

PLYMSTOCK & DISTRICT U3A

DISCUSSION GROUP

RECORD OF PAST MEETINGS - 2017

5th January 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Barbara Marlow (BM)

Sue Clements (SC)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Di Smart (DS)

Questions asked :-

DT – The Government is proposing to scrap the requirement for faith schools to recruit 50% of their intake from the local community, irrespective of faith. Is this not a total contradiction of Theresa May's rhetoric about healing divisions in our society, and also a gift to those with a radicalisation agenda?

JS – Do trade unions hold excessive assets and funds?

MC – What is the most important lesson you have learnt in your life?

BC – Why are children being given such odd names these days?

SC – Is socialism and liberalism dead?

BM – Do you think we'll notice any difference when we leave the EU?

DS – Are we becoming too cynical?

2nd February 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Barbara Marlow (BM)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Questions asked :-

DT – Will circumstances allow Donald Trump to complete his 4 year term as US President?

JS – How do you feel about Donald Trump's State Visit?

BM – Are the public sick of hearing about Donald Trump?

BT – Has reducing the speed limit on Elburton / Billacome Roads from 40mph to 30 mph served any useful purpose?

BC – Should zoos be abolished to help protect endangered species, and to protect animals from cruelty?

DT – What do you regard as the ultimate straight red card misdemeanour by a romantic partner?

2nd March 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Sue Clements (SC)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Di Smart (DS)

Nops Shotton (NS)

Questions asked :-

DT – We have heard a lot in recent months about the seemingly new topic of ‘Fake News’. What is your take on it, and is it really that new?

JS – Prince Charles is launching the ‘All Worth It’ campaign, to help disadvantaged young people to believe in themselves. What does this say about our society?

MC – Should parents be paid a child-minding allowance to look after their children at home until they are of school age?

BT – Should John Bercow be replaced as House of Commons Speaker for expressing his own opinions too much for a position which demands neutrality?

BC – Does Israel genuinely want a peace settlement, or do they prefer their advantageous status quo?

SC – Is loyalty outdated today?

NS – Should overseas aid be reduced, perhaps halved?

DS – Do people have a strong sense of conscience about the consequences of what they have worked on?

6th April 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Sue Clements (SC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Barbara Marlow (BM)

Di Smart (DS)

Nops Shotton (NS)

Questions asked :-

DT – After Brexit, the border between Northern Ireland and Irish Republic becomes a land border between UK and EU. This is currently an open border and nobody in Ireland wants that to change. How should this be resolved?

JS – Would Gibraltar be worth fighting for if Spain exerts its claim to Gibraltar forcefully?

BT – Is it right that the local police used the upstairs of double-decker buses for a surveillance viewpoint?

NS – Why is christening spelt with a small 'c'?

SC – Is morality in world politics now redundant, or has it always been so?

DS – Are MPs in tune with the living costs of the general public?

4th May 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Sue Clements (SC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Barbara Marlow (BM)

Di Smart (DS)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Questions asked :-

DT – Theresa May has declined the invitation to engage in live TV debates with other party leaders during the General Election campaign. How do you see the wisdom or otherwise of this political gamble?

JS – Do you agree with political parties agreeing pacts of collaboration in constituencies, where a party withdraws a candidate theoretically to clear the way for another?

MC – Now Parliament has been dissolved, HM Queen approaches you to deal with an imminent nuclear conflict. How would you react?

BT – Is Donald Trump right to suggest direct talks with Kim Jong-un over the situation with North Korea?

SC – Has anybody got a bucket list, and if so, what do you have on it?

DS – A new Charter of the Forest is to be launched in November on the 800th anniversary of the original one. Do you support this?

1st June 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Di Smart (DS)

Elsie Hobbs (EH)

Questions asked :-

DT – Despite what they say, do politician's ever put their country's interest first, and when arguably they have done, have they ever been rewarded by voters' gratitude at the ballot box?

DS – Are we becoming too reliant on technology?

BT – Has Theresa May damaged her position by opting out of last night's leaders' debate?

BC – Why is there such an historic prejudice towards Jews?

MC – Who is responsible for teaching children morality in this country?

EH – Are teachers facing intolerable pressures these days?

6th July 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Di Smart (DS)

Sue Clements (SC)

Barbara Marlow (BM)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Questions asked :-

DT – Should the voting age be reduced from 18 to 16 or 17?

MC – Regarding car purchase credit, should the interest rate be fixed, repossession require a court order, and customers prove credit worthiness at the outset?

BT – Is the decision to turn off the life support for Charlie Gard, the brain damaged baby, correct?

SC – Do we really need to commemorate all these anniversaries? Is it overdone?

DS – Are we too complacent about our ability to generate enough energy?

DT – What is your pet hate revolting habit?

3rd August 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Di Smart (DS)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Questions asked :-

DT – Considering what you have found out, or not found out, since the EU Rferendum, would you still vote the same way today, and if so, has your positioned strengthened or weakened?

JS – If you were given a dying wish for an item of food or drink, what would it be?

BC – How could lessons be learnt from the situation that arose from the Charlie Gard case?

DS – Are we in danger of losing our social history because of technology?

31st August 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Di Smart (DS)

Sue Clements (SC)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Questions asked :-

DT – Has our society become far too accepting of a culture of personal debt, even insofar as encouraging it?

JS – Can the world live with a nuclear North Korea?

BC – Should a proposed law change to allow the public to roam on private beaches proceed?

BT – Should the new Plymouth History Centre be named 'The Box'?

SC – Is the new aircraft carrier in the pipeline justified?

DS – It is proposed that by 2040 all new cars will be electrically powered. How is all the required energy to be generated?

5th October 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Di Smart (DS)

Sue Clements (SC)

Margaret Connolly (MC)

Questions asked :-

DT – A culture of setting targets was originally introduced in the public sector with the aims of improving service delivery and giving accountability to the public. Have the targets themselves replaced service delivery as the real targets?

SC – Disregarding current party leaders if needs be, who would you like to lead the country, and in particular the Brexit negotiations?

MC – Should all drugs be legalised and on general sale?

BC – Do we expect too much from the NHS, and should elements of the service be chargeable?

BT – There is evidence from student accommodation that standards of cleanliness are declining. What can be done about this?

DS – Is police work more demanding than it used to be?

26th October 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Bette Thomas (BT)

Di Smart (DS)

Sue Clements (SC)

Carole Lambert (CL)

Questions asked :-

DT – How do you see the end game of the Brexit negotiations playing out?

BT – Is it a sensible idea for the NHS to ease bed-blocking by utilising the general public's spare rooms?

CL – Should cyclists be compelled to ring their bells?

DS – Do you agree that climate change is largely human induced, and how can the effects be mitigated?

JS – Should returning ISIS fighters be readmitted without consequences?

SC – Is the 21st Century set to be the Chinese century, and how will that affect us?

7th December 2017

Present :-

Dudley Tolkien (DT)

Jo Sainsbury (JS)

Di Smart (DS)

Sue Clements (SC)

Bob Chapman (BC)

Questions asked :-

DT – How great is the threat posed by Donald Trump, both to the survival of western democratic values, and to the escalation of conflict in the world?

JS – Will the addition of Meghan Markle to the Royal Family put pressure on its sibling rivalry?

BC – Should Russia be banned from the Winter Olympics?

SC – As the Houses of Parliament need major costly refurbishment, should they be made a museum, and a new purpose-built assembly be created?

DT – Is the concept of a soul a reality, or a figment of human imagination? Either way, how would you define it?

JS – Has the Advent calendar lost its meaning?