

Greens accuse Theresa May of 'letting the terrorists win'



7 June 2017

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "Sacrificing our human rights in the name of fighting terrorism is exactly what terrorists want"**

The Green Party has condemned Theresa May's comments on human rights laws [1] and accused her of playing into terrorists' hands by threatening civil liberties.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, will today speak at the party's final rally ahead of the election [2] and call May's threat to human rights a disgrace.

Bartley said:

"Sacrificing our human rights in the name of fighting terrorism is exactly what terrorists want. May is exploiting people's fear to do away with hard-won protections that don't suit her regressive agenda. There is no shortage of laws designed to clamp down on terrorism and responsibility for the failure to use these lies with the Government. There's no point building more and more walls if we end up boxing ourselves in.

"If May throws away our freedoms she is letting the terrorists win. Proposing to tear up human rights laws is a knee jerk reaction and could be dangerously counterproductive. We can tackle terrorism without impinging on human rights but we need an honest conversation about the causes of terrorism and to ask some hard questions about the impact of UK foreign policy and police cuts.

"I'm calling on people across the UK to vote with their hearts for the kind of country they want. The Green Party stands for a confident and caring country, and we'll always stand up for human rights and fight for an inclusive, tolerant society with a positive vision for the future."

Notes

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-40181444>
2. Jonathan Bartley will join Molly Scott Cato, Bristol West candidate, and Green Party activists for a rally at 2pm in front of the party's mobile billboard at College Green, Bristol BS1 5TA.

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Green Party calls on people to vote with their hearts in final election rally



7 June 2017

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "Only the Green Party will fix the NHS crisis and invest in education"**

The Green Party will today call on voters to make a decision based on what kind of country they want Britain to be when they go to the polls on June 8.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, will join Molly Scott Cato, Bristol West candidate, for the party's final rally before the election [1] to set out why a Green vote matters.

Speaking ahead of the event, Bartley said:

"No matter where you're casting your vote on election day, you have the chance to put issues you care about on the agenda – from climate change to Brexit. Only the Green Party will fix the NHS crisis and invest in education.

"My message to voters ahead of tomorrow is to vote with your heart, and vote Green. If we wake up to a Conservative government on June 9, Green MPs will hold them to account, whether it's by calling out the government for bringing the NHS to its knees or fighting an extreme Brexit. We'd be making sure a Labour government delivered on the bold promises in its manifesto – and taking them even further.

"I'm calling on people across the UK to vote not just for the MP they want, but the kind of country they want. The Green Party stands for a caring a confident country, that invests in public services, protects the environment and would give the people of Britain a say on the final Brexit deal. We'll always stand up for what matters and fight for an inclusive, tolerant society with a positive vision for a sustainable future."

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Speech: “If we aren’t taking steps to address climate change, we are fighting with one hand tied behind our back.”

Thank you Mr President.

At the outset let me thank Council members for your words of condolence and support here and elsewhere following the horrific attack in London this weekend. The perpetrators sought to terrorise us, to divide us. But make no mistake, they will fail. Together, we will defeat them, and we will need Security Council unity and activism against this terrible scourge.

Turning to this afternoon’s session, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and I want to join others in paying tribute to you, your Excellency President Morales, for your leadership in bringing this crucial issue of transboundary water security to the Security Council.

It is an issue, which we used not to discuss in this Chamber, but I think it’s one that warrants our fullest attention. The stakes are high; over three quarters of UN Member States share river basins with another country and over 2 billion people live in shared river basins in the developing world.

Sadly, we know what can happen when the water runs dry. In Somalia, drought is driving the acute food shortage that threatens to tip over once again in to famine. One powerful lesson from the last famine in Somalia six years ago was that famine is not simply about food, but also about water. In north-eastern Nigeria, lack of water is exacerbating the man made crisis, as we saw for ourselves when we visited in March. Thousands of displaced people, the majority of whom are women and children, have become sick from diseases spread by dirty water and poor hygiene as the conflict continues.

We have to act – and we have agreed to act. Through the Global Goals, we all committed to deliver improved water security, improved access to drinking water and sanitation, and stronger transboundary water management.

And yet, the outlook for 2030 is fragile. We are simply not on track. The UN estimates that by the time we’re supposed to have achieved Global Goal 6, demand for water in many developing countries will outstrip supply by 40%. If such scarcity is combined with weak governance, population growth, migration and climate change, we may face a potential upsurge in global conflict in the future.

This, therefore, is a clear call for preventative diplomacy, as so many of my colleagues have already said –all of us in this room have a part to play, Mr President.

In South Asia, for example, the United Kingdom has provided 30 million dollars towards water governance over the past five years. One billion people across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal and Pakistan rely heavily on just three rivers. And despite facing similar problems posed by water demand and climate change, regional collaboration between these countries is limited.

That's why we have supported a regional approach to these rivers in order to address the shared challenges of development and climate change. We're working with the World Bank's South Asia Water Initiative, bringing together different disciplines and experiences –technical and political – across the region so that together we can identify and resolve challenges affecting these transboundary waters.

But to tackle this problem on a global scale, we'll need more than bilateral or regional action. We'll need to work together, through this institution and others. Holding this briefing is an important step, but this effort needs to be sustained; we cannot solve it through one meeting a year.

The G20 also has a role to play, including through incentivising water cooperation. This isn't just an issue for the developing world; the OECD and Global Water Partnership estimate that water insecurity costs the global economy 500 billion dollars every year, and yet we fall a long way short of meeting the 198 billion dollars of global investment that is needed every year for water governance and infrastructure.

So we need to see investment in the institutions and infrastructure to deliver improved water security within states and between states. Building effective institutions and delivering better governance is just as critical as building infrastructure. The G20 can play a critical role through diplomatic efforts, development cooperation, and harnessing the potential of the private sector, governments and communities to mobilise investment in water security.

Finally, Mr President, if we're to make progress on this issue before 2030, we need to see the bigger picture. Across the world, climate change is undermining water security. In almost all climate change scenarios the world's driest regions become drier and across the globe flooding will become more common. If we aren't taking steps to address climate change, we are fighting with one hand tied behind our back.

The Paris Agreement provides the right global framework for protecting the prosperity and security of future generations, while keeping energy affordable and secure for our citizens and businesses. The United Kingdom played a major role in securing the Paris Agreement and I'm proud to restate in this Chamber today that we are wholly committed to it.

Thank you Mr President.

Dugdale 'told' Sturgeon she'd support another indyref

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6 Jun 2017



Labour leader Kezia Dugdale “told” Nicola Sturgeon she’d support SNP calls for another independence referendum in the wake of the Brexit vote, the First Minister has confirmed.

Ms Sturgeon stunned viewers of tonight’s STV debate by recalling a private conversation the pair had about the prospect of another vote.

After the initial claim, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson sought reassurance from the SNP leader, who confirmed that was the case.

The revelation blows a hole in Labour’s claim to be opposed to independence and another referendum.

Scottish Conservative constitution spokesman Adam Tomkins said:

“This is a bombshell revelation which holes Scottish Labour’s entire campaign below the waterline.

“Kezia Dugdale has spent this campaign claiming she opposes a second independence referendum, now we learn she’s been having private chats with Nicola Sturgeon about her support for it.

“It is an utter disgrace and it proves that the only pro-UK vote at this election is for the Scottish Conservatives.”

Labour’s plan to cut Scottish funding

Both UK and Welsh Labour election manifestos call for the Barnett formula – the system used to allocate money to Scotland – to be scrapped.