearer on the need for working-class people to have an independent political voice, which none of the establishment parties can provide.

Clive Heemskerk
Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

As the obituary of Bob Crow says, he was "very keen on defending the rights of low-paid workers" - in fact he also stood up for the unwaged. It has been hard to convince union leaders that welfare and wages are inseparable. Bob Crow had no such problem. He signed our petition calling for a living wage for mothers and other carers (see goo.gl/TWPkPo).

He agreed that without a social wage protecting us from destitution if we turn down slave wages, all workers are threatened. In the same way, women's wages determine men's: as workfare, the benefit cap and zero-hours contracts drove down our incomes, men's wages were pulled down too. Ignoring the connection between the wages of those who work outside the home and the social wage has enabled today's crisis - not of capitalism, which is doing fine, but of workers whose impoverishment is a bonanza for the 1%.

Bob Crow will be missed by many, waged and unwaged.

Selma James and Nina Lopez
Global Women's Strike

Both Decca Aitkenhead (Shortcuts, G2, 12 April) and Christian Wolmar question the late Bob Crow for living in a council house when he earned £145,000 a year, she questioning his "socialist ethics" and he describing his decision as a "blind spot". Yet Crow was surely right in saying that social housing was for everyone: in other words, social housing ought to be a universal provision, conforming to socialist ideas, rather than the residual welfare provision to which it has been reduced, with baleful consequences for society.

Professor Stuart Weir
Cambridge

Bob Crow was hated by the transport bosses and their media lickspittles, but he was loved by his members and his class.

> He was hated by the transport bosses, but he was loved by his members and his class
>
> **Sasha Simic**

Where other trade union leaders talked a good fight but sold out the struggle more often than not, he delivered for his members. He never sold out. The best tribute the RMT can pay him is to smash Transport for London's plans to close all ticket offices on the tube and cut 900 jobs.

Sasha Simic
(Usdaw shop steward), London

Most people believe you should make money by working for a living; and some recognise that wage increases, when backed by increased productivity, are healthier for the economy than house price increases, which are essentially inflationary. But our society dictates the opposite: we want high wages and low property prices; we get low wages and high property prices. What Bob Crow did, both in paying rent for his public-sector housing and in securing high wages for his workers, was ultimately for the public good. Shame on the snobbish British ruling class, its media and supporters for adopting, instead of Crow's constructive outlook, the nihilist mantra "Market forces rule: human resistance is futile." Bob Crow showed it wasn't.

DBC Reed
Northampton

The death of Bob Crow has sparked a remarkable range of comment, most from unlikely sources. His message was quite simply that if you want a high-quality service delivered consistently by a well-motivated work force you need to respect them with reasonable pay and conditions. Bob clearly understood capitalism and made it work for his members. Both government and employers need to listen to Bob Crow's message.

John Holmes
London

Easily mizzled

For years, clinicians and managers in the NHS have been pleading with politicians not to defend every brick of their local hospital because to do that prevents or delays sensible reorganisation and can seriously damage local healthcare. Yet when the government brings in an amendment to the care bill to help this process along, Polly Toynbee pens an article (11 March) threatening Conservative MPs that supporting this bill "will come back to bite" them. As usual, the left is against any kind of rational progress.

John Horam
Conservative, House of Lords

Refreshing to see Charlie Mayfield, the John Lewis chairman, taking the same 17% bonus as his staff (Report, 7 March), and note the never knowingly underpaid Marc Bolland's 85% bonus last year at M&S on top of his £3.9m golden hello in 2010. Seems to me that not only has John Lewis won the battle for the high street, but also the moral high ground.

Malcolm Stewart
Edinburgh

I am very happy to support your editorial (10 March), which concludes "Leave income tax alone". I'd have been even happier had you uttered the same sentiment when Gordon Brown, for cheap political and electoral reasons, abolished the 10% rate and simultaneously cut the standard rate from 22% to 20%.

Eric Ogden
Cheadle, Cheshire

I still blush when I think of the sudden burst of grown-up laughter when, as a child of eight, I arrived late for lunch. "I'm so sorry," I said confidently, "I was misled about the time." Except I pronounced it mizzled (G2, 12 March).

Antonia Fraser
London

It's surprising that your praise of Hull (11 March) did not mention the poet Andrew Marvell, who was raised in Hull and became its MP. The coalition might care to ponder two of his memorable lines: "The grave's a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace."

Jeremy Beecham
Labour, House of Lords

Indeed there is no "heaven" in National Rail's station menu (Letters, 12 March), but Norway has a station called Hell.

Les Summers
Oxford

More on the threat to mental health services from funding cuts

Your letter (12 March) about the risks associated with the deep cuts in mental health funding highlighted an issue of increasing concern to me. I am regularly contacted by constituents struggling with mental health issues and it's become clear that the services they access locally are under acute pressure. Therapies have long waiting lists; crisis teams cannot respond quickly enough; dedicated mental health workers are buckling under increased workloads and either going on long-term sick or seeking other careers. It is heartbreaking to see the pain many of my constituents go through, often because of past traumatic experiences or debilitating illnesses. I believe our mental health and our emotional wellbeing are key to functioning as decent human beings. It's time that we, as a society, got our priorities right on mental health.

Dan Jarvis MP
Labour, Barnsley Central

As nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists and social workers, we share the concerns of England's six leading mental health organisations that a new NHS funding cut will put lives at risk. This represents yet another blow to mental health services, which are already in a critical state. The government has made a promise to treat mental and physical healthcare equally, but further cuts to mental health services call this commitment into question. Following the Francis report, professionals have a duty to raise concerns to serve and protect their patients. We urge NHS England and the NHS financial regulator, Monitor, to reconsider their decision as a matter of urgency.

Dr Peter Carter *Royal College of Nursing,* **Jo Cleary** *College of Social Work,* **Faye Wilson** *British Association of Social Workers' mental health forum,* **Richard Pemberton** *British Psychological Society division of clinical psychology,* **Julia Scott** *College of Occupational Therapists*

While I'm glad attention has been drawn to the lack of funding for adult mental health services, funding for child and adolescent mental health services is also being cut. Unless children's mental health services are properly financed the NHS will never be able to intervene early enough in the development of mental disorders to decrease adult psychomorbidity. The costs to individuals and to society of this service shortfall have been shown time and again to be very significant.

Dr Dinah Morley
London

There are currently 10 million people in the UK over 65 and this is set to increase substantially. One in five are likely to need mental health services. The funding cuts to mental health services highlighted in the letter by Sean Duggan et al are a disgrace. Older people will be subject to a triple whammy: services for this group are already comparatively underfunded, demand for services is rising and they have more complex needs. Mental health services for older people are likely to collapse if the current situation continues. We urge that parity of esteem is observed not only between physical and mental health outlined in the Health and Social Care Act but also for older people as outlined in the Equality Act.

Dr James Warner *(chair)*
Dr Nori Graham and 21 others
Executive, Faculty of Old Age Psychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists
Full list: gu.com/letters

Take arms firms out of the Big Bang Fair

As engineers, health professionals, educationists and others who believe in the power of science and engineering as a force for good, we are writing to condemn the continued sponsorship of today's Big Bang Fair by BAE Systems and other arms companies such as Thales, Selex ES, Doosan, Rolls-Royce and Airbus. It might seem like a joke: the UK's largest youth science and engineering education event, named the Big Bang Fair, is sponsored by companies who make very big bangs indeed. Except the arms trade isn't funny. All of these companies have a track record of supplying countries with appalling human rights records. Doosan is involved in cluster bomb manufacture.

The casual and unquestioned way these companies are allowed public relations space at educational events reflects a serious problem at the heart of modern British science. We need programmes which offer young people unbiased spaces to learn about science and engineering as it is currently constituted - including environmental and human rights concerns - and what it could look like.

If the government is serious in its support of science and engineering - not just a few choice companies associated with them - it must invest more fully in education so the Big Bang Fair 2015 need not be reliant on sponsorship which so narrows its scope. We were pleased to learn that several (though not all) of the fossil fuel companies associated with previous fairs have disappeared from the list of sponsors.

Big Bang 2014 is a slightly less dystopian vision of engineering than it has been in the past. Let's drop the arms trade and do something truly inspirational in the future.

Professor David Colquhoun *University College London,* **Professor Robin A Weiss** *University College London,* **Professor David Webb** *CND,* **Abbas Edalat** *Professor of computer science and mathematics, Imperial College,* **Jonathan Oppenheim** *Professor of quantum theory, University College London* **and 121 others**
Full list: gu.com/letters

Only in awe of art

As a Guardian reader, I was surprised to read about myself - one of three girls studying history of art (Not just for posh girls, Education, 4 March). I did not recognise myself as the girl shyly "knocking on the door" of my neighbouring private school. I think of myself as an independent young woman who is happy to take up any opportunity offered to me. Every Thursday I go from one good, well-respected school to another equally good, well-respected school to study a subject not offered at the first. The fact that one of these schools is fee-paying does not make me feel "overawed". A Van Gogh painting makes me feel overawed. Yes, Godolphin and Latymer is a brilliant school, but I don't go there every Thursday to stand in the car park in "awe" of it, I'm there to learn. I do not feel that my comprehensive school is second best. Comprehensive schools are the choice of the majority of children. Not because they are free, but because they give a first-rate education.

Aphra Joly de Lotbinière
London

Corrections and clarifications

Sally Morgan, the outgoing chair of the schools inspectorate Ofsted, was wrongly described as Dame Morgan in a front-page article (Short visits for inspectors in Ofsted shakeup, 8 March). We should have called her Lady Morgan: she is a baroness, not a dame.

A column in G2 (I hate Page 3, but I am all in favour of the Sun using cleavage to save lives, 5 March, page 5) said: "Personally I don't favour a ban, much as I like the No More Page Three campaign's cheerful activism." To clarify: the No More Page Three campaign does not advocate a ban but wishes the Sun newspaper to voluntarily discontinue the feature.

An editorial on the British economy (Rate relief, 6 March, page 32) confused terminology relating to mortgages when it said "savers ... are more numerous than mortgagees in Britain". Mortgagees are mortgage lenders; those who borrow from them are mortgagors.

We deserve a red card for describing Luis Suárez as "prone" in the caption to a sport piece (Rodgers fumes over 'blatant' Suárez penalty as Arsenal edge Cup thriller, 17 February, Sport, page 1). The Liverpool player was supine, on his back on the pitch, while the referee adjudicated on whether a foul had been committed or not.

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Country diary

Wolsingham, Weardale

March is a tantalising month for a botanist in the northern counties. While reports of primroses and sweet violets filter up from the south, such delights are still clenched inside tight buds here. Even after a mild winter, lesser celandines and coltsfoot are still struggling into bloom. Only snowdrops, whose displays have been exceptionally fine this year, provide some compensation. But today we had come to look for a single plant that can be relied upon to put on a show at this time of year.

As soon as we turned the corner we began to feel a sense of foreboding. A tractor with a hedge cutter had passed this way, leaving a trail of broken twigs beside the hawthorns that overhung the track. Fortunately the damage to the solitary spurge laurel bush, which we first found here 35 years ago, was minor. Most of its branches had been low enough to escape decapitation, tangled behind brambles and briars. Just a few severed ends of stems lay on the ground.

It's a rare plant hereabouts, but one of the landmarks on our annual "beating the bounds" walks, searching for reassuring early signs of spring. For most of the year its shiny rhododendron-like leaves, hidden in the shade of the hedge, hardly merit a second glance, but in early March precocious clusters of lime green, star-shaped flowers radiate a sense of optimism. They open at a time when very few insects have appeared but, unlike the drifts of snowdrops and constellations of celandines that depend on attracting passing bees and flies, spurge laurel has a crepuscular clientele. Its nectaries, at the end of a narrow tubular corolla, can be reached by long-tongued bumblebees during the day and also by moths at dusk. When I knelt I could only just detect a sweet aroma, but this becomes much stronger as night falls. Other wild flowers may bloom earlier, but here was the first floral fragrance of spring.

Phil Gates *(Twitter: @seymourdaily)*

Reviews

Solved: Wagner's problem piece
Tim Ashley on a powerful new recording of Rienzi
theguardian.com/classical

Journey into flamenco puts frocks and footwork first

Dance

Gala Flamenca
Sadler's Wells, London
★★★☆☆

Contemporary flamenco is all about making itself new, as artists explore the possibilities of minimalism, high concept and dance theatre. But if new ideas can be a sign of health, at this year's Gala Flamenca, they seem barely half-baked.

As conceived and directed by Francisco López, the gala is presented as a journey - the story of flamenco as mirrored by the stories of the dancers themselves. The first of its eight sections is titled In the Stages of Memory, and opens with Laura Rozalén alone in a pool of white light, one arm tracing a slow, luscious curve out into the darkness. It's a slow, thoughtful piece, in which the rippling arabesques of Rozalén's arms and exquisitely expressive hands pay homage to Pepe Marchena, the early flamenco singer who was legendary for the sweetness and ornamentation of his vocals.

But if Rozalén's dancing is filled with echoes, there's little sense of that journey being developed in the rest of the gala. There are sections of pared-down minimalism in the dancing, extended stillnesses, which might suggest some personal crisis or quest. But these feel more like modish tropes than theatrical themes, and despite superbly eloquent performances from the accompanying musicians and singers, the dancers themselves lack sufficient charisma to draw us into their inner worlds.

After Rozalén's solo Guajira, Olga Pericet and Marco Flores dance a taut duet, nervily mirroring each other's moves. Pericet is a marvellous dancer, bringing a thrilling precision to every wheeling turn, every slant of the head. In her later solo Abandolaos, she is rhythmically witty and dynamically alive. But between her and Flores there is disappointingly little chemistry.

Mercedes Ruiz is the Ida Rubinstein of the ensemble, tall and slender, with a fierce profile and a genius for costume. She dances her opening Seguiriya in the tightest of black dresses, her torso as lethally poised as a snake as it rises from a pool of satin ruffles. Later, in trousers and matador jacket, the intensity of Ruiz's footwork easily outdistances her rival Flores.

The latter is the weakest of the performers, his solo Farruca too technically bland to back up the bombast of his gestures. The fact that it's Pericet who compels our greatest interest is down to the richness and range of her dancing, not because of any story she tries to tell about herself.

Judith Mackrell
Gala continues until Thursday. Box office: 0844 412 4300.

Olga Pericet (left) and Laura Rozalén (right) ... rhythmically witty Photograph: Tristram Kenton for the Guardian

Classical

Artemis Quartet
Queen Elizabeth Hall, London
★★★★☆

Beethoven's monumental String Quartet in C Minor Op 131 was the first work the Artemis Quartet played when it was founded in 1989 at the Musikhochschule in Lübeck. Today, cellist Eckart Runge is the only remaining member of the original four, but Beethoven is still the Artemis's calling card, and their return to Op 131, coupled with Brahms's C Minor Quartet Op 51 No 1, now marks, as one might expect, their 25th anniversary.

They play it with admirable freshness and lucidity, if a certain emotional cool. Op 131 redefined and expanded the parameters of the genre in such a comprehensive way that Beethoven's immediate successors wondered whether anything in the form could be written in its wake. The Artemis performance was a constant reminder of its innovative force, from the melancholy ceremonials of the opening fugue to the ambiguities of the finale. The central set of variations which, even after repeated hearings, takes you endlessly by surprise was superbly controlled and articulate.

Brahms's Op 51 No 1, meanwhile, brought with it an increase in emotional pressure. The performance was very much a reminder of the paradoxes at the work's heart. This is music at once ruthless and emotive, in which logic is in itself a form of aggression. Much of its material derives from a phrase heard at the outset, but its development over the work's extended length results not in a sense of spaciousness but awesome complexity. Some silky violin duets, suavely played by Vineta Sareika and Gregor Sigl, allowed us some respite, but the tension was only released when we came to the single encore, the elegiac slow movement of Mendelssohn's A Minor Quartet Op 13, wonderful in its fervour and introspection.

Tim Ashley

Pop

Drake/the Weeknd
Manchester Arena
★★★☆☆

Abel Tesfaye, aka the Weeknd, is receiving the kind of cheers you rarely hear for what is technically a support act. The fast-rising 22-year-old Toronto wunderkind is Michael Jackson drenched in echo, an R&B producer experimental enough to incorporate a Siouxsie and the Banshees tune and a Smiths lyric into a tantalising fog of sound. His songs may drift out of focus and into uncomfortable descriptions of naughty things with drunken, vulnerable females, but a sea of sparkling audience phones suggests his next appearance here will be as a headline.

Canadian rapper Drake is playing to 40,000 people over two nights in Manchester alone, even if it's not immediately obvious why. His flow isn't as dazzling as Jay Z's, he's not as good a lyricist as Eminem or as experimental as Kanye, but by ticking multiple boxes well enough, he's ended up a superstar. His lyrics equally vary wildly from vulnerable confessionals of childhood traumas to multiple eulogies to a "pussy" who possibly isn't his cat. Many songs concern the acquisition of money - only to be expected from a man who says he wants to own the world's biggest home swimming pool.

However, when the crowd are filmed singing "I want to be successful" it feels as if he's tapped into a wave of aspiration, throwing a glittering party at which anyone can share the spotlight, if only for a millisecond. Drake is a phenomenal showman, with lasers, fireworks and a giant second stage that descends so he can meet his people, though that takes up a disproportionately long time that might have been better served by more genuinely huge tunes. However, Started From the Bottom is powerful and personal, and suggests that the 27-year-old is as baffled by the scale of his phenomenon as anyone else.

Dave Simpson
At Sheffield Arena, 13 March. Box office: 0114-256 2002. Then touring.

Theatre

The Memory of Water
New Vic, Newcastle-under-Lyme
★★★☆☆

What do you leave behind after death? In Vi's case, there's a wardrobe full of dresses and three daughters - each with their own version of events. For one, childhood was all bike rides and sunshine; for another, dead cats and a stint locked in a cupboard. Vi doesn't just live on in the memory - she multiplies.

Shelagh Stephenson's 1996 debut - named best new comedy at the Oliviers - is rather wise; wiser, certainly, than the subsequent film version, Before You Go. Yes, it's larger than life and slightly knockabout, spiced with enough weed and whisky to draw out both laughs and recriminations, but Stephenson spins a delicate treatise on human nature with gentleness and precision.

The title refers to homeopathy - the way water "remembers" healing properties. Stephenson suggests our brains work similarly, saving what they need to keep us going. Any self-centricity - and these sisters have plenty - is rooted in vulnerability. The set design by Takis suggests snowfall and salt flats - both memories of water in their own way. Nikolai Foster's production scuffs some of the play's subtleties. Scant family resemblance and what could be a 20-year age gap make it hard to believe that Mary Jo Randle's stern Teresa and Amanda Ryan as the rudderless Catherine shared overlapping childhoods. When they put on Vi's dresses, each looking like a different Quality Street, Foster trades the eeriness of triple vision for a cheap visual gag. It's a mark of the strength of Stephenson's writing that it survives any such dilution.

Matt Trueman
Until 22 March. Box office: 01782 717 962.

Amanda Ryan as Catherine in The Memory of Water

Theatre

I'd Rather Goya Robbed Me of My Sleep Than Some Other Arsehole
Gate theatre, London
★★★☆☆

At 14, the unnamed protagonist of this acidic Spanish short play assured himself he would never hit rock bottom. Yet here he is at 50, rejected by his wife, repelled by his children, a millionaire only in pesetas, losing sleep over everything capitalism promises that he will never have. There's only one thing for it: to break into the Prado and spend the night with Goya's Black Paintings.

Delivered by Steffan Rhodri with haggard fury and crackling energy, Rodrigo García's monologue is an argument for art - Borges, not Beyoncé; old masters, not Mickey Mouse - as a salve for the misery of being alive, along with philosophy, Glenfiddich and the stoicism that comes with being a fan of Atlético Madrid. There is conservatism here, and a dash of misanthropy, but also howls of pain from a mind that feels assaulted.

It's a sinewy, masculine text, given a remarkable production by three women - director Jude Christian, designer Fly Davis and sound designer Adrienne Quartly - who lock the character in a dirty white kitchen that looks unnervingly like a room in a mental hospital, with two squealing, grunting piglets representing his sons.

Initially this seems a terrible idea, if only because Rhodri is barely audible over the coos and giggles of an overexcited audience. But it conveys, with playful acuity, the contrast between the man's impression of his young sons as tasteless animals and the penetrating intellect of these fantastical creatures able to converse with philosopher Peter Sloterdijk in fluent German.

It makes apparent the lack of emotional understanding within the family, and the man's volatility, not least when he eats a bacon sandwich while looking at the pigs with an eyebrow tauntingly raised. By the end, the words "like pigs to the slaughter" were ringing alarmingly in my ears.

Maddy Costa
Until 29 March. Box office: 020-7229 0706.

More reviews online

» **Mark Fisher on Wendy Hoose at Tron theatre, Glasgow** "James Young and Amy Conachan hit joke upon joke in this scabrous comedy of manners."
★★★★☆

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Joe McGinniss

Controversial writer and journalist known for Fatal Vision and The Selling of the President

Is a journalist "a kind of confidence man, preying on people's vanity, ignorance or loneliness, gaining their trust and betraying them without remorse?" That was the question asked by Janet Malcolm in her book The Journalist and the Murderer (1990). The journalist in question was Joe McGinniss, who has died aged 71 after suffering from prostate cancer.

McGinniss had been one of the shining lights of the "new journalism" of the 1960s, but Malcolm was echoing the words of the judge in a civil case brought against him by Jeffrey MacDonald, the convicted murderer who had been the subject of McGinniss's bestselling 1983 book, Fatal Vision. The judge likened McGinniss to a "thief in the night" and a "con man". McGinniss's crime was to embed himself with McDonald's defence team, professing belief in his innocence, then write a book explaining how MacDonald was guilty.

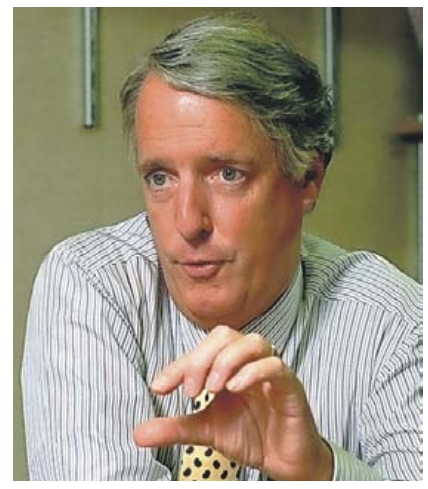
McGinniss's career had got under way through a similar confidence game and his work returned constantly to the differences between presentation and reality of those in public life. In 1968 McGinniss met an advertising executive who had landed the account for presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey, and boasted that "in six weeks we'll have him looking better than Abraham Lincoln". Intrigued, McGinniss sought access to the Humphrey campaign.

After being refused, he was surprised when campaign aide Leonard Garment allowed him full access to Richard Nixon's advisers. The resulting book, The Selling of the President 1968, published the following year, marked a step-change in campaign journalism. Media was changing politics, as was evident from Nixon's failure in the televised debates with John Kennedy of 1960. The brilliance orchestrated eight years later by the adman Harry Treleaven and the TV producer Roger Ailes turned Tricky Dick, the man from whom America would not buy a used car, into Nixon the likeable everyman-turned-statesman.

McGinniss had fly-on-the-wall access and like a documentary filmmaker he allowed the characters to speak for themselves, revealing the cynicism behind the sales approach. The result was the young, media-friendly McGinniss's first bestseller.

He had enjoyed a rapid rise to journalistic heights. Born in New York City, the son of Mary, a secretary for the CBS television network, and her travel agent husband, Joseph, he graduated in 1964 from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. After working briefly as a reporter on the Worcester Telegram, he moved to the Philadelphia Bulletin as a sportswriter. Within a year, he was a general columnist for the Inquirer, Philadelphia's top daily. He was still only 26.

The Selling of the President made his name as a journalist, but his next book was a novel, Dream Team (1972), about a sportswriter whose life falls apart in



McGinniss was one of the shining lights of the 'new journalism' of the 1960s

the face of addictions to horse racing, drinking and womanising. Heroes (1976) was a revealing memoir, detailing the collapse of his first marriage, alongside his own hero-worship of figures such as the novelist William Styron and Ted Kennedy. Neither book was successful, and his next, Going to Extremes (1980), saw him escaping to Alaska. Though well-reviewed, it did not sell.

By then McGinniss was a columnist with the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, where he was approached by MacDonald, a Green Beret doctor whose pregnant wife and two daughters were found dead in their house at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in 1970. MacDonald claimed they were the victims of a home invasion by hippies, and had injuries of his own to show. The army brought no charges against him, but in 1974 his father-in-law persuaded the courts to re-open the case, and MacDonald went to trial in 1979. He agreed with McGinniss to co-operate on a book through which the writer would tell his side of the story. MacDonald was found guilty, and after a series of appeals, ending in the US supreme court, failed, sent to prison for life in 1982. Fatal Vision appeared the following year, and, in 1984, MacDonald sued McGinniss for breach of contract.

At the trial in 1987, McGinniss was hurt by his own unsubstantiated theory that MacDonald committed the murders in a psychotic state brought on by abuse of diet pills. The jury failed to reach a verdict and McGinniss's publisher settled out of court. Malcolm, covering the case for the New Yorker, called McGinniss's deception "morally indefensible". McGinniss argued that it was MacDonald who had attempted to manipulate the truth by engaging with him "through cons and lies".

McGinniss returned to true crime with his next two books, Blind Faith (1989) and Cruel Doubt (1991), both of which, like Fatal Vision, were adapted into successful TV mini-series, but in neither did he have the intimate access that he had enjoyed with MacDonald. The Last Brother: The Rise and Fall of Teddy Kennedy (1993) was a warts-and-all biography widely lambasted for its use of invented dialogue. In 1995 he handed back a $1m advance he had received to produce a book on the OJ Simpson trial, calling it a "farce from start to finish ... a mockery of justice".

McGinniss returned to his sportswriting roots with two first-rate books. The Miracle of Castel di Sangro (1999) was about a small-town Italian football team from Abruzzo making their debut in the Serie B league, while Big Horse (2004) dealt with PG Johnson, a New York trainer for more than 60 years before he found his "big horse", Volponi, winner of the 2002 Breeders' Cup in Chicago.

After one more venture into murder with Never Enough (2005), McGinniss went back to politics and Alaska, moving next door to Sarah Palin in Wasilla while researching The Rogue (2011). The book's revelations, about drug use or premarital affairs, were the stuff of local gossip. With Ailes now the force behind Fox News, Palin's biggest supporters, it was as if McGinniss had come full circle, with politics now part of the entertainment industry. McGinniss wrote that Palin's candidacy was "unblushingly underwritten by a mainstream media willing to gamble the nation's future in exchange for the cheap thrill of watching a clown in high heels on a flying trapeze".

In December 2012, McGinniss published Final Vision, a short Kindle ebook aimed as a riposte to his critics, including the documentary maker Errol Morris, whose September 2012 book A Wilderness of Error had been critical of both McGinniss and Malcolm. Having helped create a market for celebrity criminals' stories, McGinniss was unable to escape its shadow.

He is survived by his second wife, Nancy Doherty, and their two sons, and by two daughters and a son, the novelist Joe Jr, from his first marriage, to Chris Cooke, which ended in divorce.

Michael Carlson

Joseph McGinniss, journalist, born 9 December 1942; died 10 March 2014

Kay Mander

Documentary maker who faced sexism in the postwar film industry

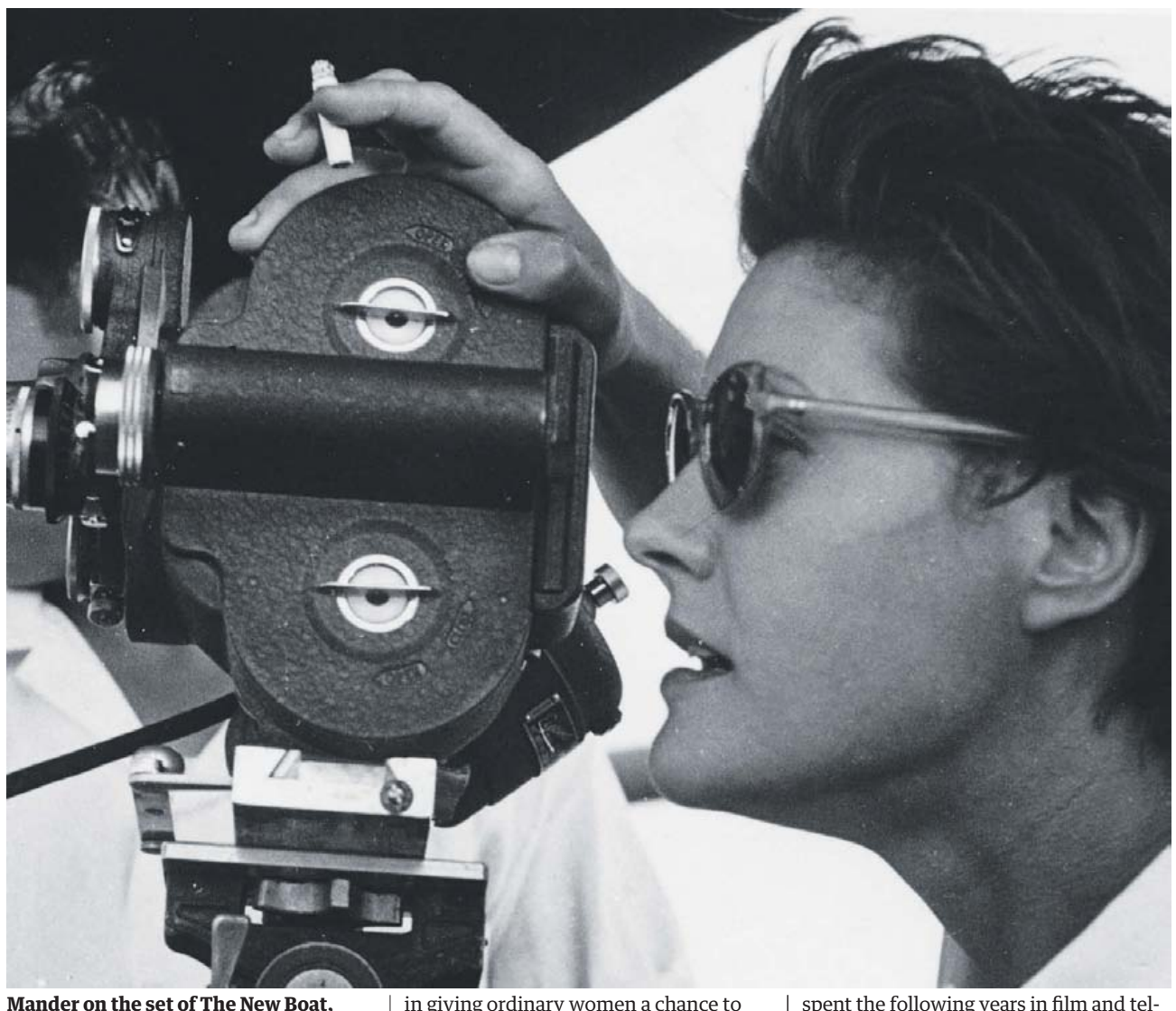
The pioneering filmmaker Kay Mander, who has died aged 98, was a member of the British documentary movement and began directing during the second world war, making training films and social documentaries for the Ministry of Information. In 1944, she established her own production company, Basic Films, and like many of her male contemporaries attempted to break into feature films after the war. But she struggled to find directing jobs and spent the rest of her long career in continuity.

Born in Hull, east Yorkshire, Mander grew up in Paris, later boarding at Queenwood ladies' college, in Eastbourne, East Sussex. After leaving school, she moved to Berlin, where her father was employed as an accountant. While working as a receptionist at an international film congress in 1935, she met British film-makers who suggested she look for work in London studios on her return to Britain. She secured a post at London Films, Alexander Korda's company in Denham, Buckinghamshire.

As soon as she walked on to a set, Mander knew she wanted to direct. It would be five years before she got behind a camera; instead she found herself in publicity, finance and continuity roles, sneaking into the studio whenever possible to learn what she could about film-making. She joined the Communist party and in 1937 the industry union ACT (now Bectu). Not only was she their first female member, but in 1940 she was elected to the union's general council.

Advised that there were more opportunities for directing in the documentary movement due to wartime personnel shortages, Mander began going to its unofficial recruiting office – the Nellie Dean pub in Soho. There, in 1940, she met the producer Arthur Elton, who offered her a position at the Shell Film Unit. Within months, Mander was directing her first film, How to File (1941), for aircraft industry workers, regarded as an exemplary training tool. Her insistence that tracking shots be used to illustrate filing techniques was ahead of its time.

After three years at Shell, Mander moved to Paul Rotha Productions, then



Mander on the set of The New Boat, 1955. After struggling to find directing jobs, she moved into continuity

the Realist Film Unit, where she was able to experiment with the drama documentary style. She continued to make homefront propaganda films, often on dry technical subjects, depicted with simplicity and coherence.

On VE Day, Mander was editing Homes for the People (1945). Produced by Basic Films, the company Mander had formed with her husband, Rod Baxter, it was commissioned for the 1945 Labour party election campaign. Much of its running time is devoted to interviews with five housewives criticising their living conditions. Mander filmed the women performing tasks such as collecting water from a village well and carrying a pram down five flights of stairs. Homes for the People was revolutionary in giving ordinary women a chance to plead their case for improved housing and provides a rare glimpse into everyday 1940s working-class life.

Basic Films gained a reputation for its educational output and in 1949 Mander won a British Film Academy (forerunner of the Bafta) award for La Famille Martin (1949), a French language teaching film. Encouraged by this recognition, Mander contacted the major studios asking to be considered "as a technician irrespective of her sex". Michael Balcon, at Ealing Studios, was not the only producer to reply that women could not handle a male film crew – although Mander had already been doing so for over 10 years. Disheartened, she joined her husband in Indonesia in 1950, establishing a film unit for Unesco and directing two films for the Children's Film Foundation.

She returned to Britain in 1957 to shoot her final film, The Kid from Canada. Not wanting to leave the industry, Mander spent the following years in film and television continuity. Among the films she worked on were Terence Young's Bond film, From Russia With Love (1963), François Truffaut's Fahrenheit 451 (1966) and Ken Russell's Tommy (1975).

Retiring in 1995, Mander moved to the Scottish countryside to concentrate on her own projects, including a script about the first world war poet Rupert Brooke. I knew her during this time and it was clear that her greatest passion in life was film. Stubbornly rejecting descriptions of herself as a feminist or a female film-maker, Mander thought of herself only as an inventive and dedicated technician who wanted to make inspiring work.

Rod died in 1978.

Sarah Easen

Kathleen (Kay) Mander, film-maker, born 28 September 1915; died 29 December 2013

Birthdays

Baroness (Valerie) Amos, UN undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs and former Labour cabinet minister, 60; **Lord (Gordon) Borrie**, QC, former chairman, Advertising Standards Authority, 83; **Terence Brady**, playwright, novelist and actor, 75; **Lord (Terry) Burns**, economist and chairman, Channel 4, 70; **Flavia Cacace**, dancer, 34; **Sir Michael Checkland**, former director general, BBC, 78; **Lesley Collier**, ballet dancer, 67; **Dame Nicola Davies**, QC, high court judge,

Neil Sedaka, the American singer and songwriter, is 75 today. He is due to start a tour of Britain this autumn

61; **Marion Foale**, fashion designer, 75; **Lionel Friend**, conductor, 69; **The Very Rev John Hall**, dean of Westminster, 65; **Grahame Morris**, Labour MP, 53; **Catherine Nettleton**, diplomat, ambassador to Venezuela, 54; **David Nobbs**, writer, 79; **Caryl Phillips**, writer, 56; **Air Commodore Helen Renton**, former director, WRAF, 83; **Linda Robson**, actor, 56; **Neil Sedaka**, singer and songwriter, 75; **Trevor Sorbie**, hairdresser, 65.

Announcements

DEATH NOTICES

KINLEY, Monika Maria OBE. Died peacefully on 9 March. Private funeral. Memorial event TBA in London, summertime.

TREVALDWYN, Mehala, nee Wickham, (3.6.1916 - 24.2.2014) of West Bagborough, Somerset; Ilkley, and Abbeyfield in Reading, peacefully, after a long, productive and courageous life. A stalwart supporter of the Manchester Guardian/Guardian, London Region CND, and any charity helping children. Much loved by her three daughters, their partners, children and their partners and her seven great grandchildren. Cremation will take place on Friday 21 March in Reading.

IN MEMORIAM

GEDDES, Sandy (Dr Alexander John). 12th February 1941 to 13th March 2010. Remembered every day with love. Jan.

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theguardian.com/obituaries

Weather

Today

London
High **16** | Low **5**
Precip: 0%
Sunny and mild

Manchester
High **12** | Low **3**
Precip: 0%
Fair

Aberdeen
High **11** | Low **5**
Precip: 60%
A few showers

Glasgow
High **12** | Low **3**
Precip: 60%
A few showers

Aberystwyth
High **13** | Low **6**
Precip: 0%
Sunny

Cardiff
High **15** | Low **6**
Precip: 0%
Sunny; pleasant

Belfast
High **12** | Low **5**
Precip: 5%
Sunny periods

Dublin
High **12** | Low **7**
Precip: 0%
Mostly sunny

World outlook

Japan Intensifying low pressure along the coast of Japan will bring rain from Honshu southward to Kyushu, with total rainfall of 25-75mm (1-3in). The higher elevations may exceed 100mm (4in) of rainfall. Flooding is possible in areas from Tokyo on southward.

Middle East Slow-moving low pressure over the Middle East will bring rain and mountain snow from Israel to Syria, Iraq and Iran today. Rainfall is expected to average 6-13mm (0.25-0.50in), though some areas will exceed 25mm (1in). Snowfall in the higher terrain will range from 3-8cm (1-3in).

Northern Argentina Very hot air over northern Argentina this afternoon with showers later on and thunderstorms in the evening and overnight. Total rainfall across northern Argentina will range from 6-13mm (0.25-0.50in), though some areas could reach 25mm (1in).

South-Eastern Canada Low pressure over Nova Scotia will bring snow, ice and rain to eastern Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland today. Snowfall, from New Brunswick into far eastern Quebec, is expected to be 30-45cm (12-18in). Rainfall in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland is expected to be 25-50mm (1-2in). Strong winds may cause sporadic power cuts.

Southern Asia High pressure will cause unusually high temperatures across much of southern Asia today. Temperatures from Thailand into Laos and Vietnam will reach 38C (100F). Very poor air quality and reduced visibility at times because of smoke from land and forest fires.

Weather view

Crows gather in Stanley Park, Vancouver, Canada
Photograph: strawberry_fields/GuardianWitness

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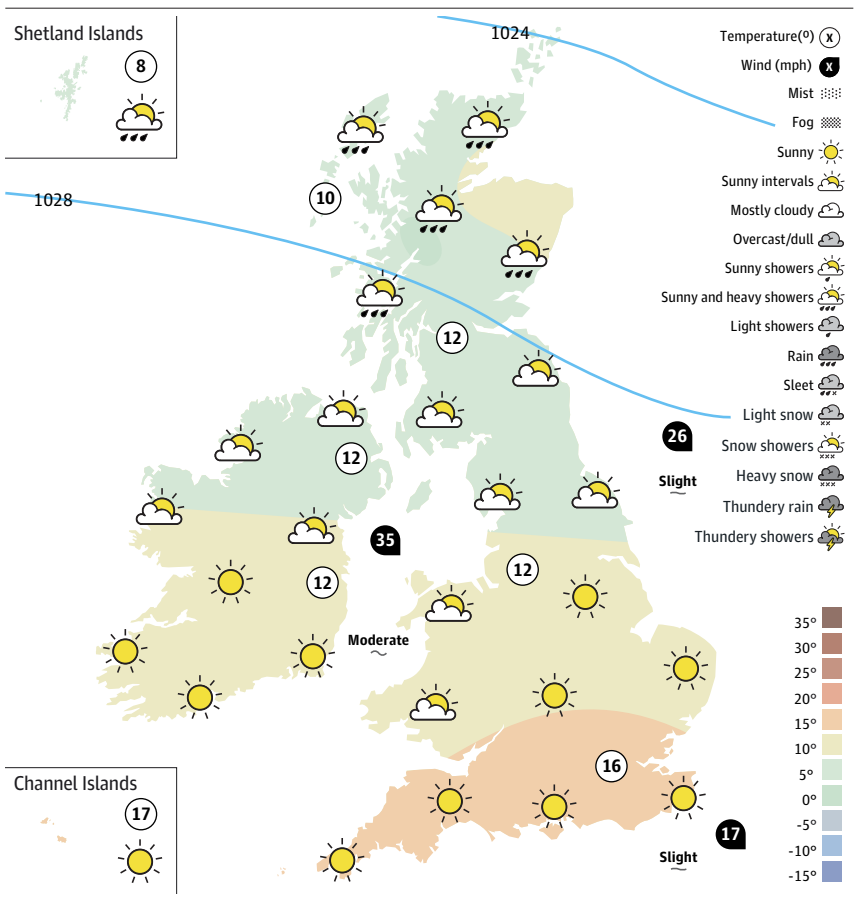
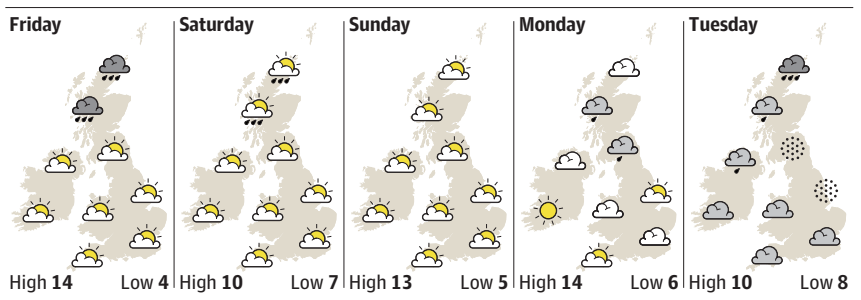
Weather forecast

UK and Ireland Noon



UK and Ireland Five day forecast



Summary

Channel Is, Cent S England, SW England, W Midlands, Wales Largely dry today with bright spells. A light east to south-easterly wind. Max 11-17C (52-63F). Mainly dry tonight with clear periods. Min 1-6C (34-43F).

SE England, London, E Anglia, E Midlands Generally dry today with plenty of sunshine. A light north-east to easterly wind. Max 12-17C (54-63F). Largely dry tonight with clear spells. Min 2-6C (36-43F).

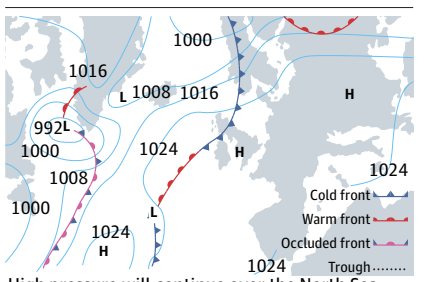
Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, NW England Mainly dry today with sunny spells. A light north to north-westerly wind. Max 10-14C (50-57F). Generally dry tonight with patchy cloud. Min 1-5C (34-41F).

NE England, SE Scotland, SW Scotland, NE Scotland Sunny intervals today with a few showers. A light to moderate north-westerly wind. Max 6-12C (43-54F). Largely cloudy tonight with a couple of showers. Min 0 to 5C (32-41F).

W Isles, N Isles, NW Scotland Broken cloud and sunny spells today with a couple of showers. A light north-west to westerly wind. Max 5-12C (41-54F). Mainly cloudy tonight with scattered showers. Min 0 to 4C (32-39F).

Northern Ireland, Ireland Sunny periods today with an isolated shower. A light westerly wind. Max 11-14C (52-57F). Broken cloud tonight with a few showers. Min 2-5C (36-41F).

Atlantic front Noon today



High pressure will continue over the North Sea

Weather report

Around the UK and Ireland

	Sun hrs	Rain mm	Temp (°C) High	Low	Weather (noon)
Aberdeen	7.1	0.0	13	0	Sunny
Aberporth	6.6	0.0	9	4	Sunny
Aberystwyth	6.5*	0.0	14	0	P/cloudy
Alnwick	7.2	0.3	8	0	Sunny
Aviemore	6.4	0.0	13	-3	P/cloudy
Barrow/Furness	6.8*	0.0	11	4	P/cloudy
Belfast	5.8	0.0	11	0	P/cloudy
Belmullet	3.4*	0.0	8	1	Cloudy
Birmingham	0.5*	0.0	12	2	Cloudy
Bognor Regis	4.6*	0.0	16	3	Cloudy
Bournemouth	3.7	0.0	15	2	Cloudy
Braemar	8.3*	0.0	12	2	Sunny
Bridlington	1.4*	0.0	8	0	Cloudy
Bristol	5.4*	0.0	8	2	P/cloudy
Cardiff	2.6	0.0	9	4	Cloudy
Cork	1.3*	0.0	9	3	Cloudy
Cromer	6.1*	0.0	9	3	P/cloudy
Dublin	5.0*	0.0	6	-1	P/cloudy
Durham	0.9	0.0	15	-2	Cloudy
Edinburgh	6.8	0.0	13	-1	Sunny
Eskdalemuir	6.6	0.0	12	-2	P/cloudy
Falmouth	3.0*	0.0	10	3	Cloudy
Glasgow	6.9	0.0	12	0	Sunny
Guernsey	0.0*	0.0	12	7	Cloudy
Hastings	5.0	0.0	15	5	P/cloudy
Holyhead	6.4	0.0	12	2	Sunny
Hove	5.1*	0.0	16	3	P/cloudy
Hull	2.1*	0.0	13	0	Cloudy
Huntingdon	5.0*	0.0	12	1	P/cloudy
Ipswich	5.5	0.0	14	2	P/cloudy
Isle of Man	6.4	0.0	9	3	P/cloudy
Isle of Wight	3.9*	0.0	13	6	Cloudy
Jersey	0.1*	0.0	14	7	Cloudy
Kilkenny	3.7*	0.0	8	2	Cloudy
Kinlochewe	7.6*	0.0	12	-3	Sunny
Kinloss	7.0	0.0	14	-2	Sunny
Kirkwall	6.3	0.0	12	1	P/cloudy
Leeds	1.0*	0.0	11	1	Cloudy
Lerwick	5.7	0.0	9	4	P/cloudy
Leuchars	6.4	0.0	13	-1	Sunny
Liverpool	5.5*	0.0	13	1	P/cloudy
London	5.0	0.0	15	3	P/cloudy
Malin Head	5.0*	0.0	11	5	P/cloudy
Manchester	9.5*	0.0	13	0	Sunny
Margate	5.9	0.0	11	5	P/cloudy
Milford Haven	7.2*	0.0	12	3	Sunny
Morecambe	6.4*	0.0	11	4	P/cloudy
Mullingar	4.0*	0.0	7	-2	Cloudy
Northallerton	0.9	0.0	11	1	Cloudy
Nottingham	0.3	0.0	11	2	Cloudy
Okehampton	4.7*	0.0	13	1	Cloudy
Oxford	0.0	0.0	10	2	Cloudy
Plymouth	3.7*	0.0	13	3	Cloudy
Portland	3.9*	0.0	12	6	Cloudy
Portsmouth	4.6*	0.0	15	4	Cloudy
Prestwick	6.0	0.0	11	1	P/cloudy
Shannon	2.8*	0.0	6	2	Cloudy
Shrewsbury	0.0	0.0	12	3	Cloudy
Skegness	3.6*	0.0	11	1	Cloudy
Southend	6.0*	0.0	12	3	P/cloudy
Stornoway	5.9	0.0	9	5	Windy
Swansea	6.4*	0.0	10	1	P/cloudy
Tiree	6.1	0.0	9	6	P/cloudy
Valentia	2.3*	0.0	10	1	Cloudy

24 hours to 5pm yesterday. * denotes sunshine from previous day

High tides

Aberdeen	--	--	1140	3.7m
Avonmouth	0452	10.8m	1722	11.2m
Belfast	0920	3.2m	2152	3.0m
Dover	0923	5.7m	2137	5.9m
Galway	0326	4.3m	1547	4.4m
Greenock	1029	3.1m	2313	3.0m
Harwich	0947	3.5m	2204	3.6m
Holyhead	0836	4.9m	2100	4.9m
Hull	0412	6.0m	1627	6.4m
Leith	0043	4.6m	1301	4.8m
Liverpool	0915	8.1m	2141	8.2m
London Bridge	--	--	1152	6.2m
Penzance	0234	4.7m	1502	4.7m
Southport	0837	7.8m	2103	7.9m
Weymouth	0426	1.6m	1705	1.6m
Whitby	0159	4.5m	1416	4.8m

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Air pollution

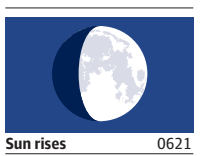
London	moderate
North East	low
NW & Mersey	moderate
York & Humber	moderate
East Midlands	moderate
West Midlands	moderate
Eastern	moderate
South East	moderate
South West	moderate
South Wales	moderate
North Wales	moderate
Borders	low
Cent Scotland	low
NE Scotland	low
Highland	low
N Ireland	low

Today's forecast in towns and cities by busy roads. Low (1-3); moderate (4-6); high (7-9); very high (10). Source DEFRA.

Lighting up

Belfast	1825 to 0643
Birmingham	1808 to 0624
Bristol	1812 to 0628
Dublin	1825 to 0643
Glasgow	1817 to 0636
London	1803 to 0619
Manchester	1809 to 0627
Newcastle	1806 to 0625

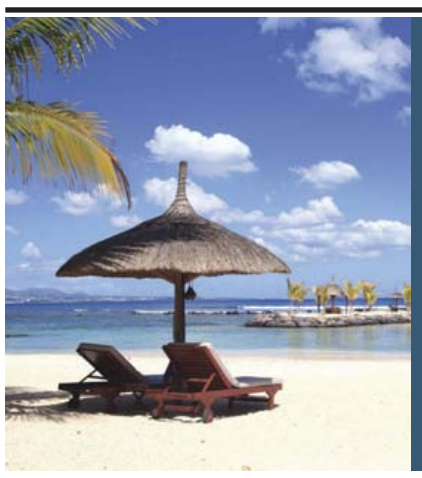
Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0621
Sun sets	1803
Moon rises	1500
Moon sets	0438
Full Moon	16 March

Around the world

	°C	°F	Weather
Ajaccio	18	64	Sunny
Algiers	16	61	Rain
Alicante	17	62	Cloudy
Ams'dam	14	57	Sunny
Athens	13	56	Windy
Auckland	23	73	Sunny
B Aires	26	79	Sunny
Bangkok	36	97	Sunny
Barcelona	17	62	Fair
Basra	23	74	Sunny
Beijing	13	56	Cloudy
Belgrade	14	58	Sunny
Berlin	16	61	Sunny
Bermuda	23	73	Rain
Bordeaux	18	64	Fair
Boston	-2	26	Snow
Brussels	17	63	Sunny
Budapest	13	55	Sunny
C'blanca	19	66	Fair
C'hagen	12	54	Sunny
Cairo	18	65	Fair
Cape Town	26	79	Sunny
Chicago	1	34	Fair
Christ'rch	24	75	Sunny
Corfu	17	63	Sunny
Dakar	23	74	Sunny
Dallas	19	67	Sunny
Denver	16	60	Sunny
Dhaka	34	94	Fair
Dublin	12	54	Sunny
Faro	18	64	Fair
Florence	19	67	Sunny
Frankfurt	18	65	Sunny
Funchal	20	68	Fair
Geneva	17	63	Fair
Gibraltar	18	64	Cloudy
H Kong	23	73	Cloudy
Harare	29	84	Storms
Helsinki	11	52	Fair
Innsbruck	19	66	Sunny
Istanbul	12	54	Fair
Jo'burg	21	70	Rain
K Lumpur	34	94	Sunny
K'mandu	27	81	Sunny
Kabul	16	60	Fair
Karachi	32	90	Sunny
Kingston	30	86	Showers
Kolkata	34	93	Fair
L Angeles	24	76	Sunny
Larnaca	17	63	Cloudy
Lima	28	82	Fair
Lisbon	19	66	Fair
London	16	61	Sunny
Lux'bourg	16	61	Sunny
Madrid	14	57	Fair
Majorca	17	62	Cloudy
Malaga	18	64	Cloudy
Malta	17	62	Fair
Melb'rne	24	75	Fair
Mexico C	24	75	Fair
Miami	24	75	Sunny
Milan	18	64	Sunny
Mombasa	33	91	Storms
Montreal	-6	19	Snow
Moscow	8	46	Fair
Mumbai	33	92	Haze
Munich	17	62	Sunny
N Orleans	16	61	Sunny
Nairobi	29	85	Fair
Naples	18	65	Sunny
New Delhi	25	77	Fair
New York	-1	28	Flurry
Nice	19	66	Sunny
Oporto	19	67	Fair
Oslo	11	52	Fair
Paris	17	62	Fair
Perth	31	88	Fair
Prague	17	62	Sunny
Reykjavik	3	38	Cloudy
Rhodes	12	54	Fair
Rio de J	31	87	Storms
Rome	18	64	Sunny
Shanghai	12	54	Fair
Singapore	33	91	Fair
St P'burg	8	46	Fair
Stockh'm	11	52	Sunny
Strasb'g	17	63	Sunny
Sydney	26	79	Rain
Tel Aviv	16	61	Showers
Tenerife	15	59	Fair
Tokyo	17	63	Rain
Toronto	-6	20	Fair
Tunis	17	62	Showers
Vancouv'r	11	51	Cloudy
Venice	17	62	Sunny
Vienna	16	61	Sunny
Warsaw	12	53	Sunny
Wash'ton	2	36	Windy
Well'ton	21	69	Sunny
Zurich	16	61	Sunny



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No 26,206 set by Philistine

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Across

1 Circuits broken by it, a retrospective in 3-D (7)
5 Musical greeting included in reservations (7)
10,27 Hector and Bob mixed with water (8)
11 Headgear fashionable to Africans (10)
12 Indiscrete xenophobia covers reactionary city (6)
13 Loves to sit together in romantic light to do this? (8)
14 "Feeling" in a laptop programme (9)
16 It's a tyranny of the flesh that describes him (5)
17 That's what you get from bad diets (2,3)
19 One's invaded some country or another (9)
23 Line from Pearl Jam covers the lot (8)
24 Players and posers can be preposterous (6)
26 Young 6 said to be ending life (10)
27 See 10
28 I, for one, having a record, chicken out (7)
29 Create an image in blue that is lacking definition (7)

Down

2 Sad expiry with a fever (7)
3 That is to say, to woo follows naturally (2,3)
4,22 Star fiddling with gift weapon, initially (2,5,6)
6 The same for an entry for 19 people, say (6)
7 Surface to back talk and disappear (9)
8 Bananas off one's shopping in here (7)
9 Therapist of the nose? Pay attention to include wise report about that (13)
15 Perhaps his topic includes a principle for reduced consumption of nuts (9)
18 Laura and Dick, oddly out for the count (7)
20 Bush having gone, returned (7)
21 Compiler's complexion charge (7)
22 See 4
25 One has an eye for a revolutionary path (5)

Solution No. 26,205

F	E	A	T	H	E	R	S	■	S	A	M	O	S	A
I	■	L	■	O	■	E	■	■	■	C	■	B	■	L
D	I	L	E	M	M	A	S	■	P	A	N	D	A	S
G	■	U	■	A	■	D	■	■	■	D	■	U	■	A
E	A	R	L	G	R	E	Y	■	S	E	C	R	E	T
T	■	E	■	E	■	R	■	D	■	M	■	A	■	I
■	■	■	■	■	A	S	P	I	D	I	S	T	R	A
E	■	P	■	O	■	H	■	S	■	C	■	E	■	N
G	I	R	L	F	R	I	D	A	Y	■	■	■	■	■
G	■	E	■	F	■	P	■	L	■	D	■	P	■	J
H	O	A	R	S	E	■	A	L	I	E	N	A	T	E
E	■	M	■	H	■	■	O	■	M	■	N	■	R	■
A	L	B	I	O	N	■	S	W	E	E	T	I	E	S
D	■	L	■	O	■	■	E	■	A	■	N	■	E	■
S	H	E	A	T	H	■	I	D	E	N	T	I	T	Y

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