

Green MEP Magid Magid calls for justice for Orgreave



Green Party

15 June 2019

The Green MEP for Yorkshire and Humber Magid Magid today will join the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign 35th anniversary rally.

He said: “Last year, as Lord Mayor of Sheffield, I was proud and honoured to dedicate one of my monthly campaigns towards demanding an immediate enquiry into this injustice from home secretary Sajid Javid. This year I will be joining thousands at the rally on Saturday to wholeheartedly reiterate that demand.

“Thirty five years after the grave abuse of state power and injustice of Orgreave, I commend everyone joining the community today to march for justice.

“The Green Party backs campaigners’ calls for an independent inquiry into the police brutality on that day.

“Coming to a clear and honest acknowledgement of what happened in the past is important in its own terms, to achieve the closure that the Hillsborough survivors and their families have won through hard campaigning. Orgreave deserves the same.

“There are still grave concerns about the behaviour of the police and security services in the UK, towards a wide range of communities, including black and minority ethnic communities and those from economically disadvantaged areas.

“Addressing the past is also a way of confronting the continuing abuses of the present, and by campaigners around many different campaigns uniting and supporting each others work, we all progress more effectively towards the goal of justice and respect for human rights and the law from the authorities.”

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Free school decision driven by ideology not evidence, says Green Party education spokesperson



Green Party

14 June 2019

Vix Lowthion, Green Party education spokesperson, has described the announcement today by Damian Hinds of 22 new free schools as a decision based on “ideology not evidence”.

Vix, a secondary school teacher, said: “Free schools have not raised attainment. They have consumed vast financial resources and are not accountable to their local communities. Their creation is driven by ideology, not evidence.

“They are not being put where they are needed, whilst too many of our community schools are bursting at the seams.

“The government must end this privatisation ideology and allow councils to plan for and deliver the educational needs of their communities.”

The announcement came as the failures of the school inspection system were exposed by a report showing that more than 80% of schools that had been top-rated by Ofsted were downgraded on their latest inspection, with inspections being conducted after a hiatus of up to a decade.

Vix said: “The Green Party calls for the focus to be schools cooperating to achieve the best result for every pupil, not competing against each other for league table places.

“We want to abolish Ofsted, replacing it with a truly independent organisation which would monitor standards but also work closely with schools to cooperatively share best practice and support each other.”

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[Greens support National Pensioners Convention protest against introduction of over-75s TV licence](#)



Green Party

13 June 2019

Green Party members will be at the BBC in Salford today, supporting a protest from the National Pensioners' Convention against the abolition of the free TV licence for the over-75s.

Astrid Johnson, Manchester Green Party member and candidate in the European elections, said: "That our most senior citizens should face the worry and concern, and potential loss of an essential bulwark against loneliness, a crucial entertainment in many people's lives, cannot be accepted.

"But the blame needs to be laid where it is due: at the government that pushed responsibility for funding the fee on to the BBC, when it had previously been accepted as a government responsibility.

"A further concern is that while the BBC has attempted to help some of the poorest older pensioners through sparing those in receipt of the pension credit, this is a blunt instrument that will miss many who need it most.

"Estimates are that 1.3 million pensioners who are eligible to get pension credit don't get it, and so will also miss out on a free TV licence.

"This is a demonstration of the dangers of means-testing, to which the Green Party is opposed. We want universal benefits – like the TV licence for over 75s."

Astrid continues: "More fundamentally, however, we are opposed to the structure of the licence, which operates as a poll tax, the poorest citizens in our society paying the same charge for it as billionaires.

“We very much believe in publicly funded public service broadcasting, but it should be funded from a ringfenced portion of progressive taxation.”

Michael Welton, Green Party councillor in Altrincham, Trafford, said: “The BBC is the fall guy for the Government’s cowardly buck passing of this unpopular decision.

“Means testing will exclude the 1.3 million people who are due pension credit but don’t claim it, many of whom are vulnerable or unwell.

“The Green Party’s policy of funding the BBC via progressive taxation is the only just solution.”

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[2050 zero-carbon: Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley says setting a target is not “action”](#)



Green Party

12 June 2019

Reacting to Theresa May’s answer to Green MP Caroline Lucas at Prime Minister’s Questions today, Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said: “The Prime Minister’s claim that setting a legal target is ‘action’ simply doesn’t stack up.

“As Caroline identified, there are significant steps that Theresa May could take in her short remaining time as Prime Minister, cancelling Heathrow expansion, turning money earmarked for new roads to public transport and stopping fracking.”

Jonathan continued:

“What most of the discussion has missed since the Prime Minister’s announcement is, however, the positive possibilities that a strong, fixed zero-carbon target date means for businesses.

“With Finland setting the goal of 2035, businesses there will be racing forward with new technologies and approaches.

“Yet our government is planning a review of the target in five years, so British business is not being given the stable policy framework that it needs to take advantage of the huge possibilities offered by the need to reshape our economy and society for the Climate Emergency.

“That is what business is asking for, nationally (1) and globally (2).

“Instead in Britain we have had see-sawing policy and sudden decisions, such as cutting and ending the feed-in tariff and removing the planned zero-carbon homes standard, that have left businesses around the country stranded. ”

Notes

1. <http://www.aldersgategroup.org.uk/latest#legislating-net-zero-target-is-crucial-step-forward>
2. <https://www.corporateleadersgroup.com/reports-evidence-and-insights/publications/publications-pdfs/we-mean-business-the-climate-has-changed.pdf>

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[Green peer responds to highly critical report about storage of data under the 'snoopers' charter'](#)



Green Party

11 June 2019

Green peer Jenny Jones has responded to a report on the use of the Investigatory Powers' Act (IPA – known as the 'snoopers' charter').

The campaigning group Liberty has highlighted the conclusions of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office that MI5 had "illegally mishandled" data including calls, messages, location and web-browsing history.

Commissioner Adrian Fulford said compliance failures first became clear in January 2016, but were only brought to the IPCO's attention in February 2019.

Jenny said: "This report has confirmed what we've known for some time, that the security services, as well as the police, are operating their surveillance systems without accepting that they have to operate lawfully, and in a properly targeted manner.

"I know from my own experience of being put on the domestic extremism database that valuable security time and energy are wasted on the wrong targets.

"We have to ensure the police and security services are not out of control, trampling on our human rights and civil liberties."

Back when the Act was passed in 2016, Jenny wrote: "We have given our security services unprecedented powers to spy on us." (2)

She said today: "They have clearly exceeded even the sweeping powers they were given, and broken the law in the process."

Further information: contact press@greenparty.org.uk, 07967-417859

Notes

(1) <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-security-mi5/watchdog-says-mi5-spy-agency-mishandled-snooping-data-for-years-idUKKCN1TC1NC?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews&rpc=921>

(2) https://twitter.com/GreenJennyJones/status/798922431545098240?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E798922431545098240&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theinquirer.net%2Finquirer%2Fnews%2F2477546%2Fsnoopers-charter-20-ip-bill-passed-by-parliament-and-will-become-law-within-weeks

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