

HARTLEPOOL FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE

Minutes of meeting held on 8th October 2018

Present: Chris Eddowes(chair), Richard Eddowes, Lynn Fletcher, Tahir Selby, Farhan Ali, Martin Green, Bill White, Keith Gorton, Jennifer Kerridge

Apologies: Diane Wanduragala, Irene Green, Michael Unwin

Minutes Minutes of the meeting on the 10th September were accepted as an accurate record.

Matters arising.

- **Recycling Meeting** KG reported that he had not had a reply from Helen Beaman to the preferred dates given to her. As it was too late to arrange a meeting in October KG sought the members advice on possible future dates. It was agreed that any evenings in January or February (except 16th February) would be acceptable. KG agreed to arrange this with Helen Beaman. KG reported that a recycling presentation to the Park Residents' Association earlier this year had been given by Tony Hanson & Councillor Dave Hunter.
- **Jubilee Debt Campaign Birmingham Celebration.** CE, RE, KG attended on 29th September. CE & KG gave a summary of the event (see appended note for details). Countries that had debts written off had benefitted enormously but debts were still being accumulated. Institutions still hold incredible power & need to be held to account. Systems that allow debts to build up still exist. After the 1998 crash we needed radical change but didn't get it. FA commented that corruption by politicians is still a very important factor. CE & KG said that a key message from one of the speakers (Ann Pettifor) was that events following 1998 showed that essential ingredients to effective campaigning are
 - Have a clear "ask" eg "Write off £300 billion by 2000"
 - Know the facts – we won the argument with the IMF on trade flows
 - Ordinary people can ask the right questions if they are given the facts, the knowledge & the understanding

Members agreed that we should all aim to get a better understanding of debt & the roles played by IMF, World Bank & Financial Institutions. To assist members, it was agreed that HGPJ should purchase Ann Pettifor's book "The Production of Money: How to Break the Power of Bankers" and to subscribe to "Peace News" (£10/year). CE stated that she had brought back from Birmingham a pledge card. It was agreed we should pledge to become more knowledgeable on debt.

- **Green Great Britain Week (GGBW) 15–19 October.** KG had asked David Golding if Teesside University was participating but had no information so far. LF said she would ask DG for the questionnaire & would email it out. LF intended to attend the GGBW stall in Newcastle.
- **JDC Debt Week 27 October – 4 November.** CE said she had asked for an action pack but had not received it yet.

Fairtrade

MG reported that Traidcraft (retail) would probably cease trading by the end of the year due partly to the fall in the value of sterling following the referendum. Traidcraft Exchange, the charity, will continue & is looking to find new markets for existing suppliers. MG is thinking of getting the 3 Tees Valley FT towns & Jenny Medhurst to meet & look into sourcing products for sale.

MG said that he had attended the FT Regional Conference in Leeds. It was reported that there had been a 7% increase in FT product sales last year. In discussions it became clearer why the FT Foundation has supported the Mondelez initiative (Coffee Life) & why they have not supported Sainsbury's project to replace FT products with their own "Fairly Traded" brands. Mondelez said they

could extend FT to 5 times the number of farmers & the farmers had voted for it. The scheme is independently audited by FloCert, the same auditors used by the FT Foundation. Sainsbury's carry out their own audit & they decide (not the producers) on how the social premium is spent. FT Fortnight will be all about cocoa producers in the Gold Coast & Ghana with the theme "She Deserves".

Correspondence

KG reported that he had written to the Labour MEPs asking for their help to restore the licence (to sail) for the MSF rescue ship Aquarius. No reply to date.

MG said that he had received confirmation that the Hartlepool Labour Party office will continue to use FT products.

AOB

- Tahir Selby & Farhan Ali notified members that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Hartlepool is holding the annual Peace Seminar at the Nasir Mosque at 3pm on Sunday 18th November. All are welcome but it would help if you could notify Tahir Selby (tahir_selby@hotmail.com) or Farhan Ali (farhan.ali@ahmadiyyauk.org) if you intend to go. The theme of the conference will be "World War 1, Centenary of the Fulfilment of a Great Warning"
- KG said that he was hoping to attend the "People's Vote" rally in London on 21 October & asked that any members wishing to go, contact him.

Next Meeting Monday 12 November at 7,30 pm, St Georges.

Actions from this meeting

- KG agreed to arrange a recycling meeting with Helen Beaman.
- KG to purchase Ann Pettifor's book "The Production of Money: How to Break the Power of Bankers".
- CE to arrange subscription to Peace News.
- All to become more knowledgeable about debt & its causes.

Breaking the Chains - From 1998 to the Present Day

29th September 2018 Birmingham



The event explored the current major debt issues and the legacy of the Jubilee 2000 movement.

Keynote Speech – Nick Dearden (Global Justice Now)

- Institutions still hold incredible power & need to be held to account. Systems that allow debts to build up still exist. After the 1998 crash we needed radical change but didn't get it.
- Global systems are focussed on short term gain & are deeply crisis prone
- Financial power is intrinsically linked to inequality
- 3rd world debt crisis peaked in 1979. Governments bailed out banks and 3rd world countries had ruthless policies imposed on them. Deregulation of financial institutions allowed these institutions free reign in the 90's. Then came the crash & debt was pushed onto the public purse. Inequality got worse & the only beneficiaries were the top 1%.

- Now we have a breeding ground for extremism, xenophobia & populism. How can this be reversed?
 - Get rid of short termism by imposing greater controls on financial institutions.
 - Reverse the intrusion of financial markets in public affairs
 - Increase collective ownership
 - Encourage mass participation (as was done in the relief of poverty campaigns)
 - Build something better through people centred policies

Celebratory Assembly Outside Birmingham Cathedral

Presentation – Ann Pettifor (PRIME Economics)

- Retrospective on Jubilee 2000 showed what an extraordinary event it was that allowed a coalition to be built that achieved great things.
- Events following 1998 showed that essential ingredients to effective campaigning are
 - Have a clear “ask” eg “Write off £300 billion by 2000”
 - Know the facts – we won the argument with the IMF on trade flows
 - Ordinary people can ask the right questions if they are given the facts, the knowledge & the understanding
- We have to keep going & recognise the incredible & overriding effect of the global financial systems.* However, we have leverage because massive investors eg Black Rock (\$3 trillion) are prepared to pay negative interest to Germany & USA because of their stability.

*Ann Pettifor’s book “The Production of Money: How to Break the Power of Bankers” examines this in detail

Presentation – Atallah Fitzgibbon (Islamic Relief)

- Islamic Relief was successful in tackling Pakistan’s debt problem by getting the government to look at the legitimacy of the debts.
- Unfortunately the government dragged its feet & the new government is allowing debt to balloon due to interest payments & the effect of Chinese loans.

Presentation – David Golding (NE-CAP)

- The terrible reality is that western governments are still allowing debt to increase to the detriment of ordinary people (eg Niger).
- Personal contribution & persistency are essential to successful campaigning