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GOOD NEWS

WOMEN IN THE BOARDROOM

Britain's top listed firms 46% of firms now have women in the boardroom.

Female led companies now represent one fifth of all UK firms and have achieved the target set in 2000, up 16% since 2018.

INDEPENDENT AGING

The NGO Independent Aging is calling for a Government Commissioner for Aging post to be set up, to represent the particular needs and situations that elderly people are facing.

WILD VENISON ON THE HOSPITAL MENU

The East Lancashire hospital Group patients are now enjoying wild venison on the menu and this is proving very sustainable and very popular. 15,000 deer are culled annually in the management of woodlands, as deer no longer have any natural predators. Venison is high in protein and vitamins and a very healthy food.

FAIR TRADE FORTNIGHT

Continues until March 12th. The Fairtrade Foundation is promoting Shared Interest, a Fair Trade investment set up that supports 204 organisations abroad reaching 38,000 farmers and crafters, providing them with microfinance to set up their own businesses, saving them from dire poverty. This is "a meeting of hearts and minds" investment that saves lives and families and can start from as little as £100.

Why is Fair Trade so important? Because it is literally lifesaving and life giving for our planet and for the many thousands of poor farmers who grow the food we consume. Exploitation by big companies who are only concerned with making a profit for shareholders means that farmers earn perhaps less than a dollar a day and nothing when prices fall. With Fair Trade a decent living wage is guaranteed and an extra premium which the farmers choose how to use for their communities, in health care, education, community development and learning business skills, forming cooperatives and

adapting organic farming methods to combat climate change.

We have POWER IN OUR HANDS to buy FAIR TRADE tea, coffee, chocolate, bananas, etc. to change the world and the lives of thousands of farmers and their families, to spread the word about Fair Trade and Trade Justice.

Having the universities participate this year in our Falmouth Town's Fair Trade Fortnight Events has been really good for the town and for us as the Steering Group. We have been impressed by the universities' evident emphasis on Sustainability and Care of the Planet and we look forward to more networking and working together.

Our wish also is to expand our Steering Group to include university representatives.

Mary Bradley

Falmouth Fair Trade Town Steering Group

FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

PAYING THE LIVING WAGE

Out of 22 dioceses only 4 are accredited living wage employers (National Justice and Peace Network).

Most dioceses have policies on the Environment but not on Social Justice.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported in 2022 that more than two thirds of working-age adults in poverty live in a household where at least one adult is in work.

INDIA has just had the warmest February on record and a heatwave is imminent.

THE POWER OF PRAYER TO CHANGE WORLD EVENTS

So many elderly people feel the world is too fast for them to have an active part. Yet these people are an amazing asset, for these are the people who have power to pray for younger generations, our communities and for the world. Their silent prayer is the greatest gift.

OUR OWN PRAYER CAN CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY AND ALLOW MIRACLES TO HAPPEN.

FORTHCOMING TALK ON SHELTERBOX

2pm Tuesday 14th March at St Mary's Church Hall Falmouth. Come and join us and hear the latest reports and developments of our own Cornish Charity, which is now is an international organisation providing "Tents for a Space to call Home" at times of disaster, war, floods and famines.

CARE 4 CALAIS

6//03/23

Tomorrow the Government is expected to launch its most draconian anti-refugee legalisation yet, as Rishi Sunak bids to make the UK off-limits to any refugees other than those his government hand picks.

It is anticipated that under the new laws, people arriving small boats will:

- Have their asylum claims made automatically 'inadmissible'
- Be subject to mass detention
- Be removed to a third country as soon as practicable
- Be permanently banned from returning to the UK
- Be unable to use family rights laws to stop deportation

This raises immediate practical issues.

- Firstly, mass detention may well be unlawful. If it is possible under the new law – where would thousands of people be held? And how much would this cost?

- If people are to be deported, then where does the Government intend to send them? It's clearly not Rwanda (the Government has now said there will be no Rwanda fights before 2024) and there are no agreements in place with other countries, despite the Government's many attempts to make them. To comply with international law, any agreement would have to be with a 'safe' country.

The critical question that needs to be asked is, what exactly is the Government trying to achieve?

If its aim is to stop small boats and people smugglers, there is a far more effective option readily available. The UK could give safe passage to refugees in Calais who have a viable asylum claim, transfer them to the UK safely, and process their claims on arrival here.

As 90 per cent of those who cross on small boats do so to claim asylum (and the vast majority have it granted) this would immediately remove 90 per cent of people smugglers' profits. It would of course have the added benefit of saving lives. It would not drive up numbers, as these applicants are coming anyway.

Logic suggests, then, that the Government's goal is not to stop the people smugglers. So what IS its intention?

It appears that the Government's real aim is to stop anyone claiming asylum in the UK, other than people whom they hand pick. This explains their favour for the limited number of 'safe and legal routes' that they determine.

But this is not how asylum is supposed to work.

The UN Refugee Convention bases asylum on an assessment of an individual's need, and presupposes that asylum should be open to anyone who needs it. Does our Government disagree with that principle? Does it really want to take us out of the Refugee Convention altogether? If they truly believe this is a defensible moral position, then they should show their conviction and say so publicly.

But they don't. Instead they proclaim that innocent refugees are 'illegal', criminalising those who are unable to defend themselves, and instilling fear and division in our society.

Yesterday trade union leaders sent an inspiring message of solidarity to refugees. If Rishi Sunak's government showed half as much leadership, promoting tolerance, instead of fear and division, our country could look the future with confidence and certainty, instead of name-calling and fighting among ourselves.

Sunak is hoping to implement the new legislation by September. It is likely that the new laws will apply to all arrivals via Calais, and not just small boats. It seems a crude, cruel and impractical plan that will cause untold suffering and pain with little improvement. Such as prospect, however, has never stopped them before.

Read more about how a safe passage policy would work: <https://care4calais.org/safepassage/>.

Clare Moseley

Founder of Care4Calais