



GREENING EUROPE

NEWS FROM MOLLY SCOTT CATO THE SOUTH WEST'S GREEN MEP AUTUMN 2016

BREXIT

HOW TO TAKE BACK CONTROL

“The EU referendum has shown a nation divided and the vote to leave has created huge economic uncertainty and revealed the desperate state of our democracy.

“This was clearly a vote against something, not a vote for a clear alternative. Many of the problems that the 52% who voted to leave identified as being to do with our membership of the EU are actually problems that have been created by the decisions of UK governments and domestic policies.

“Job insecurity, our housing crisis, a crumbling NHS and massive cuts to public services are the result of years of austerity and growing inequalities. To the elites who created these problems the EU provided the perfect bogeyman. A few catchy slogans such as ‘regain our sovereignty’ and ‘take back control’ helped seal the leave vote.

“But the actions of the government since the referendum show they are doing the exact opposite to giving back power to the people. Theresa May and a small cabal of hard-line Brexiters are making decisions behind closed doors off Westminster corridors. They are refusing to grant MPs a vote on the terms of the negotiations and ruling out the chance to let the people have a say on the final deal.

“As Greens we want to defend and renew our democracy; unite broken



communities; and keep a positive and close relationship with our European neighbours.

“We say that if the UK is to protect jobs, workers’ rights and the environment, our interests are best served by staying as close to the EU as possible.

“We also want the negotiation terms of any Brexit deal to take place inside Parliament before Article 50 is triggered.

“If we are really to take back control, the public must have a say on the final deal being proposed by the government and the EU, either through a general election or further referendum.

“We must also seize this opportunity to democratise our antiquated political structures. This is why I have called for a Great Reform Bill, to bring in a

proportional voting system where every vote counts; a democratic House of Lords and a written constitution.

“As someone who voted to remain in the EU I of course stand alongside the 48% – over 16 million people – who voted likewise, especially at this time when their voices are increasingly being side-lined.

“But I also want to build bridges with the 52% who voted to leave; I acknowledge they won the referendum. But Green policies on the economy, tackling corporate power, housing, public services and the environment can tackle so many of their concerns.”

There are many actions that those who want to maintain a close relationship with Europe can take. Here are three:

- Ask your MP to represent your views in any Brexit negotiations and lobby them to press for a parliamentary vote on the government’s Brexit plans. Find your MP: <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/>
- Defend the rights of UK and EU citizens wherever they choose to live: <http://writetoremain.uk/>
- Join or form a group in your community which is working to maintain a positive and close relationship with Europe; check out: <http://www.britainforeurope.eu>

KEEPING UP WITH MOLLY

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CONTINUING THE WORK IN EUROPE ...



EU PARLIAMENT SEEKS TAX JUSTICE

Molly has taken up her seat in the European Parliament's Panama papers committee of inquiry and has set to work immediately, calling on Home Secretary Amber Rudd to appear before the committee. It was set up in the wake of tax evasion revelations disclosed by the Panama papers, and this has been followed by further revelations in the Bahama Leaks. Molly has called on Amber Rudd to give evidence following revelations that she was previously involved in two companies based in an offshore tax haven, and another where her co-director was jailed for fraud. Molly said:

"Our government seems keener on shutting down legitimate lines of enquiry on tax dodging than they are on shutting down tax havens."

"As a British MEP it has been a constant source of embarrassment to learn the central role played by the City of London and the UK's overseas territories in the network of tax havens that enable a tiny minority to live beyond tax law. I am therefore delighted to be a member of a committee unravelling the shady and secretive world of tax avoidance and evasion and helping to deliver tax justice."

The controversial TTIP trade deal appears to be floundering due to French and German opposition and strong public opposition. Greens have been at the forefront of the fight against this dangerous EU-US deal and over 3.5m people have signed a Europe-wide petition against it.

However, a similar deal, CETA – often referred to as TTIP's lesser known cousin – has recently been signed by Canada and the EU. Resistance to the deal by the regional state of Wallonia in Belgium, who were concerned about how CETA threatens public services and environmental and social laws, almost derailed the agreement. Wallonia and other parliaments still have the chance to veto the CETA trade treaty and the European Parliament will also get to vote on it.

This Comprehensive Economic and

Trade Agreement poses a serious threat to farmers and food producers in the South West. Molly said: *"Many of the worst fears we had about TTIP could become reality through CETA. Food standards in Canada are much weaker than those in the EU so we could find foods drenched in pesticides, hormones and food dyes on the menu faster than we think."*

"Our vital small scale food producers, many producing unique and high quality products, could be forced to compete with inferior and intensively produced imports. The government needs to stand up for our farmers post-Brexit and prioritise a transition away from intensive farming, towards environmentally sustainable agriculture. CETA will take us in the opposite direction and risks a race to the bottom on food quality, environmental standards and animal welfare."

HISTORIC NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT VOTE

MEPs have voted in favour of a historic resolution to prohibit nuclear weapons. The resolution was co-authored by Molly and calls for the establishment of a nuclear free zone in Europe. It also calls on all EU governments to back a UN resolution to work on a new treaty banning all nuclear weapons and to continue working on freeing the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction.

Molly said: *"This was a victory for global peace. With Europe being increasingly threatened by the forces of right-wing nationalism and extremism, this vote sends out a clear message that Greens and the EU are leading the way when it comes to peace and security."*

"In this context the renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons system is clearly inappropriate and misguided."

"It is disappointing that Labour

continues to support the renewal of Trident, based partly on the idea that nuclear weapons manufacture and maintenance creates jobs. A new report I have commissioned makes clear that for far less public investment, we could invest in socially productive employment to replace Trident-related jobs."

SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE DETAIL.

CONTINUING THE WORK FOR THE SOUTH WEST ...

BADGER CULL: MASS CRUELTY SUPPORTED BY BAD SCIENCE

Molly has responded angrily to news that the culling of badgers is being extended to four new areas of the South West: South Devon, North Devon, North Cornwall and West Dorset. Culling will also be extended for a fourth year in Somerset and Gloucestershire, and a second year in North Dorset.

Molly says: "Extending a failed and inhumane policy will do nothing to address the dire situation facing farmers affected by Bovine TB. We need effective and scientifically grounded policy, not mass cruelty supported by bad science. We need to re-focus efforts on extending programmes of badger vaccination, and on investment into developing a cattle vaccine."



HINKLEY C: ECONOMIC ILLITERACY

Molly has denounced the government's decision to proceed with new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point. She described the decision as 'economically illiterate, technically flawed, environmentally risky and a threat to security.' The decision followed a so-called 'comprehensive review' of the scheme, called for by Theresa May. The reactors are being built by French energy giant EDF with the backing of Chinese cash.

Molly said: "As we prepare to leave the EU, the government seems determined to turn its back on experts in the name of political convenience. Having insulted our European partners through an imperfect referendum, the

government believes it cannot afford to offend the Chinese. In a desperate attempt to demonstrate Brexit Britain is open for business, the government is engaged in a national kowtow exercise, handing over our energy infrastructure to a French corporation and the Chinese Communist Party.

This is the exact opposite of taking back control, which would come through a renewable energy revolution. As Germany and other countries have shown, community owned renewables can take power away from foreign corporations and governments and hand it back to the people, generating clean, green energy and thousands of home grown jobs in the process."

SWITCH THE STICK



Molly has thrown her full support behind a Bristol based campaign to end the use of plastic cotton bud sticks.

The City to Sea campaign has

launched a petition calling on retailers to #switchthestick from plastic to paper stem cotton buds instead.

Millions of cotton buds are flushed down toilets every year, and end up in

waterways and rivers and so get washed out to sea. Because they are small and can squeeze through sewage filters, they make up an estimated 60% of all sewage related beach litter.

Molly says: "Plastic pollution is one of the most serious problems affecting the health of our oceans. And because no ocean life is free from the effects of plastic waste it finds its way into the human food chain.

"I commend this Bristol based campaign for raising the profile of this critical issue and urge retailers to switch the stick. It's not difficult and would be an important move in protecting our waterways, rivers and oceans."

DEVONPORT: FROM TRIDENT JOBS TO GREEN EMPLOYMENT



Trident-related jobs can be replaced with green jobs using existing local skills and facilities.

The debate about the renewal of the UK's submarine-based Trident nuclear weapon system is of course a major ethical issue. Greens have always regarded all such weapons as immoral, militarily useless, and a breach of our obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But this new report

estimated 11,500 civilian jobs in the UK, making them some of the most expensive jobs in the world.

For just a few hundred million pounds, significant green jobs can be created and the people of Plymouth offered opportunities to develop new sustainable local economies and employment.



Devonport: Europe's largest naval facilities.

finds there is also a strong economic case for decommissioning Trident. It finds that Trident-related jobs can be replaced with green jobs, at much lower cost, while making use of existing local skills and facilities.

The naval base at Devonport is a major local employer, but the report finds that it will remain so with or without Trident-related jobs. The report also concludes:

The current jobs linked with Trident are limited, and can and should be replaced through a growing renewables sector.

Some estimates put the life-time cost of Trident renewal at £200 billion; renewing Trident would safeguard an

Molly said: *"Some people, including some Trade Unions, argue that the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system helps sustain thousands of high-quality jobs in the UK, including in Plymouth. But this report blows that argument clean out of the water. For far less public money, we could invest in socially productive employment to replace Trident-related jobs.*

"We can abandon Trident replacement while maintaining employment but start transferring investment and skills into socially useful and sustainable jobs, making use of all the fantastic skills and resources available at Devonport."

"Creating new green jobs can be viewed as an act of peace; nuclear defence is an industry of war."

GREEN REPORT

The report: **Devonport: Trident alternatives: an overview of green employment potential**, by CAG consultants, will be launched in Plymouth on Wednesday 16th November. The full report can be viewed at: www.mollymep.org.uk/devonport



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