



## Recognising Palestine: a step towards a two state solution

On Monday 13th October I voted to recognise the state of Palestine and was proud to do so. It is about time the government stopped sitting on the fence on this issue.

When I spoke to Mahmoud Abbas I asked him what would be the most help action we could

take to promote a two state solution. His answer was recognising the state of Palestine.

Labour is clear that the conflict will only be resolved through negotiations on the basis of a two state solution.

## Tackling the threat of ISIS

In 2003 I marched alongside two million others in protest against the then Government's plan to invade an Iraq.

I agree with those who say that over 10 years on, it is clearer than ever what a colossal mistake that war was.

I understand that many people will be baffled that the United Kingdom is once again embarking on military action over the skies of Iraq. However, this action is fundamentally different. We cannot allow a caliphate to be established in the nascent democracy of Iraq and have a duty to respond positively to their request for help.

The action endorsed by MPs on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September is limited to air strikes against ISIS in Iraq. It does not allow for ground troops and does not allow for action in Syria.

The ground operation against ISIS will be waged by Iraqi Kurdish forces and the Iraqi army. We will be providing them with air cover which they badly need. The 2003 invasion of Iraq destabilised Iraq's defence capability and the sectarian policies of the post-invasion government of Nuri al-Maliki resulted in the stripping out of much of the Sunni-dominated military command. We have been assured that this will be addressed by the new government in Baghdad

# Defending the European Court of Human Rights



David Cameron plans to scrap the Human Rights Act and drop out of the European Court of Human Rights.

## The Tories' Bill of Privileges

The Tories have been banging on for years about the Human Rights Act: saying they want to replace it with a "British Bill of Rights" The problem is what should be in their new Bill of Rights? No-one is likely to object if they want to rebrand the Human Rights Act as "British" since the HRA is a reiteration of European Declaration of Human Rights and was basically drafted by British lawyers in the first place.

They've decided not to change the rights document, but change the pretty basic idea that they are universal. Only the worthy will have them. They draw distinctions between those who are responsible and those who are not; they will not allow "trivial" cases – with no definition. The Bill will redraft definitions of who is in danger of torture. It will not apply to the rights of foreign criminals, neither will it be available for those whose rights were breached abroad – e.g British soldiers dying of dehydration because of poor leadership. They specifically exclude travellers and people who step outside the law. I presume this will affect journalists trying to protect their sources.

## Remaining Members of the European Court of Human Rights & the Council of Europe

Cameron claims he wishes to remain a signatory to the Convention but he doesn't want the ECHR decisions to be binding - only "advisory". So if a decision is one the government doesn't like, they can just ignore it. This is legal nonsense. It will be music to the ears of the likes of Putin and Belarus who'd love to do the same, but the rest of civilised Europe will not let the British get away with this. The government will be required to decide if it is a member of the Convention or not. It should be noted that the European Union requires membership of the convention - so are we leaving the EU too?

## A Legally Illiterate Government

We will need to redraft the devolution settlements of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales as membership of the Convention is currently a requirement.

The Ministerial Code will need to be redrafted as these changes fly in the face of our international treaty obligations and international law and the Code insists that ministers comply with these.

It is not an overstatement to say that the Tories want to overturn the post-war settlement of checks and balances overseen by Churchill and undermine our standing in the world as a promoter of Human Rights for a few cheap votes won back from UKIP.

They are reckless and not fit for office.

# Labour Conference

The Conference at the end of September was Labour's last before the General Election next May.

I spoke at a number of events, fringes and receptions including at the Electoral Reform Society and Fabian fringes on whether a Labour/Liberal Democrat solution was desirable.

Needless to say, I did not hold back in my condemnation of their record in Government, their record locally and the campaign tactics.

I also spoke at the Liberty Fringe Question and Answer session on the importance of the Human Rights Act, the Women's Conference and Society of Labour Lawyers Meetings.



# Fundraising Dinner - Thursday 6th November

The General Election is only six months away. It will cost Islington South and Finsbury Labour Party around £20,000. With your help we have raised a quarter of this so far, but we still have a long way to go.

While this will allow us to fight the election in Islington for Labour to win the election we need marginal seats across the country to win as well.

That is why some of the proceeds of the fundraising dinner will go to help those seats fund the election as well.

**When: Thursday 6th November**

**Where: Mem & Laz, 8 Theberton St, N1 0QX**

**Tickets cost £60 and include three courses, wine, beer or soft drinks.**

I am also speaking at fundraising dinner's around the country to help raise sufficient funds to fight the election, most recently in Norwich and Bristol.



*Me with the Norfolk PPCs at the Norwich Labour Party fundraiser on Sunday 12th October.*

# My Diary Summary - October 2014

## Constituency Work

- Held surgeries and coffee mornings in the constituency.
- Hosted a talk on Individual Electoral Registration for campaigners.
- Spoke to local 6th formers
- Spoke at the Freshers' meeting of the LSE Labour Society.
- Met with the Vice Chancellor of London Met.
- Met with the Chief Executive of Voluntary Action Islington.
- Attended a performance at Sadler's Wells.

## Media Appearances

- Financial Times, Huffington Post, Guardian
- Question Time, Any Questions, Sunday Politics, Daily Politics, World At One, Newsnight and many regional radio services.

## Shadow Cabinet Activities and Parliamentary work

- Attended Labour Party Conference.
- Attended Women's Dinner.
- Spoke at the Fabian's fringe
- Spoke at the Society of Labour Lawyer's reception.
- Met with Chair of the Bar Council.

- Spoke at the Young Fabians' reception.
- Spoke at the Law Society reception.
- Spoke at the Faith's forum.
- Spoke at the Liberty Q&A.
- Spoke at the Electoral Reform Services
- Spoke at the Justice Policy Seminar.
- Spoke at the American Bar Association
- Spoke at the BDO Women's network.
- Met with the Head of Criminal Enforcement of the FCA.
- Spoke at the Mulberry Women's Conference.
- Spoke on a panel at the Chatham House conference on Human Rights.

## Campaigning and Fundraising

- Campaigned in Norwich North and spoke at the Norwich Labour Party fundraiser.
- Spoke at the Bristol Labour Lawyer's fundraising meal.

Tom sends out emails each week with details of upcoming campaigning. If you are not receiving these, please email him on: [tom@islingtonlabour.org.uk](mailto:tom@islingtonlabour.org.uk) or call him on 0755 711 5196.

You can also contact the office about campaigning on 0207 607 8373