

ASLEF

JOURNAL



JULY 2020

The magazine of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen



**Jim McMahon sets
out his vision for
Britain's railway**

**The train drivers'
union since 1880**

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MEMBERS and branches are the union and we are looking to how we operate in the medium term. I apologise if there is duplication but it is to achieve maximum results and feedback. In this *Journal* is a letter asking you to update your details – especially your current email address – which will be underpinned by a text with the same request and, perversely, an email. This will allow us to consider online branches and how they could be facilitated; naturally, separate guidelines will be provided to branch secretaries in due course. – Mick Whelan

GS Mick Whelan

Mixed messaging

THINGS are changing so rapidly during this pandemic I fear some I refer to may have moved on when you read them. One thing, though, is certain – people are still dying and new cases occurring; while we welcome the reduction we have a long way to go. The world-beating track and trace app has been scrapped, after £108 million, when others in Germany and South Korea could have been purchased and adapted. Relaxation of medical societal protection was based on its delivery but, as ever, this government over promises and under delivers.



‘PM over promises and under delivers’

Press conferences without the experts promoting a ‘new normal’ and getting the economy back makes the previously confused messaging even more mixed. It is right we look to the future, and the protection of jobs, and, hopefully, green investment to create a secure future for all, but not at the expense of more lives or risking all the good work that has got us this far.

We have supported the use of face coverings on public transport, and the wearing of masks by staff in public areas, and the positive enforcement of social distancing by signs, barriers, announcements and advertising. We are still at a point where services will increase and capacity be limited and I believe we need to reinforce the message especially as Cummingsgate has seen more people flouting the rules.

We have asked that all measures that have been agreed and put in place for safer covid operation are encompassed in all diagrams to prevent miscommunication or impact on safety; a few companies, despite having agreed the measures, are resisting. The gauge of the railway makes more than one in a cab impossible so we are trialling how this can most safely be achieved; there will be companies, who I would see as negligent in the extreme, seeking to get drivers to put themselves at risk, using economic blackmail. We will name and shame and deal with it industrially if necessary. Please do not confuse our working for the greater good with an acceptance that no action will be taken against bad actors now or in the future.

It was interesting to see the Prime Minister flounder under the marvellous campaign by Marcus Rashford for free school meals for starving children. Equality, dignity, and safety are not a choice but a right and, in the 21st century, we should be ashamed that the fight goes on in so many areas. We are proud to support Black Lives Matter. The question for trade unionists should always be not what have we done, but how much more do we need to do?

Finally, I want to thank all the branch secretaries, reps, officers, EC and staff who are going the extra yard for us all. Please be safe and well...

Yours fraternally
Mick Whelan, general secretary

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Staying safe as PM muddies the water

G S MICK Whelan, AGS Simon Weller, our executive committee, and district organisers, have been working hard with company council and local reps throughout the coronavirus crisis to ensure our members' health – and jobs – are protected.

Mick has been talking, every day, to the Department for Transport, Network Rail, the train and freight operating companies, other trade unions, and industry stakeholders. Our overriding concern has been to ensure that people – passengers as well as staff – are able to stay safe.

This has become more difficult, recently, with discussion about a relaxation of the two metre social distancing rule. And a suspicion that some businesses – and the government – are, privately if not publicly, prepared to accept a number of deaths each day, regarding them, in military terms, as 'collateral damage' as they get the tills of Britain jingling again.

'We have been reacting to the rapid developments within our industry, often on a



Mick: 'We have been reacting to rapid developments to provide guidance and protection to members'

daily basis, to provide guidance and protection to members carrying out their duties,' said Mick.

'We have also produced instructions on the operation and functions of ASLEF to ensure we continue to provide representation during these difficult times. Instructions and guidance have been issued as bulletins and placed on the ASLEF website.'

The latest EC guidance says: 'Social distancing and personal hygiene is an evolving, and sometimes complex, issue,

especially when we try to judge the delivery of an essential service with our members' welfare.

'If in doubt, negotiators are reminded that the principle for all agreements relating to social distancing is that contact with other people should be kept to an absolute minimum.

'If you are required to attend work, you are advised to take personal precautions on hygiene and social distancing in line with government advice. These should not preclude you from attending work unless these precautions cannot be met.'

Rab sees nae bits

Five years of loco-hauled Fife Circle services out of Motherwell came to an end on Friday 29 May. It fell to local ASLEF rep Robert Lang – Rab to his friends – to work that last train. Rab started with Direct Rail Services from ScotRail just as the Circles were starting and, within six months, they were a major part of his work. DRS has, over the last five years, covered two early morning and two evening peak services for ScotRail and, since covid-19, two late night key worker services out of Edinburgh round the Circle. On Friday 29 Rab worked 5K97 19.58



Motherwell ECS to Edinburgh arriving at 21.30 (1 early). He then worked 2K97 22.00 Edinburgh to Inverkeithing, again arriving 1 minute early, at 23.48. For the final leg of the journey Rab worked the empties back to Motherwell, 5K98, which was a 23.52 departure, arriving back into Motherwell at 01.00.

Kev Bell, DRS company council

Dante defined nine circles, but Rab worked the one out of Motherwell

Train Daddy back for 'mother of all jobs'

Andy Byford, who revels in the nickname Train Daddy, which he acquired in the US, has started as the new £355,000 a year commissioner of Transport for London. Byford, 55, began as a graduate trainee at London Underground in 1989, before moving onto the main line with Southeastern in 2003, and Southern in 2006. He was then chief operating officer at RailCorp in New South Wales, Australia; chief general manager of the Toronto Transit Commission in Canada; and, most recently, president of the New York City Transit Authority.

RMS – a gentle postal reminder

Due to the ongoing pandemic, head office is currently unable to send out letters reminding those in our Retired Members' Section, who pay annually by cheque, that your membership is up for renewal. So if you know your membership is due for renewal please post a cheque, made payable to ASLEF, to head office. An annual RMS subscription is set at just £15. Thanks!

QUOTE...

'There is now a path from special adviser to career psychopath.' – **David Cameron on Dominic Cummings in 2014**

...UNQUOTE

TWEETS OF THE MONTH

The #AllLivesMatter crowd are the very same people who are now saying we shouldn't be feeding the 200,000 kids in Britain who don't get enough to eat. Their commitment to all didn't last very long. #maketheUturn
Lucio Buffone @thisislucio

3 years since 72 people lost their lives and today we still have over 22,000 homes with flammable cladding in place. #Justice4Grenfell #saferHomes
Trevor Robinson @Trevorkymar84

Johnson isn't listening to #BlackLivesMatter. He's trying to wage a culture war.
@DavidLammy

Nigel Farage quits LBC radio show. I haven't been this sad since Dave Nice quit Fab FM. End of an era.
@SimonWeller

Owls don't go on dates when it's raining. It's too wet to woo.
Chris Heaton-Harris @chhcalling

QUOTE...

'A nation that doesn't make things cannot be sustainable.'
– **Lord Browne of Madingley, former chief executive of BP and president of the Royal Society of Engineering**

...UNQUOTE

Strike a pose vogue, vogue



Vogue cover photo by Jamie Hawkesworth

NARGUIS Horsford, a London Overground driver and member of St Pancras branch, has a new claim to fame. She's a *Vogue* cover star. Narguis is one of three key workers – a train driver, midwife, and supermarket assistant – who feature on the front of the July edition of the world famous fashion magazine.

'As our nation perseveres against covid-19,' writes commissioning editor Olivia Marks, 'we find ourselves leaning not on the powers that be, but on ordinary people, and their extraordinary strength and kindness. From NHS staff to shopkeepers,

teachers and train drivers, these are the frontline workers we're proud to call our own.'

Narguis, who has worked for Transport for London for 10 years, and driven London Overground trains for the past five, tells *Vogue* readers: 'I am based at a depot in Willesden Junction, north-west London. I drive two routes: Stratford to Richmond/Clapham Junction and Gospel Oak to Barking.'

'The night before work, I prepare my uniform, double check my schedule, and ensure I get a good night's sleep. I have to set my alarm pretty early to get into work. Sometimes it can be 1.30am, but

it gives me such a rewarding feeling.

'When I arrive, I book on, and read the notices for information that may affect my day, such as weather conditions, speed restrictions, or engineering works.

'Once I'm in the cab, I perform my checks. Once in service, depending on the length of the routes I am scheduled to work, I drive the train for approximately 3-4 hours before being relieved for my break. Then it's back out for 2-3 hours before the end of my shift. Every journey is different, and I always have to remain focused and be prepared to react to any situation or incident.'

Reflecting on the current pandemic, Narguis says: 'I am no hero, but I'm proud of being a train driver, and the essential role we are playing during the coronavirus crisis. Our services are vitally important to keep London moving through these unprecedented times, and maintaining safety, to ensure our key workers can get to where they need to be to provide the services that are required.'

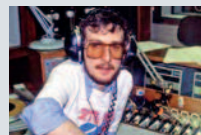
'We have seen a tremendous amount of community spirit, acts of kindness, and unity throughout this pandemic. People have been smiling more at me and I've received a few thank yous! One morning at Barking, as I was changing ends, a lady smiled at me and said: "Thank you, driver". I smiled and said, "You're welcome". I felt such a sense of pride!

Off the Rails



JOHN CRACE, *The Guardian's* Parliamentary sketch writer, has been waspy, witty, and wise – as per – puncturing the puff, bluff, and bluster of a pompous Prime Minister struggling to deal with the pandemic. And

it's good to know his columns have Downing Street reaching for the Rennies every morning. To wit: 'People have been making simple category errors with Boris. They have assumed Dominic Cummings' understudy has an intelligence and morality to compromise. Yet the evidence points to something more disturbing. That, beyond an ability to recite the odd Latin phrase, Boris is quite dim. Worse still, he is totally amoral. Boris hasn't demeaned himself, because there is nothing left to demean. But he has demeaned the UK by treating its citizens with contempt. And, across the country, Tory MPs and Tory voters are beginning to ask themselves one simple question. Ever get the feeling you've been had?'



DR BEECHING's cuts cast a long shadow over Britain's railways. The devastation his notorious report – made at the behest of corrupt Tory Transport Minister Ernest Marples – wreaked on this country is clear. All those places that lost a railway station – and there were 2,363 of them – still feel the pain. Eddie Fisher, who is pushing for the reopening of the line at Fleetwood, tells *The Observer*: 'I remember listening to the Steve Wright show on Radio 1. A caller came on and Wright hadn't heard of the town he came from, so he asked if it was a big place. And the way he defined "big" was "Does it have a train station"? If you live in a place, these things matter.'



FRANK DOBSON, who preceded Keir Starmer as MP for Holborn & St Pancras, which he held from 1979 to 2015, was an irrepressible voice, who enjoyed skewering Margaret Thatcher in the House of Commons, like this: 'In view of your announcement that you subscribe to Victorian values, will you tell us which you fancy best: the absence of a National Health Service, the absence of old age pensions, the reintroduction of the workhouse, or a long series of colonial wars?'



MATT HANCOCK has not had, as they say, a good war. He's being lined up by Downing Street to be the fall guy when the inevitable inquiry into why Britain was so slow to react to the coronavirus crisis meets to find a name to blame. Hancock, hacks have noticed, looks wearier every day. 'Yesterday he looked like a father having to supervise a six-year-old's birthday party in a soft play centre,' noted Michael Deacon in the *Daily Telegraph*. 'On a Sunday morning. With a hangover.'



FRANK GILES, urbane editor of the *Sunday Times* for two turbulent years, formed an unlikely friendship with that horny-handed son of toil Ernest Bevin when Giles was the Foreign Secretary's private secretary. 'This is it, Frank,' Bevin said to Giles as they once stood side by side at a urinal. 'The socialist dream – the means of production in the hands of the people.'

QUOTE...

'Black and Asian ethnic groups are up to twice as likely to die from covid-19.' – **David Lammy**, Shadow Secretary of State for Justice

...UNQUOTE

500 CLUB: Roger Jocelyn, with number 190, won the June draw, scooping the RMS prize money jackpot of £474.

Face to face

MICK Whelan welcomed the announcement by Grant Shapps, at the government's televised early evening briefing on Thursday 4 June, that face coverings would be compulsory on public transport in England from Monday 15 June.

The GS said: 'This is a sensible step by the Secretary of State for Transport. We have been working closely with the government to ensure that agreed increases in services on Britain's train, and Tube, network is done in a safe and controlled manner – to help spread the loading, and maintain social distancing – for the safety of passengers and staff.'

'The instruction to wear face coverings to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus will ease the concerns of people travelling, and working, on the transport network.'

'But, as well as wearing a face covering, it remains vitally important that we take other



Mick has backed the Transport Secretary's move to make face coverings compulsory

measures to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, such as washing your hands thoroughly and frequently, avoiding touching your face, and maintaining social distancing.'



Mick was interviewed about the move by reporter Tom Barton for *Good Morning Britain* on ITV on Friday 5 June and DO8 Finn Brennan was interviewed by Philip Chryssikos on LBC News UK on Thursday 4 June.

Finn told listeners: 'While we welcome this decision – it's something we have been calling for, for months – it's really too little, too late. The trouble with this government is it delays, prevaricates, and causes confusion.'

'Matt Hancock was arguing against face coverings in April. And now Grant Shapps makes them mandatory.'

Nearly reach the sky

MARTIN Samuel, chief sportswriter of the *Daily Mail*, was gloriously off-message, albeit online, and in print, with his reflections on the PM, his government, and lockdown.

'Well, quarantine didn't last long. Not much the government says does these days. Indeed, no sooner had it been announced that all visitors must self-isolate for 14 days after arrival than Boris Johnson performed his latest handbrake turn. That was his opening salvo on



Martin is, er, different class to right-wing Mailers such as Sarah Vine and Richard Littlejohn

Friday 29 May. 'Over a race at Silverstone, appropriately. It had obviously been pointed out that his new rules would spell

the end of this year's British grand prix, which would probably take place at Hockenheim, in Germany, instead.

'Not really the best look for a Prime Minister elected on a ticket of taking back control. Brexit Britain incapable, Germany to the rescue. Not the sunlit uplands of popular myth. So the Prime Minister did what he invariably does – sniffed the wind and changed his mind.'

Adding: 'Football has been consistently used as a distraction by mendacious

politicians. On 13 March, when Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta tested positive for coronavirus, the official death toll stood at 11 and football closed down. Yesterday, when the Premier League announced it would restart on 17 June, the death toll stood at 37,460. So, yes, a little inconsistent.'

Martin, 59, has always been a curious fit for the *Mail*. Although his columns are consistently good – his pieces are thoughtful and knowledgeable – he does not appear to share the prejudices of his Derry Street masters. But, as a West Ham fan, Martin, who worked for *The Times*, *News of the World*, and *Sunday People* before joining the *Mail*, is used to disappointment.

QUOTE...
'Campaign in poetry, govern in prose.' – Former New York governor Mario Cuomo
...UNQUOTE

WALTER – THE LABOUR WHIP WHO PUT THE SQUEEZE ON YOUNG JACK STRAW

The National Theatre Live's pandemic feed of the magnificent James Graham play *This House* brought back happy memories of Walter Harrison, long-serving MP for Wakefield, and the deputy chief whip who kept Harold Wilson and Jim Callaghan in power in the 1970s. When Jack Straw was a newbie, Harrison, who rarely took prisoners, grabbed him by the balls. 'What have I done?' squealed Straw. 'Nowt,' growled Harrison. 'But think what I'd do if you crossed me.'

BEEB BOWS TO BULLY BORIS PRESSURE

BBC journalists are furious that Emily Maitlis was censured by management for saying on *Newsnight* that the country could see that Dominic Cummings had broken lockdown rules – which he did – while political editor Laura Kuenssberg wasn't censured for tweeting comments from 'a Downing Street source' – Cummings – that he had 'not broken the rules'. The Dom, who briefs Kuenssberg personally, boasts he has her in his pocket.

PRIVATISATION FAILS – SO PROBATION SERVICE IS TO BE RENATIONALISED

The government is planning the full renationalisation of the Probation Service in England and Wales after the disastrous part-privatisation by Chris 'Failing' Grayling when he was Justice Secretary. The Ministry of Justice will 'put right a catastrophic mistake' in June next year.

Capital punishment

London is at risk from a deadly second wave of coronavirus infections. That's the warning from Tim Spector, Professor of Genetic Epidemiology at King's College, London, and one of the country's top experts in tracking diseases. There are about 800 new infections a day in the capital and the government's test and trace initiative will only help with a few of these. 'There is no way this is going to control any further outbreaks. You need to be doing lots of things together. We mustn't think this is going to be the solution to all our problems.'



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bag. Price £17.50 (inc p&p); email info@aslef.org.uk or visit our online shop at www.aslef.org.uk

Schools must be safe – we back the teachers

A SLEF called on the government to put back the reopening of schools in England until the safety of pupils and teachers is ensured.

GS Mick Whelan, speaking on Wednesday 27 May, as the government put pressure on local authorities, head teachers, and trade unions to ‘get up close and personal’ in the classroom again, said: ‘We believe the government’s decision to try to reopen schools on 1 June is dangerous and premature.’

Mick pointed out that the National Education Union has five tests for what needs to be in place before schools can safely reopen: much lower numbers of coronavirus cases; effective covid-19 testing; a national plan for social distancing; a whole school strategy; and

proper protection for the vulnerable.

‘Teachers and the NEU are the experts in this field; they know their jobs, their schools, their pupils, and the dangers. It’s vital that the government listens to what they have to say. That’s why we support the NEU’s demands that the government allows schools to reopen when – and only when – it is safe to do so. Safe for pupils, safe for teachers, and safe for ancillary staff.’

And Mick warned: ‘One death in our schools is one death too many and I fear the government, in its rush to force pupils back into the classroom, is putting the health and safety of children in danger.’

The GS also backed the People’s Assembly’s call to ‘stay away, stay at home, and save lives, to protect children, their loved ones, and all school staff.’



Mick: ‘One death in a school is one too many’

Righting the wrongs of Marples and Beeching

When rail travel really gets back on track, the routes brutally axed by Dr Richard Beeching in the 1960s should be revived, says Anthony Lambert.

Off the back of the controversial Beeching report in 1963 the government – led by Tory Transport Minister Ernest Marples, the boss of a road-building firm – ripped up one-third of Britain’s railway tracks and closed 2,363 stations, devastating the network, and putting 67,000 men and women out of work.

‘Some spectacularly scenic lines were among those axed by Beeching,’ says Lambert. ‘One thinks of the Callander & Oban

line over which a summer season Pullman observation car provided armchair views of Glen Ogle.

‘Or the Somerset & Dorset, whose bucolic landscapes were traversed by the Pines Express and excursion trains from northern towns and cities to the sands of Bournemouth and Poole.’

The historian, journalist and travel writer – author of *Lost Railway Journeys from Around the World*; *Britain’s Railways in Wartime*; and *Lambert’s Railway Miscellany* – frankly admits that ‘the lines that might be reopened will not be chosen for their aesthetic appeal but some would certainly attract passengers purely



The Glen Ogle viaduct (above) on one of the railway lines Anthony Lambert (right) ‘would love to see reopened’

for the landscapes.’

These are the 10 routes he chose: Okehampton-Tavistock-Bere Alston; March-Wisbech; Matlock-Buxton; Ashington Blyth & Tyne; Poulton-le-Fylde to Fleetwood; Caernarfon-Bangor; Dumfries-Stranraer; Ilfracombe-Barnstaple; Penrith-Keswick; and the Borders Railway extension from Tweedbank to Carlisle.

Beeching was a villain, he says, because he ‘accepted Marples’ prescription for unremunerative railways – closure – without a rigorous examination of their supposed costs or any attempt to see how new technology and simplified operation could reduce them.

‘The other cardinal sin was his lack of prescience by failing to preserve the linear integrity of the



track bed, at least for the more marginal closures. Reopening of many a line has been made impossible by planning permission for construction on the track bed and by demolition of viaducts, sometimes as an exercise for the army.’

QUOTE...

‘The government needs to know the temperature out there if public transport is ever going to be seen as safe again.’ – **Anthony Smith**, chief executive, Transport Focus

...UNQUOTE

POSTIE BOSS BANKS £1 MILLION FOR FAILURE

Royal Mail CEO Rico Back has been sent packing – with a cool £1 million payoff – after criticism for running the company from his penthouse suite in Switzerland while postal workers braved the dangers of the coronavirus to deliver the mail in Britain. Back was forced out through the letterbox after months of industrial unrest and a collapse in the company’s share price.

DFT ‘BLINDSIDED BY CONTACT WITH REALITY’

The HS2 rail project is ‘badly off course’ and it is unclear if the firm building the line has the necessary ‘skills and capability’, according to a damning report by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, which also accused the Department for Transport of deliberately withholding information about spiralling costs.

CLEANERS COULD BE STATIONED ON TRAINS

Cleaners armed with hand sanitisers and anti-viral sprays could be permanently stationed on board passenger services to give commuters the confidence that carriages are safe. TOCs are suggesting they be deployed to clean ‘touch points’ such as buttons, handles and rails.



Time for a brew? This red ASLEF mug is just the job for tea or coffee in the mess room or at home. £3.50 (inc p&p); email info@aslef.org.uk or visit our online shop at www.aslef.org.uk

Now I'm a union man (and woman)

MEMBERSHIP of trade unions has risen over the last 12 months by 91,000 and is now up to 6,440,000. That's the third successive year that numbers have gone up and means that union membership has increased by 200,000 since 2017.

'This is really good news,' said TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady. 'There are now more women carrying a union card in the UK

than at any time since 1995.'

The proportion of workers covered by union collective agreements also increased and these workers are, naturally, better paid than workers who are not covered by such trade union-negotiated agreements.

'This increase in membership confirms evidence from several affiliate unions, particularly those representing workers on the



TUC DGS Paul Nowak addressing AAD in Leeds last year and (front row, fifth from left) standing shoulder to shoulder with ASLEF delegates in front of our new national banner in Trevelyan Square



frontline of the fight against the coronavirus, of a surge in membership since the start of the pandemic' said TUC deputy general secretary Paul

Nowak. 'These are very encouraging figures for a movement that, if it were ever in doubt, has restated its importance and relevance over the

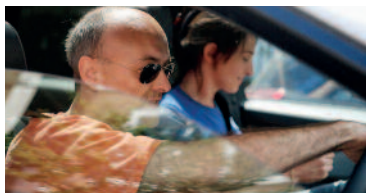
last few months. 'Trade unions have been at the forefront in protecting jobs and livelihoods by persuading the government to

introduce the job protection scheme and are leading the way in making sure that workers return to safe workplaces.'

TripAdvisor suspends Barnard Castle reviews

TripAdvisor suspended its reviews for Barnard Castle in Northumberland after the page was flooded with spoof recommendations mocking Dominic Cummings's claim that he, er, drove all the way from his parents' farm in Durham – a 60 mile round trip – to, ahem, test his eyesight.

No one believed his – literally – incredible excuse for his day out at the famously beautiful tourist hot spot, and it provoked a flood of spoof reviews on the



I'll drive all night just to buy you some shoes

website.

'Had a lovely day with the family on 12 April,' wrote Big Dominic C. 'Nice and peaceful, didn't see many people around. Can't think why. But think I got away with it.' While Soul Jambo smirked: 'Great place for a test drive if you're feeling ill. Lovely place to take the wife and son to check your eyesight.'

TripAdvisor, which

is, ironically, notorious for refusing to take down fake

reviews, posted this message: 'Due to a recent event that has attracted attention and caused an influx of submissions, we have suspended publishing new reviews for this listing.'



SPECS APPEAL: One of many spoof ads on social media after Dominic Cummings offered an implausible explanation, in the Downing Street rose garden, for enjoying a day out at Barnard Castle.

SHAPPS SELF-ISOLATES ON AIR BRIDGE

Grant Shapps, the Secretary of State for Transport, was left isolated in cabinet after Number 10, the Home Office, and the Foreign Office all branded his exciting new 'air bridge' idea as 'completely unworkable'.

INVEST IN RAIL FOR RECOVERY

Sir John Armitt, chair of the National Infrastructure Commission, has called on the government to invest, and not cut public expenditure, because 'connecting the regions by road, rail, and fibre is the first step on the journey to a sustainable recovery'. He said: 'More than half of the UK's population live in its 62 cities, with the six largest urban centres accounting for 31% of jobs. That is why we need transformative transport improvements in our towns and cities.' He wants an integrated rail plan, a range of rail upgrades, and new lines 'to make inter-urban transport a more practical choice for business and leisure'.

The tech that fails

Rail workers should not rely on technology to see if bags and clothing are trapped in automatic doors before trains leave the platform. That's the conclusion of the Rail Accident Investigation Branch annual report.

Investigators highlighted an incident in 2018 in which a 78-year-old woman was dragged into a tunnel at Notting Hill Gate after her bag became trapped in a Tube train door. She was pulled 246ft along the track, leaving her with multiple bone fractures.

The RAIB says London Underground should review emergency stop facilities on platforms. It is also calling for improved door systems to detect small objects, and enhanced training for Tube train operators.

'A recurrent theme in so many of our investigations is the mistaken assumption that door control systems will always detect the presence of an object. It is disappointing that we continue to encounter train dispatchers who believed that door safety systems would always prevent the train from moving if an object became trapped in the closed doors.' And in a shot across the bows of TfL management it adds: 'Worryingly, this misconception is shared by more senior members of staff.'

The RAIB, since it was set up in 2005, has investigated 16 incidents in which systems sold as 'hi-tech' and 'failsafe' have failed to detect objects trapped in the closed and locked doors of a departing train or tram.

QUOTE...

'Ever get the feeling you've been cheated? It emerges the rules are optional for the Prime Minister's friends'

– **Leader comment, The Guardian**
...UNQUOTE



ASLEF's young members are driving the future. If you're 35 or under, wear our badge with pride for just £3 (inc p&p); email

info@aslef.org.uk or visit our online shop at www.aslef.org.uk

The ASLEF RMS 500 Club

Colleagues

The 500 Club is a fundraising venture for ASLEF's Retired Members' Section.

Conditions of Membership: Only retired and working members of ASLEF, including district councils and branches, plus permanent staff employed by ASLEF, can make an application to join the RMS 500 Club. The application form and standing order form can only be completed and submitted by the ASLEF member, or staff member.

Numbers in the draw cost £4 each per month. To begin making payments into club funds, all you have to do is complete the standing order form and return it to your bank. Alternatively, you can pay by cheque a year in advance; the cheque should be made payable to **ASLEF RMS 500 Club**. Payments need to reach the club account by 1st of every month and the draw takes place on 12th of every month – with the winning number, name, and prize printed on page 5 of the *ASLEF Journal*. Once you have arranged your method of payment **just complete the form and return it to Peter J Smith, Treasurer, RMS 500 Club, 6 Devonia Gardens, London, N18 1AF.**

The Retired Members' Section committee would like to thank you for your support and wish you luck in the draw!

Yours fraternally, Peter J Smith, treasurer, ASLEF Retired Members' Section 500 Club

ASLEF RMS 500 Club application form

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

email.....

Each number costs £4. You can purchase as many numbers as you like. I confirm that I wish to purchase _____ numbers as part of the 500 Club.

(A) I have set up my standing order (£48 per annum or £4 per month)

(B) I enclose a cheque for advance payment (£48 per annum).

Delete (A) or (B) accordingly.

Signed.....

Date.....

Please return this coupon to:
**Peter Smith, Treasurer, RMS 500 Club,
 6 Devonia Gardens, London, N18 1AF
 and the standing order mandate
 (right) to your bank (or via your
 internet bank)**

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To _____ Bank

Address _____

BANK	BRANCH TITLE (NOT ADDRESS)	SORTING CODE NO.
Unity Trust Bank	Birmingham	60-83-01

BENEFICIARY'S NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER
ASLEF RMS 500 CLUB ACCOUNT	2 0 2 0 1 1 9 3

AMOUNT IN FIGURES	AMOUNT IN WORDS
£	

DATE AND AMOUNT OF FIRST PAYMENT	DUE DATE AND FREQUENCY
£ and thereafter every	1 ST OF EVERY MONTH

DATE AND AMOUNT OF LAST PAYMENT	
£	

*Until Quoting the reference

*Until you receive further notice from me/ us in writing and debit my/ our account accordingly

Please cancel any previous standing order or direct debit in favour of the beneficiary named above

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

ACCOUNT TO BE DEBITED	ACCOUNT NUMBER

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Note: The Bank will not undertake to:

- (i) make any reference to Value Added Tax or other indeterminate element
- (ii) advise payer's address to beneficiary
- (iii) advise beneficiary of inability to pay
- (iv) request beneficiary's banker to advise beneficiary of receipt

* Delete if not applicable

If the amounts of the periodic payments vary, they should be incorporated in a schedule overleaf

Never let a good crisis go to waste



Clapping for carers won't help them pay the bills. GREGOR GALL, an affiliate research associate at the University of Glasgow, and editor of the *Scottish Left Review*, looks back at some economic crises in our past to see what this government might have in mind for us

IN AN economic crisis, the poor suffer while the rich are able to protect themselves from the effects of that economic crisis. 'Twas ever thus'. Not the words of an eminent philosopher but the sum of historical fact – from my own pen (well, keyboard).

But if you want some suitable quotes from philosophers and luminaries, these come to mind: 'Poverty is the worst form of violence'; 'Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn't commit'; 'As long as money is respected, the poor will be disrespected'; and 'The best test of a nation's righteousness is how it treats the poor'. They all ring true for the continued coronavirus crisis through which we are living.

LASTING EFFECTS OF COVID-19 CRISIS

In coming to terms with the highest number of deaths for any European country, and the lack of PPE, testing, and the like, attention has rightly been focused on the immediate health and safety issues. In amongst all this, the poorest have the highest death rate, due to underlying health problems from existing poverty or the work that they do making it impossible for them to social distance properly or work from home.

The demand for food banks has soared, unemployment has rocketed by more than a million to 2.1m, and applications for universal credit have gone through the roof. These are all signs of how the poor are being affected and how more people are being made poor.

But with the relaxation of the lockdown, and the resumption of some normal patterns of working, attention is turning to thinking more deeply about dealing with the lasting effects of the coronavirus crisis. Unfortunately, most of this will be about returning to some kind of capitalist normality – getting the economy back on its feet, re-opening the supply lines, starting international trade again, and so on. Much less attention will be paid to those who are suffering and those who will suffer in the future.

If they are not already unemployed, many of the 8.4 million have the ending of the job retention scheme in October to which to look forward and consequent redundancy. Those still in employment, whether in the public or private sectors, can see themselves getting their unjust desserts with the coming wave of pay freezes. Clapping for carers will not pay any bills here.

The economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic will disproportionately affect the poorest people in Britain. Illustration: Cécile Gariépy

And, despite the predictable, and opportunistic, protestations to the contrary, no Tory government will want to go into a future general election carrying a £300bn public debt, equating to 110% of GDP.

Austerity afresh will return with a vengeance. Again, whole swathes of our public services – bar, probably, the NHS – will feel the pain as funding levels are cut ever nearer the bone. Even if some of the rich lost some of their wealth in the coronavirus crisis, they are economically equipped to ride it out and then make hay when the capitalist sun comes out to shine again.

MAC: YOU'VE NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD

While the onset of recessions, and recessions turning into depressions, can have many different sources, ranging from the fall in the value of silver (in the 1870s and 1880s) to the collapse of stock prices (in the 1930s), the hiking of oil prices (in the 1970s) and unregulated financial loans (2008), there is one constant in our economic history.

The poor get poorer and the number of people in poverty rises as a result of each economic crisis.

The only time in living memory when this did not happen was during the long economic boom from the 1950s to the 1970s, when Prime Minister Harold Macmillan famously announced: 'Most of our people have never had it so good.'

He might have been a Tory toff, but he was right. What he neglected to say was that the country was cashing in on the hard work and success of the great reforming Labour governments of 1945-50 and 1950-51.

And he was a One Nation Conservative who – unlike Margaret Thatcher and John Major 25 years later – did not try to roll back the frontiers of the state.

It was the enormous public investment of the immediate post-war years, together with the public ownership of some of the central pillars of the means of production, that meant he could tell people we'd never had it so good.



Bad though economic crises are for the poor, there is possibly yet worse to come. Crises are used by the rich as opportunities to further strengthen their interests. Karl Marx, in the middle of the 19th century, showed that economic crises lead to a concentration and centralisation of capital.

By this, in an almost Darwinian way, he meant that those companies remaining in business buy up weaker competitors and take over the markets of those that have folded. The outcome is that capitalism, after a recession, is made up of fewer but bigger companies, that are consequently more able to exert more power in our society.

A more recent version of this comes from Naomi Klein. In *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, she argues that the neo-liberal version of capitalism under which we live is more than capable of exploiting a national crisis to further establish controversial and questionable policies as citizens are too distracted (emotionally and physically) to engage and develop an adequate response, and resist effectively. This was quite prescient – the book was published in 2007 a short while before the 2008-2009 global financial crash.

THE RETURN OF THE FIVE EVILS

Neo-liberals will use the post-pandemic period as an opportunity to call for more marketisation and privatisation – diminishing the public sector and the role of the welfare state in particular – and will try to free capital and companies from as many rules and regulations as possible.

It's not hard to see what this will mean for the poor. It will mean less protection from the market and the whims of the rich and the interests of the powerful. It will mean the return of the 'five evils' – want, disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness – the existence of which gave rise to the creation of the modern welfare state after the Second World War when Clement Attlee's Labour government was able to use a crisis to take our country in a rather different direction.

Rail crash warning – a mountain train's coming down the track



DOB FINN BRENNAN, ASLEF's organiser on London Underground, reveals the Tube train load of problems heading down the track towards us dispatched by an aggressive Transport for London management acting under pressure from the Tory government



C OVID-19 has had a drastic effect on the finances of the entire travel industry. But there is a massive disparity in the treatment of privately-run franchises and the publicly-owned Transport for London. While privately-run train companies were, effectively, handed a blank cheque, with all the revenue and cost risks being transferred to the government, TfL was forced to beg ministers for a humiliating handout that was only granted when the combine was on the brink of bankruptcy.

Even before the pandemic, TfL finances were under huge pressure. The ending of the operational grant, cost overruns and delays on Crossrail, a fares freeze, and softening customer demand meant that more budget cuts were inevitable.

A POLITICAL PUNISHMENT BEATING

There has already been a huge programme of savings; more than £1 billion has been cut from operational costs in the last few years and thousands of jobs have gone under the 'TfL transformation' programme. Major projects like the sub-surface upgrade and the Northern line extension were 'de-scoped', meaning fewer potential long-term benefits, while others, like extra trains for the Jubilee and Northern lines, and the Croxley extension to the Metropolitan line, were cancelled.

But, instead of recognising the vital role that TfL and its staff have played, by keeping essential services running throughout the pandemic, and acknowledging that at least 42 TfL workers have died during the crisis, this Tory government simply saw an opportunity to administer a political punishment beating to a Labour Mayor and attack a unionised workforce that Boris Johnson was unable to defeat during his stint at City Hall.

After dragging out talks for weeks, an interim settlement was only agreed when TfL made public the fact that it would have to issue a Section 144 notice, imposing immediate spending restrictions and cutting services. This settlement – a loan of £505 million and £1.1 billion in grants – is designed to keep services operating until September while a long term package is agreed.

Even this interim package came with strings attached. TfL has to provide the

government with monthly updates on cash flow and staff attendance levels; there will be two DfT appointments to the TfL board; free travel for children and peak time concessions for Freedom Pass holders have been scrapped; and congestion charges extended. There is to be a complete review of TfL structures and finances. But the Mayor will be left with political responsibility – and the blame when things go wrong – but without effective control of an organisation of which he is head.

Projections for the future are dire. Passenger numbers and revenue will not be returning to pre-covid-19 levels. The worst recession on record, the collapse in tourism and leisure travel, and an increase in homeworking mean a multi-billion pound gap in the TfL business plan. Only a government funding package can avoid large-scale redundancies and big cuts to services.

When Boris Johnson became Mayor of London one of his first acts was to cut the step-free access programme started by Ken Livingstone that made the Tube more accessible to the disabled and less mobile. The restarted programme looks set to be one of the first targets of a new round of Tory cuts.

LOW-HANGING FRUIT'S BEEN PICKED

There are no easy options to cut expenditure. All the 'low hanging fruit' has long since been harvested. And cuts to future capital expenditure doesn't just affect passengers in London. TfL spends £6 billion a year through its supply chain, money that creates and sustains jobs across the UK. Any delay to the introduction of new trains on the Piccadilly line may mean inconvenience for passengers at Cockfosters but will also mean hundreds of skilled jobs lost in east Yorkshire where the trains are due to be designed and built.

TfL's plans for expanding and modernising public transport in London were based on projections of the city's population increasing to more than 10 million by 2030. But the combined effects of Brexit and the pandemic could mean the capital's population falls rather than grows. Between 1941 and 1992 it lost two million people. Without the investment needed to make the city a decent and attractive place to live and work there could be a similar decline in the coming decades. High

TfL is set to use the coronavirus crisis as an excuse to come after your t&cs, our working agreements, and your pension

quality public transport is essential. The alternative is a spiral of decline; more cars, more pollution, deteriorating public spaces.

But the cuts will not just be to capital expenditure and future projects; there will be big cuts to operational expenditure, too.

Already Night Tube has been cancelled for the rest of this financial year and there is no guarantee it will return. Although extremely expensive to TfL, at its launch we were told that Night Tube would 'play a vital role in opening up London's night time economy, supporting almost 2,000 permanent jobs, and boosting the economy by £360m'. Are those jobs, and that boost to the economy, no longer needed? Management are drawing up plans now. Reductions in services are a real possibility but so, too, is a concentrated attack on our members' terms and conditions, working agreements, and pensions.

Employers like BA have used the pandemic as an opportunity to force through changes they have long wanted. I have absolutely no doubt that London Underground management would like to do the same. Already they have ignored our objections and the agreed machinery of negotiation to force through duty schedules and to dock pay from members who raised health and safety concerns.

ATTACK ON OUR TERMS & CONDITIONS

ASLEF reps have worked hard and long to achieve a reasonable standard of living, and a decent retirement, for our members and we have no intention of letting that slip away. We will always be prepared to negotiate, but we cannot accept detrimental changes being imposed.

In the early days of the pandemic, public transport workers were called heroes for our role in keeping vital services moving. As we prepare to protect our living standards, we will doubtless be called 'militants', 'wreckers', and worse.

Being prepared to fight, to make sacrifices, and to be attacked, is the price we have to pay to defend our working conditions and our families' living standards.

TIME TO INVEST IN B



Exclusive: Jim McMahon was appointed as the new Shadow Secretary of State for Transport by Keir Starmer in April. Here, in his first major interview since he joined the shadow cabinet, Jim tells KEITH RICHMOND about his plans for Britain's rail network

JIM McMAHON is, in some ways, an unusual politician. Many Members of Parliament, on both sides of the House of Commons, are middle-class, have been university-educated, often with a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Oxford, and have either worked for a think tank or as a special adviser to an MP.

Nothing wrong with that, of course. But, as Joe Fortune, general secretary of the Co-operative Party, and a friend of Jim's, points out, the new Shadow Transport Secretary ticks none of those boxes.

Jim is working-class, he left school at 16, and he had a series of real jobs – my words, not his – before he was elected to serve the constituents of Oldham West & Royton in 2015.

I'M KEEN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND BUILD ON OUR MANIFESTO POSITION

At a time when – and in a toxic twittersphere where – so many of our leaders are loud and aggressive, making policy on the hoof, apt to over-promise and then under-deliver, it is refreshing that Jim is, as Joe says, 'quiet, and thoughtful, with a really impressive track record in local government for delivering for people when and where it really matters.'

Shortly after Keir Starmer was elected Labour Party leader in April he appointed Jim to the transport portfolio, moving Andy McDonald after four years to become Shadow Secretary of State for Employment Rights.

'Personally, having been a councillor for 13 years, and Shadow Local Government Minister, I was looking for a new challenge,' says Jim. 'It was exciting to be asked to do something I care about, and feel I can make a difference to.'

Transport runs through his blood – his grandfather worked on the railway as a porter at Mayfield and his father, William, was a lorry driver – and he has a longstanding political interest in the subject, serving as transport lead on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority while leader of Oldham council.

Now it is not unknown for MPs to roll their eyes and sigh when people bring up problems with buses and trams and trains at constituency surgeries but Jim is passionate about the Metrolink in his constituency and a quick look at *Hansard* shows how often he has highlighted



The Shadow Transport Secretary tweets @JimfromOldham although he was born six miles down the A62 at Miles Platting in Greater Manchester. Local rivalries still matter to many in the ancient county of Lancashire... Photos: Andrew Wiard

the difficulties caused by cuts in bus services around the country.

He cares about public transport and understands, as Tip O'Neill, long-serving Speaker of the US House of Representatives, famously said, 'All politics is local.'

'In this role I have a chance to help drive HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse,' says Jim, without prompting. 'What I'm keen to do is to make a difference and build on our manifesto position.'

Ah, yes, the Labour manifesto. Some in the party – and the wider labour movement – wonder, and worry, if our new leader, with his new shadow cabinet, will row back on some of the popular promises made in the last general election manifesto.

And what of the detailed plan for Britain's railways – the result of a year's hard work, into which ASLEF had significant input – published by Andy McDonald, then Shadow Transport Secretary, at the beginning of April, which was, effectively, the white paper that Labour would have brought before Parliament had the party won the general election in December?

WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS 2024

As reported in the *Journal* in May, its proposals included a unified railway, with all parts working efficiently together, in not-for-profit public ownership; a guiding mind for the whole railway with simpler, better value, fares; and a railway with long-term funding horizons and steady

long-term public investment.

'*GB Rail* – Andy's document – is sat on my desk now,' says Jim. 'We are working towards a Labour government in 2024, when we will be in a different place, with the government adopting the Williams review, and rail concessions will slightly change the landscape, but the principle is maintained, and the manifesto position has not changed. We have a clear way of getting there and an investment plan to support it.'

But there is always a suspicion, when a minister or shadow minister is moved, that some, or all, of his or her plans, pledges and promises will leave the building in a black bin bag at the same time.

'Will the policy on rail ownership get unpicked? Answer: No.' Well, that is unequivocal.

AUSTERITY HOLLOWED OUR ECONOMY

He is painfully aware of the way money leaks out of our railway – 'to other nations' state rail companies,' he notes dryly – in the form of the profits and dividends the privatised train and freight operating companies leech from the UK rail network.

He wants to plan ahead, with a strategy for a 'single transport network across England,' underlining the importance of 'democratic accountability,' and making it clear 'who holds the ring.' He criticises the 'fragmented' nature of the network at the moment, and condemns the way, with Northern, that an inept government

BRITAIN

course, investing in people in work, which may sound counter-intuitive, but instead of paying people for failure, we were paying people for success, recognising the contribution they were making, and helping them move to a better-paid job, at the same time freeing up an entry-level job for someone else at the warehouse.'

It's not a template, exactly, but an idea he would like to see work elsewhere. Because work – and what it means – is important to him.

Jim joined the party 'because the Labour Party is the party of working people. It's part of my identity' and he is clear how work plays a big part in people's sense of self-worth, and that Labour needs to re-connect with those working people who turned away from the party at the last general election.

'We need to meet working people where they are. Their individual circumstances have not got better. They have been ignored, when we were losing industries, and lower-paid, lower-skilled jobs don't give people a sense of worth and purpose.

STEEL WAS LEFT TO GO TO THE DOGS

'The work ethic is strong among working people – it's not just about where you work and what you do, it's part of who you are, part of your identity, and that's been stripped away from many communities.'

He wants Labour to talk about a common

purpose, to bring people together, rather than, like the Tories, set one group against another, and plot a clear path to the future. 'Covid-19 has revealed just how weak our underlying economy is. Take steel – a really important foundation industry that was left to go to the dogs – we need to invest in our foundation industries as we need to invest in our railway.'

Family is important, too. Jim and his partner Charlene, who works in the NHS, have two sons – Jack, 18, and Harry, 11 – and he understands how losing your job, and the money you earned, affects family life. 'You can't enjoy family life if you're worried about the knock on the door.'

PEOPLE VOTED TO TAKE BACK CONTROL FOR A BETTER, NOT A WORSE, FUTURE

Brexit, he says, has been settled. 'We are leaving the EU when transition ends in December and there are numerous deals they need to get in place. But people voted to take back control, not for a worse future, they wanted a better future. A growing economy, not an attack on workers' rights, and a race to the bottom.'

That's why he wants to see a Labour government in 2024 which, with its interventions, 'will fill the gap, help people put sufficient food on the table, and live a great life. We need to change the structure of the economy and let working people share in the wealth they are creating.'

sat on its hands and ineffectually muttered, 'the operator needs to improve.'

He is also aware that Britain's railway badly needs the proper investment it hasn't had since privatisation. 'Whatever the landscape, there has to be a shift, and there has to be significant investment.'

Really? After the economic problems caused by the coronavirus crisis?

'The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, has found the magic money tree,' Jim says dryly. 'We need to find the same determination to fund the railway, and the recovery from covid, as we found to fund our way through the pandemic.'

Reflecting on the mistakes made by the coalition government led by David Cameron, Nick Clegg, and George Osborne from 2010 to 2015, and the Conservative governments of David Cameron and George Osborne, and Teresa May and Philip Hammond, from 2015 to 2019, Jim knows that only by investing – rather than cutting – public expenditure will the UK be able to recover from the covid-19 crisis.

'Austerity hollowed out the economy,' he says. 'The question is not, can we afford to invest? The question is, can we afford not to invest?'

'The structural inequalities in this country can only be addressed if we invest in transport. And we know we will get a return, in economic growth, if we do invest.

HS 2 IS NOT ABOUT A FAST TRACK BUT ABOUT FREEING UP RAIL CAPACITY

'Now is not the time to roll back on capital investment, it's the time to bring forward the investment, in projects like the Northern Powerhouse, and rail electrification should be accelerated. Transport provides opportunities to connect people with greater opportunities. That's more of an argument today than ever before.'

He also stands four-square behind HS2. 'I share the frustration – over the management of the cost envelope, that makes the project vulnerable to being cancelled – but HS2 is not about a fast track, but about freeing up capacity on the rail network, getting freight off the road and onto rail, moving goods around the country in a cleaner, clearer way, and about connectivity, connecting the different parts of our country.'

'We should be building from Manchester and Leeds and working our way down as well as working our way up. And why aren't we carrying on up to Scotland?'

When he was council leader in Oldham, Jim launched a warehouse to wheels project in the borough. 'The wage differential between a warehouse operative on £18,000 and a truck driver on £25,000 was £7,000 and the scheme offered people a chance to upskill and earn more money. The council paid for your HGV driving



FACT FILE



- **JIM McMAHON** was born at Miles Platting, Greater Manchester, in 1980 and educated at state schools in Cheetham Hill and Middleton.
- He left school at 16 to become an apprentice technician at Manchester University, before switching to local government, first as a regeneration officer, then a town centre manager.
- Jim was elected, as a councillor for Failsworth East, to Oldham metropolitan borough council in 2003. He became Labour group leader in 2008 and, when Labour took back control from the Liberal Democrats in 2011, council leader.
- That gave him a seat on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, where he served as transport lead.
- He was elected to the Labour Party's NEC in 2014, representing local councillors, and was awarded an OBE in 2015 for services to the community in Oldham.
- Jim was selected to fight the seat of Oldham West & Royton as Labour & Co-operative Party candidate in a by-election following the death of Michael Meacher in 2015. Jim won the seat with 17,209 votes, well ahead of UKIP, in second place, and increased Labour's share of the vote to 62.1%.
- He was Parliamentary Private Secretary to Labour's deputy leader, Tom Watson, before Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn appointed him Shadow Minister for Local Government and Devolution in 2016.
- Jim was returned to Westminster at the general election in June 2017, polling 29,846 votes, 65.2% of the votes cast, a long way ahead of the Conservatives in second place.
- And he held the seat at the general election in December 2019 with another handsome majority.

A walk you should take



ED D'BELL, Black & Minority Ethnic Representatives' Committee member for District 1, reflects on Grenfell three years on

ON 14 June 2017, a fire broke out in the 24-storey Grenfell Tower block of flats in North Kensington, West London, which caused 72 deaths. Those deaths were preventable. But failures inside and outside government ultimately contributed to the deaths of all those men, women, and children.

In the aftermath of the tragedy, several groups were formed, including the Justice4Grenfell campaign, to support the survivors, their bereaved families, and the local community.

With the help of Yvette Williams and Judy Bolton, Justice4Grenfell grew from an organization, in the first few days, giving

immediate help to those directly affected, to starting a silent walk on 19 June 2017 to bring the community together. The first silent walk, in memory of those who lost their lives, drew thousands of people, not only from the local but the national community. Silent walks have taken place on the 14th day of every month ever since.

Previous anniversaries have been marked with an interfaith service but, this year, due to covid-19, events were held in a virtual format.

It's no surprise that trade unions have been supporters of J4G, especially the FBU, as their members were the first to respond to Grenfell. ASLEF also supports J4G, and we



Marching in memory of those who died at Grenfell



have been actively raising donations, joining in the walks, and helping to highlight a cause that should not be silenced, to bring some solace to the families of the bereaved. During the walk you stop to remember, as each name is read out, a poignant moment that really hits home.

Keeping what happened at Grenfell in the public eye is of paramount importance. It is vital to bring those who were at fault, directly and indirectly, to justice to prevent such a disaster happening to anyone else.

● For further information go to justice4grenfell.org



QUOTE...

'We don't need a race review. We need action.'

David Lammy, Labour MP for Tottenham and Shadow Justice Secretary

...UNQUOTE

Remember the dead and act for the living

Three years since 72 people died in the Grenfell Tower tragedy, 23,000 households in Britain are still living in homes that are flammable. That is an horrific period of time to leave people in dangerous homes, especially as we have been living in lockdown. Please put pressure on the government to take responsibility for removing flammable cladding as soon as possible.

Yvette Williams, Justice4Grenfell

A minute's silence



FLOYD DOYLE, chair, ASLEF's Black & Minority Ethnic Representatives' Committee, reports on their first Zoom meeting on Thursday 4 June

PRESENT at our first Zoom meeting were Ed D'Bell (D1); Roger Galloway-Smith (D3); San Senik (D4); Floyd Doyle (D5); Peter Acheampong (D7); and Trevor Robinson (D8). Apologies were received from Paul Patmore (D2). An election is needed in D6. Also attending were GS Mick Whelan; equalities adviser Lee James; and equalities assistant Craig Barker.

We started with a minute's silence to mark the murder of George Floyd.

The GS updated us on work the union is undertaking on covid-19 and was asked how BAME members stood as we're almost twice as likely to die from the coronavirus as our white colleagues. Could we refuse to work under those conditions? Mick said we had to take every case individually. The issue has been raised with the ORR, DfT, and sister unions to raise with employers.

He also talked about the Black Lives Matter movement and was fully supportive of the

Justice4Grenfell campaign being shared on ASLEF's social media pages.

Lee James, Trevor Robinson, and DO8 Finn Brennan are taking part with the Labour Party looking into BAME deaths, risk assessments, and disproportionate fines for BAME people during lockdown.

We discussed the Immigration Act and the media focus on NHS workers. The committee agreed to oppose this unfair Act and contact our ASLEF political adviser to speak to supportive MPs to oppose the Act.

Our Black History Month event, due to be held in October, is now under review because of the current coronavirus restrictions on group gatherings. We will make a final decision in the coming months.

San Senik is helping to set up a campaign group about Turkey and its treatment of political opponents and the committee will be putting out a future AAD motion on the topic.

Craig Barker told us about a branch equality rep survey and training opportunities.

This year, 2020, marks the 20th year of the ASLEF committees and, as the only original individuals from inception, Floyd Doyle and Susan Greenwell may be asked to do a video interview to be launched at a joint meeting.

George Floyd

GS Mick Whelan says: 'The death of George Floyd, an unarmed, innocent, black man, at the hands of a white police officer, Derek Chauvin, on the streets of Minneapolis, was both horrific and disturbing. What it wasn't was unusual. People in the US, stopped by police while going about their lawful business, dryly mutter that their only crime is "driving while black".'

'But, here, how do we treat black and minority ethnic citizens? We live in the shadow of Windrush, Grenfell, and police stop and search. A list that shames Britain. But, deeper than that, we know that BAME men and women, young and old, are at a disadvantage in our education system, suffer disproportionately from mental health issues, are disproportionately sent to prison, and suffer a disproportionate number of deaths from covid-19.'

ASLEF

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

STATEMENT TO MEMBERS ISSUED IN CONNECTION WITH THE UNION'S ANNUAL RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2019 AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 32A OF TRADE UNION AND LABOUR RELATIONS (CONSOLIDATION) ACT 1992

Income and Expenditure

The total income of the union for the period was £7,353,032. This amount included payments of £7,021,564 in respect of membership of the union. The union's total expenditure for the period was £6,283,524. The union maintains a political fund. In respect of the union's political fund, its total income was £248,724 and total expenditure was £269,881.

Salary paid to and other benefits provided to the General Secretary, President and members of the Executive

The General Secretary of the union was paid £103,132 in respect of salary and £27,267 in respect of pension benefits. Other members of the Executive Committee were paid daily allowances as follows:

		£			£
T Wilkinson	T	29,615	J Metcalfe	J	27,533
J Baxter	J	17,239	HA Hudd	A	5,110
D Calfe (President)	D	11,830	H Kaye	H	40,159
M Colombini	M	35,628	M Wakenshaw	M	23,406

Irregularity statement

A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.

Auditor's report

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) (the 'Union') for the year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the statement of comprehensive income, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Union's affairs as at 31 December 2019 and of its result for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Executive Committee has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Union's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The Executive Committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Foreword to the 2019 Annual Report and Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

Matters in which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the Union and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the financial report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters to which the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us, in accordance with the requirements; or
- the union has not maintained a satisfactory system of controls over its transactions in accordance with the requirements; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the Statement of The Executive Committee's Responsibilities, the Executive Committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Executive Committee are responsible for assessing the Union's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intend to liquidate the Union or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs(UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Councils website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, as a body, in accordance with the provisions of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



BDO LLP
Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditor
55 Baker Street, London, W1U 7EU

12 May 2020

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).

What is white privilege?



JULIAN VAUGHAN, Northern Line North branch, and London Underground trains health & safety council, reflects on a phrase coined by Peggy McIntosh, an anti-racist activist and women's studies scholar at Wellesley, the prestigious liberal arts college in Massachusetts, in her groundbreaking 1988 essay *White Privilege and Male Privilege*, and a phrase which has been much bandied about in recent weeks

I AM a white middle-aged man and I most certainly have white privilege. This does not mean that I have had things handed to me on a plate, but I have not faced the relentless, overt, and far more subtle forms of racism still present in today's society.

If you are white, you have white privilege; you can't not have it. That does not mean there are no other forms of privilege, to do with class and gender, but the experiences of black people, from slavery to segregation to apartheid to Windrush, to name a few examples, surely places it at the top.

It is worth setting out what white privilege is as, trawling through social media, it is clear there is a lot of ignorance on this matter:

'White privilege is the societal privilege that benefits people whom society identifies as white, beyond what is commonly experienced by non-white people under the same social, political, or economic circumstances. White privilege does not mean you are racist. White privilege does not mean your life has been easy.

White privilege does not mean you do not face struggles, too. White privilege simply means your life isn't made harder by your skin colour.'

I read a number of social media posts from people who said they had struggled all their lives, faced many issues, and how dare they be accused of white privilege. I have been asked if the troops who fought in the Somme had white privilege. In both cases, they misunderstand what white privilege is.

I am incredibly proud to be British. Proud of its people, and its many institutions, such as the BBC, and of our armed forces. I believe that British people have a deep sense of fair play. But we cannot deny that racism is still present across our society, particularly in areas such as the press, and government, as evidenced by the Windrush scandal. While the scandalous treatment of people from the Caribbean was exposed, many elements of the 'hostile environment' remain.

We also must be aware that much of the historic wealth of our country was created by the slave



Topical illustration by Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Adam Zygis for the *Buffalo News* in Buffalo in New York state

trade and the subjugation and exploitation of people in the British Empire. This is a scar that has yet to heal. Further, there is no doubt that the comments of certain politicians, and the relentless scapegoating of migrants by sections of the media, has stirred up hatred where there was previously none, and made some people far more comfortable in expressing their latent racism.

We should be very cautious when we dismiss other people's views, when we have no experience of life from their point of view, and, especially, the experience of being a person of colour. Yes, those of us who are white cannot help being white and we will not be able to experience it, or fully understand

it, but we are capable of empathising – if we listen.

Whatever your views on Brexit, it is indisputable that it has caused a huge rift in our society and, once again, made it more acceptable for racist opinions to be freely voiced. The polarisation of our society is entrenched, and a solution is unlikely to be found in the battleground of social media, but a solution must be found.

Politicians, and others in positions of influence, have a responsibility to set the tone. However, we all have a part to play and we must challenge racism wherever we find it and educate ourselves on the long history of black and minority ethnic oppression. We have much to gain by talking a little less, and listening a little more...

BAME lives matter

The following motion, proposed by T Laws, and seconded by D Daly, was discussed and passed unanimously at East Ham 068 branch committee meeting held on Wednesday 3 June:

'The scenes shown on TV of the death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin were horrific and deeply disturbing. Whilst we, quite rightly, look across to America and shake our heads in disgust, we must also look inwardly at how we treat our own BAME citizens.

'Grenfell, Windrush, covid-19, Brexit, police stop and search, poverty, zero

hours contracts, the justice system, mental health, education, migrant health staff having to pay to use the NHS, and unemployment are all areas where successive governments have let this section of society down.

'Harrowing stories of East Asian people being attacked because of covid-19, black men being stopped by police because they have a "drug dealer" car or having to take their child with them when they are out walking for fear of being arrested for a crime they haven't committed because "they fit the description", black MPs (especially

female) who have rape and death threats hurled at them daily on social media, Asian people are seen as either terrorists or part of paedophile rings.

'We therefore ask the EC to consider commissioning a series of articles in the *Journal* written by BAME writers and members, chronicling their struggles, and highlighting that the term BAME is not just a homogenous group and that the experiences of BAME people and how they experience racism and racial biases, vary wildly. Further, encourage branches to invite more speakers from the BAME community, to educate people about race and how they can become effective allies.'

Terry Laws, branch secretary, East Ham 068

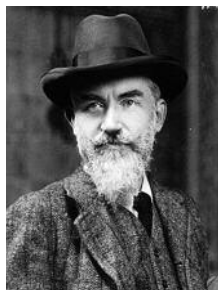
Dangerous and premature

The following motion, proposed by Deborah Reay, was passed unanimously at the Northern Line North branch meeting held on Monday 25 May:

'Following the decision by the government to begin to reopen the schools on 1 June, this branch believes this is a dangerous and premature action. The National Education Union has produced a "five tests for government" plan, which outlines what needs to be in place before schools reopen: much lower numbers of covid-19 cases; a national plan for social distancing; testing, testing, testing; a whole school strategy; and protection for the vulnerable.

'The more pressure trade unions, and the public, put on the more local authorities will refuse to back uniform reopening of schools on 1 June. We ask that the EC support this motion and sends solidarity and support to the NEU in its fight to protect the safety of our children and vulnerable members of society. Teachers and the NEU are the experts in their field, and the government and local authorities ignore them at their peril.'

Educate, agitate, organise



As George Bernard Shaw said: 'Educate, agitate, organise'

Organise 2020 is the TUC's free festival of ideas for trade union organising. 'We're bringing together activists and staff from across the TUC's affiliated unions for three days of online events from Thursday 9 to Saturday 11 July,' says GS Frances O'Grady. 'We'll showcase union organising stories from around the UK, and around the world, host debates on major trends in organising, and offer online training sessions in key organising topics and new digital technologies. And we hope this will encourage and support unions to further work together.' Speakers will include

Frances, Sharan Burrow, general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, and Angela Rayner, deputy leader of the Labour Party.

Dom, Dom, Dom-de-Dom, Dom

These are now available from your nearest newsagent, inside one of the newspapers. They enable you to jump the queue at the supermarket, when boarding a train or the tram or the Tube. They also allow you to enter football grounds when the game is being played behind closed doors. I'm now off to the pub with these three – the



landlord is opening up because he has one.

Mel Thorley, RMS Longsight

APPY DAYS: National Rail is warning people if stations or trains are busy, to help passengers follow social distancing rules. A warning triangle pops up on its app and website to warn those buying tickets that a service is oversubscribed or a railway station is busy. 'We are using journey planning trends and live updates from rail staff to run the system,' said a National Rail spokesperson.

UNION ALERT: Ian Beckett, who works alongside Katy Proctor at head office, when we're not in lockdown, and from his home at Harlow in Essex when we are, dryly signed off an email about a head office staff virtual quiz night, 'Stay alert, drink tea, join a union.' Now that's one for the government to consider...

Upcoming Events

■ RAINHAM – THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER

All welcome for our Southeastern reunion from 11.00 at the Rainham Social Club, 86 Station Road, Rainham, Kent.

■ TOTON – FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER

'Pubs and clubs will probably be the last venues to reopen after the coronavirus crisis,' says Reg Sergeant. 'But, ever the optimist, I'm hoping we can hold our reunion' in four months' time, at the very end of October from 19.30 at the Sportsman, Derby Road, Long Eaton, Derbyshire. All current and previous Toton colleagues and partners are cordially invited. A help yourself buffet will be provided and a raffle run to raise funds towards future reunions.

● These events have been planned but, in light of the lockdown, and government advice about social distancing during the coronavirus crisis, are subject to cancellation.

Under pressure

DAVE VAUGHAN, branch secretary, Newton Heath 143, reports on a mental health training day in Doncaster

Mental health is in the news nowadays, and rising up the political agenda. A need for awareness is strong in our workplace, too; witness the longstanding partnerships between ASLEF, Network Rail, and operators with the Samaritans. But what about ourselves? As well as fatalities, we know the potential stresses in our jobs through shift work, the volatility of a privatised industry, especially in the freight sector, and the great responsibility of our role. Not to mention the pressures of life, family, and finance.

Compared to many industries, where the solidarity of community has been broken down, the railway still can provide a sense of family – something of which we can all be proud – but caring for each other can't be left to chance.

ASLEF has been running mental health awareness training days around the country, helping support reps and colleagues in how to recognise symptoms and respond. One, presented by Tracy Douthwaite of Happy Life, was held at the Trades Club in Doncaster last year and brought attendance from far and wide.

Tracy's honesty about her own experience of mental health was matched by the candid contributions from delegates. That openness was as vital to the day's success as it is in dealing with issues in the workplace – the worst outcome is for issues to be buried in the hope they will go away.

The day followed a logical progression from picking up on warning signs, knowing how to start a conversation about such a sensitive



Tracy Douthwaite from Happy Life

subject, to supporting recovery in the workplace. One day did not suddenly make us experts in the subject, but it did give us pointers to those who are, with a list of useful contacts.

Perhaps the most thought-provoking part was when we worked through conditions; so many ways in which poor mental health can show itself. Sadly, some of these can be trivialised and dismissed, and, because there may be no visible evidence, some regard them as less real than physical injury. But mental health is every bit as real and can be every bit as harmful. These mental health training days are a big step forward in helping reps look after ourselves and our colleagues.

Join the Trade Union Badge Collectors Society for **FREE**



TRADE UNION BADGE COLLECTORS SOCIETY

Trade union badges form a central part of the rich visual culture of the labour movement that also encompasses trade union banners, emblems and membership cards and other ephemera.

Often taking their design from aspects of the larger and more intricate union emblems of the 19th century, or illustrating the tools of the union member's trade, badges were first produced by trade unions as far back as the 1870s, and by the 1890s were routinely being issued by some unions to new members.

Probably the first trade union badge collector was Walter Southgate, who started collecting union ephemera as early as 1905, and would later become one of the founders of the National Museum of Labour History.

The collecting tradition is kept alive today by the Trade Union Badge Collectors Society, a UK-based group set up by like-minded enthusiasts to promote a wider appreciation of trade union badges and ephemera, and to create a friendly environment for sharing information and research about trade union badges and ephemera.

ABOUT US

The Trade Union Badge Collectors Society was formed in the early 1980s by a group of union activists and officials.

The first issue of Trade Union Badge Collectors News was produced in 1984 and has recently been relaunched.

A website has also been set up at www.tubcs.wordpress.com

The aims of the newsletter and society are collecting, cataloguing and researching trade union badges and related items.

As our late editor John Hammond put it:

"I believe that this hobby of ours is one of the most fascinating ones. When I pick up a new badge or artefact, I enjoy the research in to its history and each book I look up gives me more and more interesting information. And I know that I am helping to preserve the past. There is a great difficulty with the historical memorabilia of this great movement disappearing as more and more unions merge and disappear. Many trade union leaders have little or no time to be concerned with the history of the movement and many interesting artefacts and memorabilia are thrown in the dustbin rather than being kept for posterity. The badge collecting fraternity has helped salvage some of the best items and ensure that important items are available for the next generations"

TUBCS members have also produced two booklets: *A Guide to British Trade Union Badges* and *A Guide to Irish Trade Union Badges*

The society and newsletter have been mentioned in a number of publications including:

ASLEF Journal March 2007, K Myers, What's behind union badges
Paul Martin (2002) *The Trade Union Badge - Material Culture In Action*, Aldershot, Ashgate

Land Worker Feb 1991, I. Monkton, Worn with Pride - The badge of nobility
Labour Research Feb 1987, N. Clark, Worn with Pride - Union Badges
TUC 2006 Congress Guide, K Myers, Badges of Honour

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE.....

EMAIL.....

UNION.....

INTERESTS (PLEASE TICK ALL INTERESTS)

- GENERAL TRADE UNION BADGES
- SPECIFIC UNION/INDUSTRY, WHICH.....
- INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION BADGES
- MEMBERSHIP CARDS
- CERAMICS
- OTHER PRINTED MATERIAL

OTHER.....

Please email your completed application form as a photo attachment to stevewbaguley@gmail.com

HAYDN ARCHARD ARDENT ROBINS FAN

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of ex-Cardiff and Bristol Bath Road driver Haydn Archard on 12 February following a cardiac arrest. He was almost 90. Haydn was born in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, USA. His parents were Welsh miners who moved to this American coalfield in the 1920s for employment before he was born.

Haydn was a Western man, starting his railway career when

the Second World War finished as an engine cleaner at Cardiff. He was promoted to fireman, moving to St Philip's Marsh in the early 1950s. Working through the links, Haydn moved to the new Bath Road diesel depot when SPM closed in June 1964.

He eventually got his driver's job at Bath Road and continued working through the links, ending up working the top link express, mileage jobs to London, Derby

and Plymouth.

Haydn loved his football, was a keen Bristol City fan, and a regular attendee at games at Ashton Gate. He was very knowledgeable about his favourite sport and loved to chat, and argue, with workmates during breaks in the mess room. He was a very happy family man and is survived by his daughter Lynne, two brothers, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Bernard Kennedy, Bristol 036 branch secretary



Haydn Archard: a Western man

LES JOHNSON DISTRICT 3 SECRETARY

It was sad news to learn that Les Johnson has died. Les served ASLEF well during difficult times for the union. He passed through the normal course for promotion to driver (including firing Liverpool to London turns).

Les represented Birkenhead as secretary to the London Midland LDC. Birkenhead had its problems, basically being two depots in one, the other being GWR. Les was a very efficient and able advocate. Harry Whitehead, ex-secretary of sectional council B, remembers the prolific correspondence he received, as Les represented his men without fear or favour.

He was a trustee of the LM social club, played a full and active role on the national executive of our union, and was an expert on PT&R pensions, etc. Les became Organising Secretary and was deeply involved in the Colwick disaster (a head-on collision).

Les was well thought of and respected in Liverpool and the north-west. Many of us have cause to thank him for his work on behalf of ASLEF.

Lew Adams, GS 1994-1998

ARTHUR NAYLOR

It is with sadness I report the death of ex-Charing Cross driver Arthur Naylor. Starting as a fireman at Peterborough in July 1960, he got his driving position at King's Cross in the late '60s. Transferring to Charing Cross in the '70s, becoming LDC there before moving to Slade Green as a shunt driver in December 2003 and retiring in August 2009. It was always possible to bump into Arthur in the cafe or shops near the depot at Slade Green and great to share a few words and update him on the latest railway news. Leaving behind wife Sandra and sons Kevin and David and their families, Arthur's cheeky grin and sharp sense of humour will be greatly missed by all. RIP Arthur.

Ray Garland, Southeastern DCC



Arthur Naylor: A pint and a cheeky grin with friends

KEITH CANNING TOASTIE WAS WALKED OVER THE BISHOPSTOKE RAILWAY BRIDGE FOR THE LAST TIME

Keith 'Toastie' Canning of Freightliner Intermodal has died. He was only 64 and had been in ill-health for sometime but kept it very much to himself.

He started on the railway in 1978, transferred to the driver grade in 1989 at Stonebridge Park, working alongside a certain Mick Whelan and Dave Calfe. He transferred to Eastleigh in 1996 when the freight industry was first split up under privatisation.

Keith got the nickname Toastie because he always had a toasted cheese sandwich for his PNB break at Wembley. He also always had to have his toast before shunting at Southampton Maritime. He spent many years shunting at the



Toastie worked with the **GS and EC president at Stonebridge Park**

Maritime where he could be seen leaning out of an 08 shunt loco.

Keith was a loyal ASLEF

member since 1989, attending many branch meetings. Due to covid-19 funeral restrictions there was a different kind of opportunity for his colleagues to remember him. The funeral director stopped the cortège, got out and walked Keith, for the last time, over the Bishopstoke railway bridge. His friends and colleagues lined the bridge, many in uniform and HV vests. There was a minute's silence at Southampton Maritime, to coincide with his funeral, and a head board placed on a shunt loco during the day shift. Keith will be greatly missed by all his fire ends and colleagues.

Paul Barber, Eastleigh 069 branch secretary

LAST JOURNEYS

Sad to report the loss, but honoured to have known and worked with, three brothers from the 184 who welcomed the public into our second home for the 1992 open weekend. They can now take rest in the celestial 9A mess room to await the grand reunion.

Ron Cocksey died on 11 April aged 67. He started as a guard at Guide Bridge in 1979, was successful on vacancy list no 5, and got booked as a driver on Monday 16 October 1989, an early beneficiary of the train man concept. He moved to Piccadilly in 1994 after Longsight closed. Ron lived life to the full, and was never a dull mate on the roving ballast or glazebrook tanks.

Eric Bailey, 92, died on 27 April. He left school at Christmas 1942 and started as a cleaner at Stockport Edgeley MPD in 1943 at the age of 15. He transferred to Trafford Park for regular driving turns, then returned to Edgeley. He retired in 1992, four days short of his 65th birthday, after 49 years 10 months.

Along with Bert Taylor and Brian Ridgway, Eric was one of 9A's racing drivers. My lap record with him came on 28 November 1989 when he walloped the 3-car EMU 304009 from Piccadilly to Stockport in just over six minutes. I was weightless in the middle brake for the entire journey.

Teddy Whalen died on 27 May aged 91. Young Edward started his career with the LM&SR at Longsight as a bar lad in 1943. Ted was a real driver's driver, as popular as it was possible to be at the depot. He retired in 1993, completing 49 years 10 months, during which he had cleaned, fired, and driven everything that Longsight had.

Mel Thorley, RMS Longsight

Kevin fights for all of us – and a plea to new drivers

It was with disbelief that I read Bro Tom Burns' attack on Bro Kevin Lindsay (*Journal*, May) after he misread Kevin's statement (*Journal*, April). Tom cannot proclaim himself a democratic trade unionist and patriot. He is neither.

Trade unionism should always be enshrined in social democracy, one person one vote, and it is as near fascism as you can get when the state simply dictates, as Tom wants for Scotland's future, displaying his Westminster nationalism.

It is enshrined in article one of the charter of the United Nations that self-determination of every Scottish citizen is a fundamental right. So Kevin is correct; Scotland voted overwhelmingly into power two political parties that support political independence from Westminster on their mandate, whilst Tom is in the minority, again.

Seems like Tom fails to understand that the mother of all parliaments would not refuse Scotland's political independence, or refuse self-determination in an initial vote. What a laughing stock Westminster would be in the eyes of the world. As trade unionists we cannot allow nationalism or fascism in any form.

It was a Scottish king, James VI, who united the kingdoms – he styled himself King of Great Britain – when, in 1603, he became King of England (as James 1) as well as King of Scotland. The Act of Union in 1707 united the governments of Scotland and England. The queen would still retain her Scottish kingdom, and Tom could still call it the United Kingdom of Great Britain; it's all in the title and not so hard to grasp.

We are the people, after all, and perhaps if Bro Tom realised the true meaning of this, he might realise that his Westminster nationalism is flawed.

I would also like to plead for new drivers in Scotland to donate to the ASLEF political fund. I do and, whilst I am a great believer in Scotland's political independence, you should realise the wider implications, because you will find that Bro Kevin Lindsay fights hard for us all.

Niall Campbell, Yoker branch

I vow to thee my country – or nationalistic jingoism?

Tom Burns (*Journal*, May) says 'I am a patriot' and 'make no apology for putting country before party when deciding who to vote for'. I can only deduce from this that Tom voted Conservative (correct me if I am wrong) at the last election, along with many other trade unionists!

This does not equate to being a democratic trade unionist, in my opinion, but someone who puts nationalism and self-interest before patriotism! As previously stated, in his long article on Monet and the EU, 'I want out'.

It was 25 years ago today – things you find when you're sorting out your drawers during lockdown

I found this in a drawer yesterday. Perfect timing as, 25 years ago today, after two years and three months training, I passed my final exams to become a qualified train driver. This is what they used to give you back in the British Rail days. I thought you might be interested.

Ian Jones, New Cross Gate



The key to the kingdom for Ian from British Rail's Network Southcentral training centre

Tom is now surprised that Scotland is using the same nationalistic arguments that the Brexiteers used, albeit Scotland does not have a Dominic Cummings at the helm, pumping out lies and propaganda, which, incidentally, he admits if you watch his videos, and, alas, the UK public accepted as fact!

Where I agree with Tom is that I do not want to see the break-up of the UK. The historian WC Mackenzie, a Scot, in his book *A Short History of the Scottish Highlands*, mentions the Act of Union and states that both England and Scotland have benefited from cross-border migration.

My great-great-grandfather, and many others, did likewise and moved to London from Edinburgh and set up businesses. Tom clearly accepts this, but does not want a continuation of cross-border migration within a European Union!

Tom quotes the matter of Scottish independence as being a matter for the UK Parliament; this, presumably, is the UK Parliament that Tom wanted back from the EU, to take back control! Alas, that Parliament no longer exists. The UK government, since the election, has taken control of Parliament. The executive (government) has passed laws without putting it through the legislature (Parliament) and, with such a large majority, has managed to sideline Parliament. The UK is now controlled by an extreme right-wing, authoritarian government.

He mentions 'Labour's untrustworthiness' but is happy to vote for a compulsive liar, to achieve his self-interest, as 'I want out'. None of this makes any sense. How can you trust a known liar?

He claims his patriotism, and voting for a candidate best placed to defeat narrow nationalism, will prevent his country being destroyed, yet it is the very nationalism that he voted for ('I want out') that has brought the UK nearer to breaking up.

There is a difference between patriotism and nationalism, which was defined by George Orwell: 'Patriotism is a devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world, but has no wish to force upon other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and

culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power, and more prestige, for the nation or other unit in which he has chosen to sink his own individuality.'

The nationalists have taken patriots out of the EU, removed their EU citizenship, and their right to free movement within the EU. Thereby forcing their views on the patriot of a promised land where we have 'taken back control', and everything will be better! As time progresses we can see that the executive is reining in more and more power from the people. Eventually all will be sold off, including the NHS, which is already broken into 230 authorities and trusts for ease of privatising/selling and, when it's gone, people who voted for the current regime will be shouting – I didn't vote for this, and the blame game will start! It is time for a wake-up call before all is lost.

Phil Stodart, RMS Penzance

Let's build a better Britain

As we emerge from this coronavirus crisis, now is the time to build back better. We must heed the lessons it has taught us. That we did not listen to the scientists about the risks of such a pandemic and were not prepared. That, for decades, our NHS and social care systems have been under-resourced and in need of reform. That many key workers in our economy – many of them women, many not born in this country – have, for years, been amongst the least-valued and lowest-paid. And long-standing inequalities in our society have left far too many vulnerable.



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Yet we can draw on new sources of hope. That, when faced with a crisis, government can spend wisely, at speed, and at scale. That care, neighbourliness, and mutual support are the threads that bind our communities together. And that clean air and a concern for wellbeing can inspire more sustainable and enjoyable ways of living.

Some have compared this crisis to the Second World War. Then, as now, it was widely agreed that there was no going back. But #BuildBackBetter must be more than a slogan. We must answer these profound questions: How to ensure that the NHS, social care, and other vital public services are properly resourced and able to meet our future needs. How to mend the inequalities in our society, so everyone can live a decent, fulfilling life. How to create secure, well-paid, and rewarding jobs for all who want them, particularly young people. And how to build resilience to future pandemics, and tackle the climate and environmental emergency already upon us. And how to create a better democracy, to harness technology for public good, to build a fairer and more co-operative world.

Answering these questions will be a challenge to governments, businesses, and citizens. But it is a challenge to which, together, we can rise. With the best of human values, and the determination of politicians, and citizens, we can emerge from this crisis a stronger, fairer, greener country. We must #BuildBackBetter.

Miatta Fahnbulleh, CEO, New Economics Foundation

Keeping cool in the cab

London Overground driver Michael Reeves (*Journal*, March) is correct about being well-watered to maintain focus. Comfort in the cab is also important. Drivers must never rely on TOCs and FOCs improving the cab environment – which will cost them money – but should adapt to please themselves! When a suggestion in 1983 for a small rotary fan in cabs was refused, I continued to use my adapted Pifco C-powered fan clipped onto my metal sun visor readjusted upside down behind my speed controller to give a cooling breeze to my face.

Dennis Bostock, RMS, ex-motorman

Which country is this?

This country pretends it is a democracy. Every five years or so, it holds a general election, and the people have a Hobson's choice of two largely unrepresentative parties. The people usually end up with an elective dictatorship, in which a large number of voters feel disenfranchised, as the winning party can pass laws virtually unopposed.

This country has become a surveillance state, and wants its citizens to be tracked, and monitored, for fellow citizens to inform on each other, and issue fines for 'non-compliance'. Its government also wants to severely limit its citizens' ability to travel to other countries.

This country's government does not accept any criticism of its actions, and is making its citizens' lives miserable, and destroying the future of its young. Indeed, some of its members seem to enjoy laying down new laws with no proper debate on the effectiveness, and hidden consequences, of their actions.

Which country am I describing? Feel free to decide for yourself.

Tony Emptage, Ramsgate

Families do need fathers

Terence Frisby? No, me neither! But Wikipedia advises that he died in April, aged 88, and his play *There's a Girl in My Soup* was a hit in the 1960s. But was his comment about Families Need Fathers either relevant or funny enough to give him a place in last month's Off the Rails column? Unfortunately, one of my colleagues was very upset by the comments. An over-reaction? Maybe. But his distress was very real, and the treatment of FNF, very unfair.

FNF is not a 'divorced dads' pressure group' but an organisation with the aim of ensuring that children can enjoy a relationship with both their parents. FNF can, and does, help mothers, as well as fathers, and, most importantly, the children. It is a serious professional organisation.

For the liberal left, 'kindness' has become a cliché but I find little evidence of it in the *Journal*. Condemn opponents politically, by all means, but there is too much gossip and innuendo. But one individual gives me hope. Step forward retired Wolves driver Bob MacMillan. While you keep writing in, mate, I'll never get sepsis from the staple!

Stuart Hammond, Euston

Are subs tax deductible?

Whilst filling in my recent tax return it came to my attention that union subscriptions could be tax deductible. I found a list of HMRC approved organisations for deducting tax against subs. There are many unions, from many industries, on this list, but, regrettably, I cannot claim as ASLEF is not on the list. Maybe ASLEF could speak to HMRC and be added to the list, which would save all train drivers 40% of subs. What do you think?

Mark Kennerley, Manchester Piccadilly

Mick says: 'Thanks, Mark, for bringing this to our attention. We will look into this!'



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by Peter Darley (The History Press, £20) as featured on the centre pages of the January *Journal*. Buy it direct from the

Camden Railway Heritage Trust at a discounted price of £15 inc p&p; email Darleyp@aol.com or phone 020 7586 6632 for details. 'All income from sales goes to the trust,' says Peter.



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Tonbridge driver (and railwayana collector) John Waddington at johnwaddo@yahoo.com



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Luck be a lady



CHRIS PROCTOR worked for the CWU, and then ASLEF, where he helped general secretaries Keith Norman and then Mick Whelan put together the *Journal* each month, as well as handling press and PR for the union. He has also written for *The Guardian*, *The Times*, the *New Statesman* and *Tribune* and now amuses hacks with his 'And Finally' column in the NUJ's magazine *The Journalist*. Here he wonders where to put his money on the candidates to become leader of the free world

OVER recent years I have taken to popping to the bookies and putting large bets on things I don't want to happen. Then, if they do, I can stave off my misery by picking up my winnings. As an Everton supporter, I placed a hefty bet on Liverpool to win the European Cup. As a socialist, I speculated freely on a Tory victory. And, thanks to my fluttering, I'm the only person in the country likely to come out of Brexit with a profit.

I've recently turned my attention to the United States. Unsurprisingly, I'm not a fully fledged Donald Trump supporter. I therefore decided to venture a stake on his success in the Presidential election on 3 November. But, first, I had a glance at the other candidates.

KANYE WEST AND GEORGE CLOONEY

Late last year there were 98 of them. Even I could see some were non-starters. You could get attractive odds (300/1) on Kanye West, for example, but he's even a bit steep for Americans. And George Clooney, too, who isn't going to win because he isn't standing. (He said he 'didn't have the skills', not a factor taken into consideration by the current incumbent). And, remarkably, Paddy Power were offering 500/1 on Amanda Abbington, an English actress legally excluded from the race on the grounds of her good fortune in not being a natural born US citizen.

Because to be a candidate to become President of the United States of America you need to be at least 35, have lived in the country for at least 14 years, and, yes, to be a 'natural born citizen'. I can offer no advice what this latter condition implies. But, presumably, you are excluded if you were birthed via an ear. As we know from the Donald, no test is applied to determine the sanity of a candidate.

In the light of history, it's safe to exclude any candidate not in possession of a penis. There were a number of females in the running, in the early stages, such as Nancy Pelosi, Michelle Obama, and, at the other end of the decency scale, Stormy Daniels and Sarah Palin.

But we knew they weren't going to stay the course. The US is astonishingly sexist, one of



Chris Proctor, on the set of Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*, checks the odds in the President's stakes

the few areas where Donald Trump genuinely represents his constituents. In the past century, there have been female leaders in 81 independent countries. The US is not among them, even though in 2016 Hillary Clinton won nearly 3 million more votes than Trump. There is some idea that women are not firm or decisive. Have they heard of Margaret Thatcher? Angela Merkel? Or my mother?

Elizabeth Warren, a Massachusetts senator since 2013, dropped out in March explaining a central difficulty. 'If you say, "There was sexism in this race," everyone says "whiner". And if you say, "There was no sexism," about a bazillion women think, "What planet do you live on?"'

Barack Obama broke the mould with two victories, but the number of serious black candidates in the 98 starters for the 2020 presidential race was around nil. No, it was exactly nil.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Any aspiring candidate is best advised to be a WASP – white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant. It also helps to be filthy stinking rich and have massive numbers of staggeringly affluent chums. Trump and Clinton managed to spend a combined \$2,386,876,712 (that's two billion pounds) in the 2016 White House Derby. In this year's race even the progressive Democrat lefty Bernie Sanders raised more than \$228 million to compete.

Politicians in the US, at most levels, are a long way from the breadline. Top of the trough-snouters in the Senate is Virginia rep Mark Warner, who's worth £175 million; while Greg Gianforte from Montana has £154 million stashed. Congressman Paul Mitchell represents Michigan with £146 million sitting between him and the gutter. While Vernon Buchanan, in Florida's House of Representatives, has £138 million in his back pocket. These are the sort of men who could cheerfully have a whip round to help out Tony Blair, our own grand

acquirer.

Before passing over my 'Trump to win' stake to the bookie, I checked that there was no one even more off the wall. Americans seem to favour nutters in the White House. Looked at from this angle, I could see the attractions of Mark Cuban, who featured as Macho Mark in the 1994 film *Talking About Sex*. Minnesota senator Al Franken has the advantage of ten women alleging inappropriate behaviour against him. And Senator Tom Cotton made a late bid for fruit & nut glory when he claimed, apparently with a straight face, that gun control laws would not prevent mass shootings like that one in Las Vegas in 2017 (which left 58 dead, and 413 injured).

DON'T BACK A SINGLE ISSUE BIGOT

Initially, I considered putting a few bob on these guys as well, as I loathe them so much. But I'm pretty confident that the great US public won't back them. Because they are single issue bigots. If voters go for Trump, they can have all their racist, sexist, and exploitative prejudices wrapped in one simple package. This is what is known as 'mass appeal'.

It might seem odd to put on a bet with the desperate desire that you lose. But, in my experience, losing is what gambling is mostly about. And, in America, it is what democracy is all about as well.

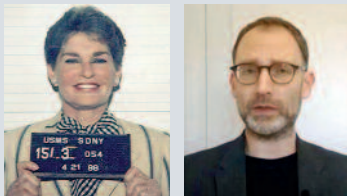
THE PRESIDENCY IN NUMBERS

There have been 45 US Presidents. 36 have been Protestant. Four have been assassinated in office (Abraham Lincoln, James Abram Garfield, William McKinley, and John F Kennedy). Two have been divorced (Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump). Only one has been not white (Barack Obama). Not one has been a woman.

Rules don't apply to me

WHEN Leona Helmsley, a wealthy American businesswoman whose brutal, self-serving and high-handed behaviour earned her the sobriquet the Queen of Mean, was arrested for tax evasion, fraud and extortion in 1988, she famously told investigators, 'We don't pay taxes; only the little people pay taxes.'

It is an attitude which has echoed down the centuries. An attitude, rarely voiced, except in private, that there is one rule for the rich and powerful, the important, self-important, and influential; and another for the rest of us.



Leona Helmsley after her arrest and (right) Neil Ferguson

It's why Catherine Calderwood, the public face of the campaign to persuade people to stay at home in Scotland, where she was chief medical officer, travelled not once but twice from her home in Edinburgh to her second home in Fife.

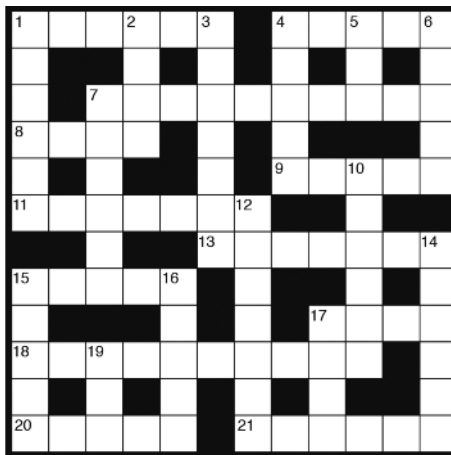
It's why Professor Neil Ferguson, a virus modeller at Imperial College, London, and a scientific adviser to the government for 20 years, broke the lockdown he advised the Prime Minister to introduce to have sex with his – and the tabloids loved this bit – married lover. Married, yes. But, er, not to him.

And it's why Dominic Cummings, chief adviser to Boris Johnson in Downing Street, broke the rules – and the law – by driving from London to Durham, and then from Durham to Barnard Castle, and invented a literally incredible explanation to try to keep his job after *The Guardian* and *Daily Mirror* revealed what he had done.

Calderwood, Ferguson and Cummings think the rules – in or out of lockdown – are for the little people. For us, but not for them.

Keith Richmond

Crossword 171 by Tom Williams



Solution to Crossword 170

Across: 3 Tutor 6 Cheetah 7 Rabbit 8 Visor 9 Condense 12 Ranch 14 Chirp 15 Pullover 18 Offer 19 Supper 20 Squalor 21 Lance
Down: 1 Personal 2 Starch 3 Throne 4 Table 5 Raids 6 Cover up 10 Nail file 11 Emperor 13 Averse 14 Crocus 16 Usual 17 Lupin

Congratulations to **SJ Parker**, of **Ramsgate, Kent**, who was last month's winner. The winner of this month's Prize Crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25



● You can see more of Tom Williams's crosswords, word games and puzzles at wordgames.co.uk

Across

- 1 Rounded wine glass
- 4 Vagrant
- 7 Tennis contest
- 8 Beat rhythmically
- 9 Strong and bulky
- 11 Long-necked African animal
- 13 Muslim double veil
- 15 Detested
- 17 Ink spot
- 18 Soft red fruit
- 20 Guttural Tirolean song
- 21 Sinew

Down

- 1 Retriever or spaniel (3, 3)
- 2 Weaving machine
- 3 Frighten greatly
- 4 Rubbish
- 5 Wood chopper
- 6 Small-minded
- 7 Castle tower
- 10 Household group
- 12 Seriously sincere
- 14 Young cat
- 15 Eskimo sledge dog
- 16 Wooden fixing pin
- 17 Husks of cereal grain
- 19 Scarlet

Name.....

Address.....

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Postcode.....

If you successfully complete this month's Prize Crossword please send the solution by post to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 77 St John Street, Clerkenwell, London, EC1M 4NN (or take a photo on your mobile phone of the grid and send the image to journal@aslef.org.uk) by Friday 10 July

ASLEF's legal services

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A resolution approving the furtherance of political objects within the meaning of the above Act as an object of the union has been adopted by ballot under the Act. Any payments in furtherance of those objects will be made out of a separate fund, the political fund of the union.

Any member, who joined the Union on or after 1 March 2018, who has given notice of their willingness to contribute to the union's political fund (an 'opt-in' notice), has a right to withdraw that notice by giving notice to the union (a 'withdrawal notice').

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Mobile: _____ Landline: _____

Email: _____

Membership number: _____

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Do you have a disability? Yes/No _____

Gender: Man Woman Trans

Non-binary Other

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