

Green Party commits to reparatory justice for Afrikan enslavement



11 October 2020

- **Members back motion at online Autumn Conference**
- **Motion will see party call on Parliament to establish an All-Party Commission of Inquiry for Truth and Reparatory Justice**
- **Councillor Cleo Lake: “While we cannot change the past, we can go some way to heal and repair from it.”**

The Green Party has become the first major national party to commit to seeking reparations for the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Afrikans.

Members backed the motion on the final day of their Autumn Conference [1] [Sunday 11 October] which commits the Green Party to call on Parliament to establish an All-Party Commission of Inquiry for Truth and Reparatory Justice.

The party also supports calls from campaigners within the International Social Movement for Afrikan Reparations, such as Stop the Maangamizi Campaign and the International Network of Scholars and Activists for Afrikan Reparations [2], for the Government to commit to a holistic process of atonement and reparations in accordance with the United Nations Framework on Reparations.[3]

In July this year, Lambeth Council became the first local authority to pass a successful motion [4], led by Green Party councillor Scott Ainslie, calling for a parliamentary reparations commission to address the impact of slavery on current racial inequalities in the UK.

Ainslie, who has co-signed the motion to conference, said:

“This motion is a step towards Britain finally facing up to the historical impact it has had on countries throughout the world. I am proud that the Green Party is showing true leadership on this issue.

“If Britain can properly address the legacies of its colonial past, then it can truly deal with the root causes of our country’s socio-economic inequality rooted in systemic racism.

“By engaging in a genuine process of reparative and transitional justice, we can begin to heal holistically and re-balance the past and present injustices inflicted by the few which cause endless suffering to the many.”

The motion was proposed by Bristol Green Party Councillor Cleo Lake.

Lake said:

“Getting this motion to conference has been a great example of collaborative working with key reparations campaigners.

“The fact it has been backed by Green Party members represents a significant and historic milestone towards acknowledgement, justice and reconciliation over a painful shared history. The legacy of this history still plays out today through rife global inequality, racism, Afriphobia, and a ravaged planet that continues to be pillaged and disrespected.

“I am pleased that the Green Party, through its membership, is the political party leading the way in its support for this movement towards holistic reparations by voting for this motion.

“While we cannot change the past, we can go some way to heal and repair from it. And by taking decisive action, we can direct the future course of our shared humanity and planet.”

Esther Stanford-Xosei, one of the UK’s foremost reparations scholar-activists, and co-founder of the Pan-Afrikan Reparations Coalition in Europe, is among those representatives of the ISMAR who have supported the party’s work on the motion.

Stanford-Xosei said:

“This is a holistic way to begin a dialogue on Afrikan Reparations with British society and the state which tells the truth centred upon planet repairs in order not to pull communities apart.

“It begins with first educating ourselves. Reparations means to repair. You can only effectively repair when you are stopping the harm.”

ENDS

Notes

1

The Green Party Autumn Conference 2020 is taking place online from Friday 2 October to Sunday 11 October.

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/conference>

2

The International Social Movement for Afrikan Reparations includes groups such as [Stop the Maangamizi: We Charge Genocide/Ecocide Campaign](#) and the [International Network of Scholars and Activists for Afrikan Reparations \(INOSAAR\)](#).

3

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/remedyandrepairation.aspx>

4

Lambeth Council passed the motion on 15 July 2020.

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2020/07/15/greens-lead-on-first-successful-motion-to-demand-government-reparations-for-slavery/>

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[Green Party to end advertising for “high carbon” goods and services](#)



11 October 2020

- **Members back pioneering climate motion at online Party Conference**
- **Advertising for high carbon goods and services like SUVs and long haul flights to be banned as Party brings advertising rules into the 21st century**
- **“This will spark a long overdue conversation about the role of advertising in our lives” says Green Party peer Natalie Bennett**

Members of The Green Party of England and Wales have called for the end of advertising for “high carbon” goods and services, backing a motion which brings it into official Party policy.

The new policy is designed to “bring advertising rules into the 21st century” by phasing out adverts for goods and services which are harmful to the climate, such as SUVs and long haul flights.

The motion noted that there are already many restrictions on advertising on products which are socially and physically harmful, such as tobacco which was banned from being advertised and promoted in the UK since 2003.

A study by BMJ journal Tobacco Control found that the ban “significantly reduced exposure to pro-tobacco marketing influences” and their conclusions were found to “support the effectiveness of comprehensive bans on advertising”. [1]

In August 2020, the ‘Badvertising’ campaign called for adverts for SUVs to face a similar ban, noting that such vehicles make up more than 40% of new cars now sold in the UK, while fully electric vehicles count for less than 2%. [2]

The motion was backed by Bristol City Councillor Carla Denyer [3], who said:

“In a time of climate emergency, how can it be right that we are bombarded by endless adverts demanding we fly more, drive bigger cars and burn more fossil fuels?”

“We need to learn from the campaign against tobacco advertising. It used to be normal for children to see cigarette billboards on their route to school. After decades of campaigning, a new normal has been established and levels of smoking have fallen.”

“We can do the same for products which are trashing our planet. Ending advertising for high carbon goods and services would be a simple and socially beneficial way to reduce UK carbon emissions.”

Green Party peer Natalie Bennett said:

“After the year we’ve had, we’ve learned what matters most to us, and it’s not the things screaming at us from billboards, posters, radio jingles and television trailers.

“This common sense policy to curb the influence of the biggest polluters will spark a long overdue conversation about the role of advertising in our lives.”

ENDS

Notes

1

Source: https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/15/suppl_3/iii26.full

2

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53607147>

3

Carla Denyer is a Green Party Bristol City councillor, known for proposing and passing the first ever climate emergency motion on any council in Europe.

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Greens call for windfall tax on tech billionaires to pay for Green Recovery



7 October 2020

Following revelations that billionaires' wealth rose to \$10.2 trillion amid the coronavirus pandemic, the Green Party are calling for a windfall tax on the digital monopolists.[1]

Deputy leader Amelia Womack said:

"It's shocking to see how, as so many are losing their jobs and children were going hungry, some of the richest men in the world saw their obscene levels of wealth increase even more.

"During the crisis we saw the strength we have when we work together. We must make sure that the cost of the crisis does not fall on the poorest, as happened after the financial crisis a decade ago.

"Introducing a windfall tax on the supernormal profits earned in exceptional circumstances will help to pay for the Green recovery from coronavirus and I am calling on Chancellor Sunak to make good on his 'sacred duty' to protect the public finances by making sure that the wealthy pay their fair share."

The shocking figures on wealth concentration come following a report from the US Congress making clear that the massive profits enriching a tiny number were not made as a result of entrepreneurship or technological skill but through anti-competitive market practices and the use of monopoly power.[2]

ENDS

Notes

1

The report on incomes by UBS found that chief executive of Amazon Jeff Bezos saw his wealth increase by \$74bn while Elon Musk, founder of electric car company Tesla, has made the most money so far this year with his fortune increasing by \$76bn to \$103bn.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/oct/07/covid-19-crisis-boosts-the-fortunes-of-worlds-billionaires>

2

Damning revelations from the Congress report include:

- Attempts to interfere with market competition and abuse of monopoly position, exemplified by a 2012 email in which Facebook's Mark

Zuckerberg acknowledged that he planned to acquire photo app Instagram in order to “neutralise” it.

- A litany of anti-competitive practice from Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, Apple’s Tim Cook and Google’s Sundar Pichai, including trying to clone rivals or deny them services.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f3cb3da3-a306-4557-9d6f-ed519230bc81>

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[Amelia Womack says artists should be protected with a basic income](#)



6 October 2020

- **Green Party deputy leader responds to comments made by chancellor**
- **Womack: “Whether or not he was trying to make a point about all workers, this Government’s attitude towards the arts has been clear throughout this crisis”**

The chancellor Rishi Sunak has today warned workers, including those in the arts, will need to find new opportunities and retrain as the coronavirus pandemic continues.[1]

Reacting to the comments, Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack said:

“Today, thousands of musicians and performers, and all those behind the scenes, will have heard the chancellor write their careers off completely. Whether or not he was trying to make a point about all workers, this Government’s attitude towards the arts has been clear throughout this crisis.

“Lockdown has shown us how much we truly value the arts. We’ve tuned into TV, tucked into books and turned up the radio. To say all these people should just seek ‘new opportunities’ is ridiculous, when they bring joy, stimulation and sustenance to people everywhere.

“If we let this sector collapse, it won’t bounce back. The legends of the future will be lost and undiscovered. Imagine if Beyonce, Bowie and The Beatles had been told to seek ‘new opportunities’. Imagine how much poorer we would all have been in every sense of the word.

“Our artists deserve support, they deserve protection, and they deserve to know that they are valued. We need a universal basic income to protect them until we can all enjoy the arts to the fullest, safely, once again.” [2]

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-10-06/rishi-sunak-suggests-musicians-and-others-in-arts-should-retrain-and-find-other-jobs>

2

Earlier this year, Amelia Womack led a call alongside musicians such as The Libertines, The Charlatans and Reverend and the Makers asking the government to introduce a universal basic income to support artists during the pandemic.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/musicians-union-artist-support-arts-government-universal-basic-income-a9625511.html>

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[Greens welcome Prime Minister's conversion to wind power but warn much more is needed](#)



6 October 2020

- **Green co-leader warns that level of investment must match rhetoric**

Green Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley has welcomed the confirmation that the long-running opposition to wind power by the Conservative Party has finally been reversed.

The Prime Minister is today due to promise to power every home in the UK with offshore wind energy by 2030.[1]

Reacting to the news, Bartley said:

“For decades, Greens have been arguing that the UK is ideally placed to become a world leader in onshore and offshore windpower.

“But we have battled opposition from Conservative MPs locally and nationally as they sheltered their fossil fuel friends. Johnson’s support for wind power suggests that the transition to green energy is now irreversible.

“However, the level of investment proposed by the Prime Minister is nowhere near matching his rhetoric. The £160m for wind power due to be announced today falls far short of the £48bn that analysts say is necessary [2]. The Government needs to set out where this investment will come from.

“Nor will it provide what we need to power every sector of the economy, most notably transport. The Green Party proposes that 70% of the country’s electricity should be provided by wind by 2030. The Government’s proposals fall far short of this.

“And we need to connect the support for wind farms with an industrial strategy that means the jobs making the blades and towers of the wind farms are made in the UK. An economic and industrial conversion on this scale is what Greens mean by building back better.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54421489>

2

Analysis

source: <https://www.auroraer.com/insight/reaching-40gw-offshore-wind/>

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