

This cover has been intentionally left blank in order to appease those who believe their God can't take a joke and are prepared to kill to prove it

Elect M



At least you know where

larmite



you stand with the fucker



COVER STORY

CARTOON VIOLENCE

Six weeks on from the Paris massacre we ask: what kind of tosser do you have to be to murder people over a stupid drawing? Even if it is of Mohammed?

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Children are dying of measles because their parents are fucking idiots. We yell into the void, as usual.

Editor's Shriek by John Wirstham-Harte



"Here's hoping that 2015 will be a bit more cheerful." Well, fuck. The new year didn't waste any time sucking, did it? France became the latest country to get its very own 9/11 (after Australia, Britain, Spain), albeit post-al Qaeda. Kinda sorta. IS is like the relaunched post-merger al-Qaeda. The Lloyds TSB of terrorism. Anyway, it doesn't really matter because whatever they're calling themselves they're nothing but a bunch of tossers who unfortunately have some pretty impressive ordnance and an inexplicable ability to make other tossers join them.

In theory we should be a little worried about the whole thing, as a satirical magazine—Charlie Hebdo with more words than cartoons (although we'd be happy to accept any Charlie-style cartoons you send in — see page 25 for details). Not only that, but we named the "Islamic State" our Cunts of the Year for 2014. Fortunately, few people have heard of us, and of those who have, only approximately five of them, if that, know the rough location of our offices. Besides, we called IS cunts, not Mohammed (PBUH). He's fine by us, and while he'd undoubtedly find us a bunch of irritating nonbeliever dickheads, he would under no circumstances call for us to be brutally murdered, even if we had mocked him specifically, which we never have and (unless he appears on Celebrity Big Brother or something) never will. In fact, we reckon he'd basically be on our side regarding IS. See the main article for some choice Qu'ran quotes on the subject.

Enjoy the magazine, because it's the last normal one until late June at the absolute earliest. Next up, a massive double-length election special, due out on May 1st. We plan to be out of the country on election day (don't worry, we're going to vote by post), possibly eating pastries — whether in celebration or to dull the pain...well, we'll find that out, won't we?

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Unless otherwise indicated, all materials are used without permission. No profit is made from the distribution of this magazine. No attempt has been made to supersede existing copyright. This magazine is not affiliated with any company or service mentioned herein. I mean, obviously. We only mention it to cover our arse. Neither are we affiliated with any organizations or pressure groups mentioned in passing in these pages. We know that "President of the Board of Trade" isn't the main title anymore, or even in 1985, but it's a cool-sounding title so we use it all the time.

NEXT ISSUE: BUMPER ELECTION SPECIAL

A NEW OLD VISION FOR BRITAIN



(Cover not finalised)

THE CONSERVATIVE MANIFESTO 2015

Available free at libraries, assuming you can find one we haven't closed already

I STARTED A JOKE



Les Français musulmans en ont marre de l'islamisme • **RISS** au 1^{er} meeting de Sarko • **NICOLINO** rencontre les paysans pleins de pesticides • **MARIS** abat en vol les pilotes d'Air France



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NOUVELLE FORMULE

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..that set the whole world crying. Satire can now get you killed, apparently. Just as well the location of our office isn't public knowledge, and also no-one's heard of us. If est proper Charlie: **Sampford Courtenay.**

“The Prophet is avenged!”

That's what the brothers grim are said to have yelled after gunning down several cartoonists in Paris on a Wednesday morning in January. “The Prophet is avenged!”

The horror of what they did has been well documented; the despicability, the monstrosity, the sickening evil. What hasn't been touched on as much is the sheer slack-jawed drooling *idiocy*, the cretinism, the moronity of their actions, and that statement is at the heart of it.

“The Prophet is avenged!”

Because the Prophet can't avenge himself, it appears. The messenger of Allah. Great mates with the angels (and Islamic angels are hardcore; Muhammad was taught to read basically by one of them beating the shit out of him until he said okay, okay, I can read, just stop hitting me). The last Prophet of Islam. Apparently a powerless child who needs big boys with guns to commit massacres every time someone talks smack about him.

“The Prophet is avenged!”

Bullshit. Your tiny pricks are all you wanted to avenge. Neither Allah nor His Prophet need your help dealing with some wilfully juvenile French cartoonists. And they certainly don't need you to use them as motifs for your little power trip. Look up an Arabic dictionary: He's God, for crying out loud. We're pretty sure that part of the point of accepting this is to assume that he knows what he's doing. He's omnipotent; He's got this. QED.

Take a look at the Qu'ran. “*And when you see those who engage in [offensive] discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into another conversation. And if Satan should cause you to forget, then do not remain after the reminder with the wrongdoing people.*” And later: “*Whenever they (believers) hear vain talk of ridicule, they withdraw from it decently and say, ‘To us our deeds and to you yours; Peace be upon you, we do not seek to join the ignorant.’*” There you go, you fuckheads: it's Qu'ranic law that when someone talks smack about the prophet, you ignore them. Possibly you passive-aggressively call them a twat, but that's all. This is what Obama meant when he said Islamic State weren't truly Islamic: though they fervently believe otherwise, Islam is not their driving motivation, merely their excuse, in the same way that Pat Robertson is, scripturally speaking, half as Christian as Richard Dawkins (and three times as much of a twat, which is impressive). IS might as well hold a massive bacon cookout in their backyard for all that Mohammed is likely to be impressed by what they're doing.

And it has already come down to you in the Book, the Qu'ran continues, that when you hear the verses of Allah [recited], they are denied [by them] and ridiculed; so do not sit with them until they enter into another conversation. Indeed, you would then be like them. Indeed, Allah will gather the hypocrites and disbelievers in Hell all together.” (An-Nisaa': 140). In other words, anyone who takes the piss out of the Allah, his Prophet or his Book is *naturally* a massive fuckwad by definition, but he's also too doomed to bother with. Allah knows what's going on, because he's God, and they'll get their desserts. Let 'em laugh; you'll get the last one when they're slowly rotating on a spit in Jahannam, and you're up in Jannah eating pies.

Sadly, such obvious “insurance passages” tend to just get ignored by those single-minded and broken enough, just like the one in the Bible about “turning the other cheek”. Further evidence that they're not really Islamic at all. They don't care about any parts of the religion except the ones that they can use to justify their atrocities.

But we said much of this in the last issue when naming IS 2014's Cunts of the Year. Let's talk about the victims instead. And the massive headache they caused progressives by getting brutally murdered and making them look at their back issues. The bastards.

Hands up if you'd heard of Charlie Hebdo before they got massacred. Hands down if you're French. If your hand is still up, there's a good chance you're a bloody liar. We certainly weren't familiar—we'd heard the name in passing, we think, but we were better acquainted with Les Guignols, if only because they're a straight adaptation of Spitting Image. The massacre inevitable threw the magazine into the public consciousness the world over,

which was a mixed blessing (for reasons other than the killings themselves, we mean).

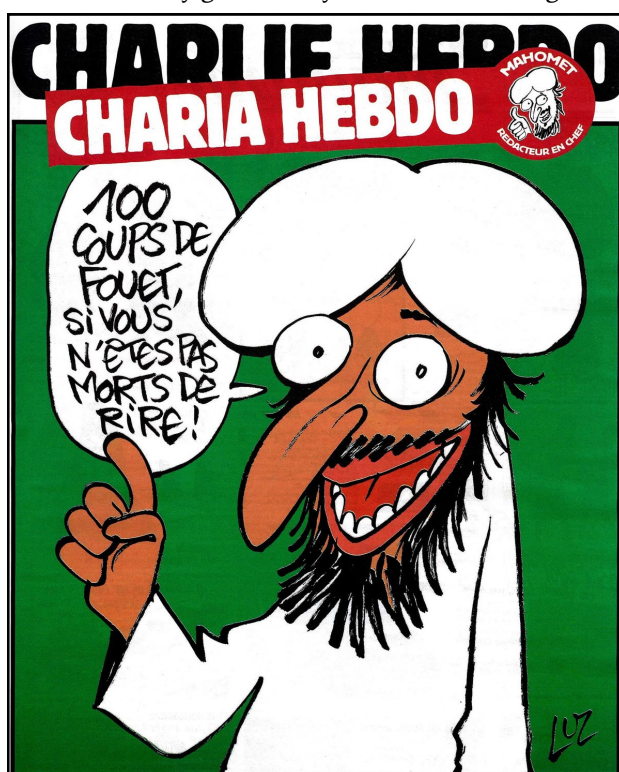
Because this is the modern world, it only took a few hours before the worldwide outrage, upset and mourning turned into "welp, guess they deserved it herp a derp" when someone fished out some troubling-looking old cartoons and covers from the magazine's recent history. The most famous was the one drawn by Laurent "Riss" Sourisseau (shot in the shoulder, but survived) with four hideously caricatured pregnant Muslim women labelled as "The sex slaves of Boko Haram" - referring to the dozens of kidnapped girls sold into slavery in Nigeria. They're yelling into the picture plane, "Hands off our welfare!"

On pure face value, this is of course horrific. Beyond victim-blaming. And like we said, this is the modern world. Who has time to look past face value for anything anymore? More damning evidence came out that Charlie was just reaping the whirlwind: an image by the murdered editor Charb depicting Justice Minister Christine Taubira as a monkey, underneath some French words or other. Clearly a racist drawing, and proof positive that Charlie Hebdo brought it all on themselves and (by some arguments) do not deserve a shred of pity, except in that they were murdered by those terrible savage Mussulmen.

But dig deeper and you'll discover that to call Charlie Hebdo racist would be like calling Peter Tatchell a raging homophobe. Charlie was and is actually one of the most dedicated anti-racist publications in France, and one of the most vocally left-wing to boot. Charb was a former member of the French Communist Party and had contributed posters to various anti-racist organisations.

But then, what's the deal with the racist-looking cartoons? The depictions of Mohammed that they got killed over, for example? The one that mostly comes to mind is the Mohammed drawn by Luz, who gave him a long, pointed nose. This is problematic, but not intentionally racist; it's just a caricature, no different from any given beaky Gerald Scarfe image of Thatcher. Except, of course, that there's an added resonance to the large, pointed nose when applied to Semitic figures (Arab or Jewish), which is why the caricature is problematic. But that's all. Otherwise it depends on how it's used, and the Luz Mohammed on the front of the "Sharia Hebdo" issue is a cheerful sort of chap, albeit one threatening physical violence on your person if you don't find the magazine funny. As drawn by Charb, on the other hand, he was basically the standard bright-yellow lumpy clay person, with the traditional huge, spherical Gallic nose, that populated the rest of his cartoons, albeit with a beard.

When they weren't just generally taking the piss (as with the naked Mohammed asking if you like his arse — a reference to and direct quote from Godard's Contempt, intended to mock the Innocence of Muslims YouTube video rather than the Prophet himself), Charlie's Mohammed tended to be deployed in criticism of his extremist "followers". The best example of this is Charb's cover to #1163, just a few months ago (reproduced at the start of this article). "If Mohammed returns..." is the headline; Mohammed, knife at his throat, is saying, "I'm the Prophet, idiot!" while the IS idiot about to behead him says "Shut up, infidel!" The same point



we made in several paragraphs, made in one image. Basically, their attitude to Mohammed was and is as irreverent as their attitude to everything else in the world, with an extra dollop because religion is a major bugbear of theirs — partly because they're so easy to provoke. Not just Islam, but religions in general: another famous cover showed a homosexual three-way between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, drawn by Luz in much the same way as his cheerful, lash-happy Mohammed.

As for the Boko Haram welfare queens and monkey-lady Justice Minister cartoons, there are multiple levels to these. First, in the case of the “Hands Off Our Welfare” one, this is an example of a Charlie Hebdo cover tradition: take two big news stories and blend them together into one ridiculous image. In this case it was the ongoing storm over benefits reform, and obviously those Boko Haram fuckstains. The combination that results is, as is the aim, basically absurd, but it also makes another point, and it's not that the kidnapped girls are moochers. It's a reduction ad absurdum that, again, works on a couple of levels: first, as a “first world problems” illustration — as which it's effective, but a little facile. Fortunately, it can also pertain to the delightful gang of mischief-makers known as the Front National. In case you weren't aware, the FN are the French UKIP, only rather than being the Diet BNP, they're the full-strength thing. They don't pretend not to be a bunch of racists. At the time this issue came out, they'd done a lot of shouting about how political refugees and asylum seekers should not be allowed to claim benefits, because they're brown and foreign, no wait, I mean, no, actually that's basically it. This was based around the old chestnut of anchor babies: get pregnant, come to America (or France in this case), have a baby there, it gets full citizenship and you can claim welfare and live like a King without ever having to work because that's totally how the Welfare State works you guys. The Riss



cartoon takes this principle and applies it to the sex slaves of Boko Haram, many of whom are impregnated by their rapists and (of course) have to see it through to term. Essentially, it's a logical extrapolation of the FN's viewpoint, taken to an indefensible but ideologically consistent place. “This is what the FN really believe”.

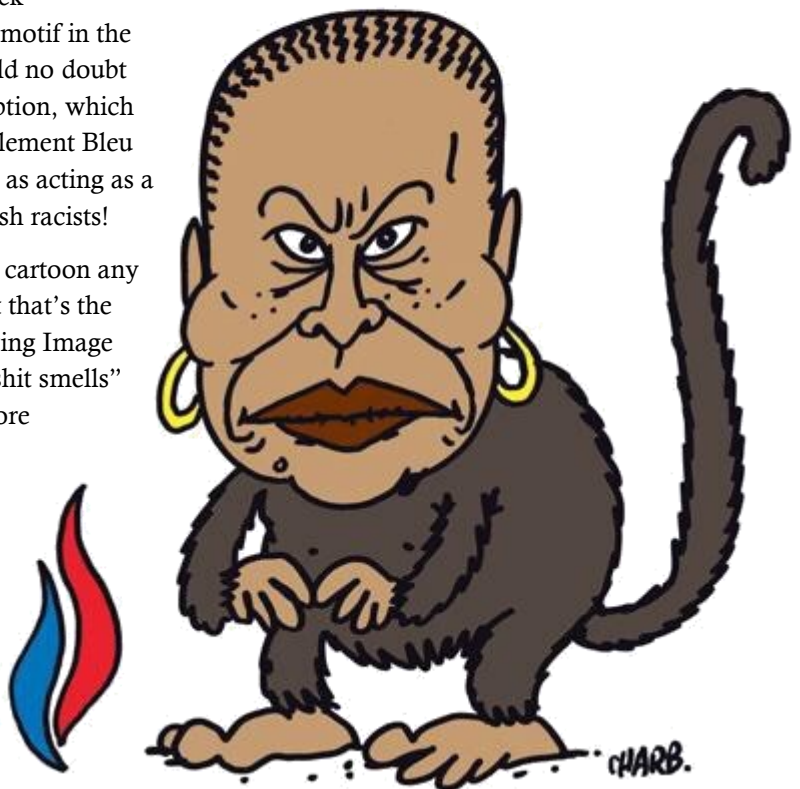
The monkey-lady Justice Minister is similar. This is a reference to an incident involving an FN candidate's Facebook page and a denunciation of Taubira (French-Guyanese, in case it matters, which it doesn't) on the grounds that she's A Black.

Said candidate posted the picture to the left (“at 18 months”, “now”) along with a delightfully whimsical statement to the effect that Taubira is a savage who should be swinging through trees. (Not racist). No, seriously, they appended the phrase “not racist” to the post.

In response, Charb drew that cartoon — more an illustration, really — depicting, again, what the Front National actually believe and are okay with: that black people are equated with monkeys. The blue-and-red motif in the corner is the FN logo, as the intended audience would no doubt recognise. They'd also understand the joke in the caption, which plays on the FN's nickname-slash-slogan, “Rassemblement Bleu Marine” — which means “Navy Blue Rally” as well as acting as a pun on their leader, Marine Le Pen. Oh, those puckish racists!

Knowing the context, of course, doesn't make either cartoon any easier to look at (or reproduce in this magazine). But that's the point. Satire is supposed to be ugly. That's why Spitting Image (and the Guignols) looked like that. You can't say “shit smells” without mentioning shit, and the stinkier it is, the more important that you understand the full aroma. If necessary, the satirist will grab your head and rub your face in it. Hence hot-button images of Mohammed being beheaded by (self-declared) Muslims, or sex traffic victims as the welfare queens they'd be labelled as by the likes of Le Pen. In a country where the FN has become a genuine political force, there's no room for Mock the Week.

RASSEMBLEMENT BLEU RACISTE



PROPAGANDA



Unlike in America, British elections are a process which we know who's going to win. Even beyond that, we're not even allowed to talk about the election in Parliament (and the EU) until the polls are closed.

Broadcasts that only run at specific, agreed times, picking up momentum until it finally crashes. The starting pistol won't be fired for at least a week. Election fatigue doesn't set in more than a few days.

Unless you have a billboard in town. We don't have traditional Saatchi-influenced advertising campaigns, but the advertising campaign



**IMAGINE IF YOU
NOT VOTING MEANT
ED MILIBAND BECAME
PRIME MINISTER**

Help keep Ed Miliband out of No. 10 - PLEDGE TO VOTE TODAY

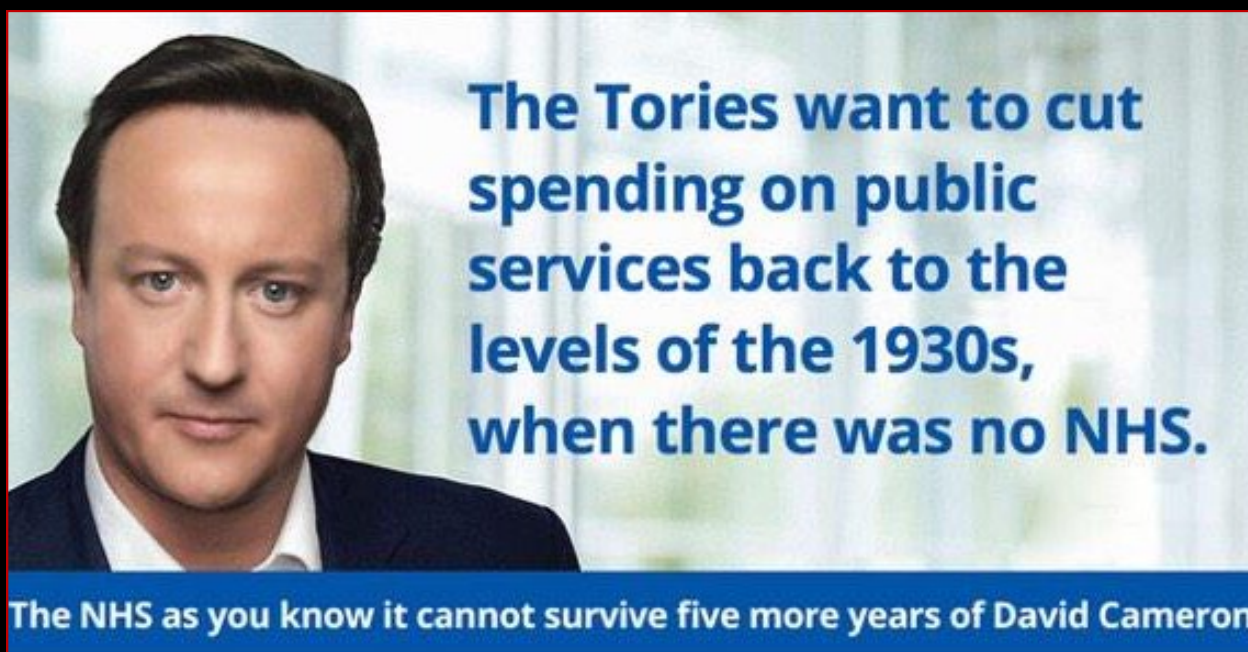
...It would be quite ironic, given that it's what we want to happen (or at least out of the several possible outcomes, this is the most likely of the ones that we wouldn't hate). They left the logo out, but this is a Tory poster, but quite cleverly using red as the predominant colour instead of blue. They're not trying to fool anyone into thinking this is a Labour poster — no-one's that thick who's registered to vote — but it means it doesn't look like a Tory poster until you read the words. Non-Tory voters are more likely to look at for more than the millisecond it takes to register the colour ("blue, fuck that"). It also means that the poster plays down, almost completely, the identity of the party — no name, no logo, no signature colour — which given that they're pretty unpopular is probably a good idea. Of course, they're *all* pretty unpopular this year, but that's not the advertisers' fault.

ANDA NOW

election campaigns are very carefully rationed. It helps that we have a party system under no need to be fighting them and don't have to spend three years trying to decide, of course, but are much better adjusted. We don't have campaign ads — those are prohibited by an Act of Parliament on the grounds that they make democracy into a car show. Instead we have Party Political Broadcasts, avoidable junctures, and we don't have an endless campaign that careens throughout the year, which finally crashes into election day: we have a single official campaigning period of a month to six weeks. At least another couple of weeks after this magazine "goes" to "press". At least this way, it's over in a month before the election itself. Theoretically.

We might not have commercial TV or radio advertising for political parties in this country, but we do have poster advertising, and that can start whenever it likes. The "official" campaign may not be the best, but it certainly has. Here's a choice selection of the best and/or worst so far.

Words: Willard Van Omnomnom Quine



"Biting the other guys' style" seems to be a theme this year. Labour have hired most of Obama's campaign staff for this Election. A good idea, but they've got off to an inauspicious start with this. Clearly it riffs on the "We can't go on like this, I'll cut the deficit, not the NHS" poster for Cameron in 2010, but with no particular wit or artistry; just the eerie photoshopped picture of Dave staring earnestly out like a dog watching you cook a ham, and a fairly dull-to-read sentence next to him. What would have been better, since the original poster had turned out to be a complete and total lie, would to be to release a deliberately (and as tastefully as Ofcom will allow) defaced version of the original, making the point that what actually happened was the exact opposite of what the poster promised. Instead we've essentially got a poster everyone's already seen and no-one wants to see again.



And yet again. The Lib Dems are in an invidious position at this election, being the enablers that let the Tories in, despite having better left-wing credentials at the time than Labour. There's a sense of weary resignation over the Lib Dem campaign this year, and their initial election poster continues with that, listlessly parodying a poster that was already parodied to death a fortnight ago. And the literal "middle ground" imagery just makes them look wishy and/or washy.



The "Sisters are doing it for themselves" imagery is neat, but what really helps this poster is coming out before Natalie Bennett's already infamous interview with pro-am fucking cunt Nick Ferrari. We're now dreading her appearance on the debates. Dreading it. Why did Caroline Lucas even step down?



Honest Mike's Holdings
Maire Nui Drive
Ruratonga
Cook Islands
15 February 2015

**To all HSBC Customers,
Shareholders and Colleagues.**

Dear all,

Quite frankly you can bite me. We all know that no explanations or justifications I put here will be believed in the slightest, the most craven rationalisations would be dismissed out of hand, the most grovelling of apologies will never be accepted. Nor should they be. This is a pure exercise in doing what polite society expects of us, and in all honesty I can't be fucked. Yes, we were straight-up money laundering mafia-style for people richer than you could comfortably conceive. We find it hard to believe you didn't at least suspect something like this was happening already. Ultimately, you're really outraged at the fact that we were so inept at keeping it secret, forcing you to accept that it's happening whether you like it or not. Believe us, we're right there with you.

If you feel like complaining that we're only sorry we got caught, then by all means say the bleeding obvious as if it matters at this point. Of course we're sorry we got caught, we have to spend like a year pretending this isn't exactly how the world works before you forget we ever did it and we can start all over again. A year's worth of graft out the window, because you people are so fucking outraged about things you already knew were happening but would rather not think about. We're only sorry we got caught? You're only outraged because you found out.

And that's assuming you even understand what's happening in the first place, which we doubt. This is high-end economics. There are wheels within wheels within wheels that don't even officially exist. At this level, we're using mathematics to speak the world into existence, with numbers that don't represent anything tangible but instead are merely sigils to be arranged in esoteric and only half-comprehensible ways in order to shape the world to our will. It's called "voodoo economics" for a reason. And now you've interrupted the ritual, god knows what'll happen before we can get our hands back at the tiller. Good going, do-gooders.

In conclusion, you can eat it, because this is our world, not yours. We're the ones holding the fabric together and we just let you walk around in it as long as you never question your place. This is what civilisation is built on, motherfuckers. It's either us or the Collapse. You might want to think a bit harder about it next time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stuart Gulliver". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

High Priest, HSBC UK

For more information, go fuck yourself

TONY ABBOTT'S MADHOUSE

Well, who didn't see this coming? Turns out sociopathic narcissist Tony Abbott is shit at being Prime Minister. The only surprise is the first leadership spill motion coming over a year into his tenure. His honeymoon period lasted a couple of weeks before Australia realised who they'd elected: a racist, sexist, homophobic idiot savant, without the savant; an unreconstructed Bogan with a shave, a suit and a tie, but the same old mental combination of a regressive outlook and the wits of a freshwater salmon.

His Premiership so far can be understood via the terrifying and infamous news clip in which he is confronted about inappropriate comment directed at a soldier — which in itself spoke mostly of how far over his head Abbott is as Prime Minister. When asked to supply the context for the original statement, Abbott freezes up, standing in perfect silence, nodding his head for thirty seconds while the increasingly frightened interviewer starts to wonder if he's having a stroke. Eventually, the reporter takes pity on him and turns the cameras off.

You really couldn't ask for a more potent illustration of the fact that Abbott is nowhere near being qualified for the job of Prime Minister. The worst thing about it? *This was two years before the election.* He was still Opposition Leader. This happened and people still elected him.



In Opposition, he managed to make it seem as though he had basic charisma; this now seems to have been an illusion, largely caused by the pressure being on the other guys, who were self-destructing so spectacularly Abbott didn't have to try. Well, now he does, and he's like a scared child who's been caught impersonating the teacher and now has to keep the pretence up for two more years. On those occasions when he *can* talk, it's extremely slowly, with more pauses than a Pinter play. Sometimes, when he's giving a news interview, you'd swear he was reading off cue cards.

So how did he get the job in the first place? Well, conventional wisdom points out, Labor were all but un-re-electable, all he had to do was show up. Abbott was elected almost by default. That's not untrue, but it's not the whole story either. Australia would dearly love you to forget that Abbott was elected not just as a protest vote, but because of his aggressive policies towards Australia's borders, which amounts to a return to the White Australia Policy without saying it aloud. (The Liberals like to pretend there was no such thing in the first place, of course). The only difference is that they still have to put up with legal immigrants showing up with active melanin and epicanthic folds, but the militarization of the coastline and literal concentration camps in the Pacific are quite effective at deterring people from moving there, at least until they stop acting like terrified xenophobes. Which doesn't look like happening for a long time yet. And that's the worst thing about Tony Abbott: he *is* Australia right now: ugly, bigoted, incompetent and not even half as clever as he thinks. It can do better. Even if that has to mean Bill Shorten.

Suddenly the Lucky Country's longing for the good old days of Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd alternating as PM like divorcees with a child. At least instability and in-fighting meant they weren't stuck with the world's biggest tosser. But maybe he's the Prime Minister Australia deserves right now. Upside-down frown: **Konstantin Jesualenko**.



“ “ Because it's there, I guess? I mean, it's just a couple of streets away, compared with Sainsbury's which is right on the other side of town...I mean, it's not some kind of deep philosophical decision, it's just that the closest shop happens to be a Morrisons...I don't know what you want from me, here. ” ”



Fewer reasons to shop at MORRISONS

STING TIMEWATCH

Former Home Secretary Leon Brittan has died, just in time to not have to answer any awkward questions about that paedophile dossier Phillip Schofield was reading. Noncery aside, what did he achieve? Not a lot, to be honest; his most famous moment was his political suicide. Over helicopters. Words: [John Wirstham-Harte](#)

1986:

PROP ELLER HEADS



OUR PLAYERS

THAT WOMAN



MICHAEL HESELTINE



LEON BRITTAN



When Jewish Sontaran Leon Brittan died just over a month ago at the age of 75, most of the column inches were inevitably about the child sex abuse investigation that might yet implicate him in some kind of horrifying Steven Ward-style kiddy-fiddling parliamentary inner circle. With his in mind, his death reaches Ken Lay levels of political convenience.

The second most referenced incident in Brittan's obituaries was, also inevitably, the Westland Affair — the helicopter-related scandal that ended his career and, for a while, looked like it might have ended Thatcher's too, if only she'd had competent opposition. It was one of those scandals completely divorced from anything in the real world in which the majority of the actual voters lived; it was John Wilder stuff — both in its aviation connections and its Machiavellian dealings.

As noted, Westland ended Brittan's career, but it was already on the skids by the latter half of 1985. He'd started the year as Home Secretary, but he ended it as President of the Board of Trade, and thanks to Westland he was out of that job too before January was over. Without the Miner's Strike, he'd probably be right alongside David Waddington on the list of "people who occupied a Great Office who you couldn't name in a game of Trivial Pursuit" (alongside Anthony Crosland and, potentially, Phillip Hammond).

He was Thatcher's second choice (if that) for the job; her first had been BDSM polecat Norman Tebbit, then Employment Secretary. Tebbit, of course, was very much on the right of the party, even by the standards of the Thatcher era.

Essentially, he's slightly to the left of Satan. In recent years he's bemoaned the rise of UKIP — on the grounds that the Tories gave up that far-right territory and let them take it

Leon Brittan, making you vaguely worried that you're turning into an anti-Semite yesterday.

over. As Home Secretary he would have made Britain over into a totalitarian nightmare right in time for the real 1984.

Fortunately

for the planet,

Thatcher's Cheney Willie Whitelaw — whose accession to the Lords is what left the position vacant in the first place — stepped in to prevent Tebbit's accession to the third Great Office, on the grounds that a Britain guided by Tebbit may never vote Tory again, assuming he didn't abolish elections altogether. While this may sound like a good outcome, the result would not have been worth the procedure.

So she fished around and found Leon Brittan instead, then pottering around the Exchequer as Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Economics wasn't really his strong point, though. Possibly he'd been mistaken for his (still living) older brother, Sir Samuel Brittan, the *Financial Times* legend who learnt at the feet of Milton Friedman himself, and whose shadow his younger brother never really successfully shook off. Instead of money, Leon studied law, rising to become a barrister and earn the right to wear one of those daft white wigs. He'd spent a few months at the Home

Office as a minister of state immediately after Thatcher's

initial election, before abruptly being moved to the effective role of deputy Chancellor of the

Exchequer. Family connections? Not for us to say. This made him the youngest member

of the Cabinet at just barely forty years old.

By the time the Home Secretary position

Leon Brittan as Home Secretary turned out to be a perfect illustration of the Peter Principle.



became vacant, he was 43. Only Winston Churchill was younger. Churchill has had approximately 900000000 books written about him. Brittan has a dozen. Maybe.

Brittan as Home Secretary turned out to be a perfect illustration of the Peter Principle. It wasn't that he was unqualified — the man was a Barrister, for heaven's sake. He was intelligent and almost sickeningly devoted, but he was also weak and uncharismatic, clever but not cunning, Nixonian only in his ability to look dodgy and flustered under the slightest pressure. And the job of Home Secretary comes with pressures no-one could call slight. Admittedly, the Miner's Strike had him in his relative element, organising the police response like a military operation, but he had the help there of Arthur Scargill's narcissistic personality disorder.

Outside of the Strike, he suffered a succession of butterfingers and fuckups. There was the Libyan Embassy siege which resulted in the death of WPC Yvonne Fletcher, for which Brittan found himself heading up the Crisis Committee almost by accident (both the PM and the Foreign Secretary were out of the country). There was the incident where Thatcher — to whom he never wavered in his puppy-like devotion — convinced him to compromise on his own anti-death penalty principles and introduce legislation to bring it back for cop killers, only for the bill to be kicked to death in the commons. And there was the time he ordered the BBC to ban a show he hadn't even seen (a documentary about Northern Ireland, featuring interviews with Martin McGuinness). This was under Thatcher's orders, but with Brittan as her catspaw it led to a major BBC journalists' strike. Although the BBC Governors eventually made the programme makers edit McGuinness out of the show, it's still one of the few confrontations between Thatcher's government and the BBC which the BBC didn't lose outright.

Ultimately, Brittan just wasn't a strong man, and the job of Home Secretary requires a tough bastard. Brittan was barely a bastard at all (in personality, we hasten to add, not necessarily in actions); many of his cabinet colleagues remembered him as "a kindly soul", and while a lot of that must be the relativistic effects of being in Thatcher's cabinet and not being pro-actively despicable, you can sort of understand where they might have been coming from (assuming they were either unaware of or okay with the alleged child abuse).. He was a sad, ingratiating Peter Lorre type, with all the inherent authority of a startled frog (which he often resembled). Worse still, he didn't even have that startled frog's charm or charisma, and that was the real sticking point as far as Thatcher was concerned. Her Government was about selling Britain as much as governing it; Geoffrey Howe was doing a brilliant job of promoting her vision abroad as Foreign Secretary, but his Home counterpart simply wasn't getting the message across. So it was that in September 1985, she held a minor reshuffle, prompted by that man Tebbit stepping down as President of the Board of Trade to look after his disabled wife. Square-headed elder-statesman-in-waiting Douglas Hurd took over as Home Secretary, and Leon was moved down a rung or two to take over Tebbit's old job — replacing him once again, in a more literal sense. This may well have come as a great relief to Brittan, but in reality it's where his troubles really began.



Michael Heseltine
looking really bloody
sexy yesterday.

Michael Heseltine was the mirror opposite of Leon Brittan. Handsome (relatively speaking — Richard E. Grant played him and it wasn't a stretch), magnetic and very much his own man. Too much so, for the comfort of various Tory Leaders, from Heath to Major, which ensured that he never occupied any of the Great Offices, even in Shadow. In 1985 he was Defence Secretary, and already notorious for the infamous incident at which he seemed prepared to beat the entire Labour frontbench to death with the Speaker's ceremonial mace after losing a vote on—prophetically—an aerospace bill. His legendary temper would be the engine for the scandal that ended Leon Brittan's career: the Westland Affair.

Westland Helicopters was one of Britain's biggest aviation companies at one stage. A lot, if not most, of the helicopters used by the British armed forces (most recently deployed in the Falklands) were Westland models. By 1985 they were the last helicopter manufacturing company in Britain. Unfortunately, they hadn't been profitable for a long time and were very obviously heading straight for the receivers unless something happened sharpish. Rival chopperman Alan Bristow almost bought them out, but withdrew when the Government could neither guarantee further orders nor wipe away a £40 million debt. This ultimately resulted in Sir John Cuckney, professional saviour of failing companies, being appointed Westland's Chairman. He was an ally of Thatcher, and this would become important.

Cuckney's mere presence indicated how worried the Government was getting about Westland's future, or lack thereof, and they spent months fishing around for some sort of bailout solution that wouldn't involve using public money (which was tantamount to murder in their eyes). Finally, in November — by which time Brittan had taken up his new role at the DTI — a bid came in from Sikorsky Aircraft, an American company. Cuckney and Westland's management liked it. Heseltine didn't. As defence secretary, he may have had no trade-related duties, but he did decide which companies provided the various branches of the armed forces with their equipment — including the helicopters used by the Navy and Air Force. He didn't much care for the idea of the British Army flying American choppers, nor for the prospect of Europe being completely frozen out of the aviation industry. To that end, he rang up the National Armaments Directors of the four major European powers — France, West Germany, Italy and of course Britain ourselves — and convinced them to sign an agreement saying they'd only buy helicopters made in Europe — effectively blackmailing Westland into turning the Sikorsky deal down.

Thatcher and Brittan agreed that this was unacceptable — not because it was a *douche* move, just because Thatcherite principles dictate that Government interference in corporate affairs is a monstrous evil comparable with anything Hitler ever did. The PM convened two meetings that together involved almost the entire top level of the Cabinet, to try and get the thing sorted out. Brittan wanted the NADs to drop the “No Yankee Choppers” agreement. Heseltine had allies in Geoffrey Howe and, perhaps oddly, Norman Tebbit. A mini-compromise was mini-reached: Thatcher gave them a fortnight to find a Europe-based bid to replace Sikorsky's. If they could, and Westland turned it down, then Sikorsky won and the NADs could just about fuck off.

Ultimately that's what happened: Heseltine put together a bid from a European consortium under which Westland and British Aerospace would be integrated with Augusta of Italy and a bunch of French companies. Westland turned it down. Heseltine demanded another Cabinet Meeting. Thatcher turned him down, saying Westland had made its choice. But the European Consortium weren't done yet. They submitted a fresh bid shortly before Christmas. Brittan said it was too late, but Westland were still obliged to consider it. Brittan and Heseltine started openly attacking each other (verbally, we hasten to add) in the corridors of Parliament, and it wasn't long before the country as a whole

That woman being solemn yesterday.



were aware of it. It was to be a bitter Christmas slash Hanukkah, and it wasn't over yet.

As 1986 dawned, Heseltine picked up his efforts to get Westland to pick the European option. When Cuckney expressed his concern about a Sikorsky-backed Westland's potential sales to European governments, Brittan and Thatcher soothingly promised they'd continue to support them. Heseltine spied an opportunity, but Thatcher told him he wasn't allowed to contradict her in front of Cuckney. Fortunately (for him), he got his chance anyway when Lloyds Bank wrote to him on the subject. Heseltine decided to put his reply in the form of an open letter to the Times, in which he said that contrary to Brittan and Thatcher's reassurances, Westland would almost certainly lose a significant amount of European business if they went for the Sikorsky option. Thatcher, of course was not impressed, except possibly by Heseltine's balls; warned not to contradict the PM in front of Sir John Cuckney, he doubled down and contradicted her *in front of the entire nation*.

Thatcher put the Solicitor-General Patrick Mayhew on the case, and he composed a reply to Heseltine in which he criticised several "material inaccuracies" he'd apparently made. Unlike Heseltine's letter to Lloyds, this one (Mayhew to Heseltine) was supposed to be private. Like letters normally are. So when its contents showed up on the Press Association wire, the engine oil really hit the propeller.

It had been leaked to the PA by future Ofcom chief Collette Bowe, then Chief Information Officer of the Department of Trade and Industry — Brittan's department. But she was evidently only following orders. The only question was, whose? Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General (ie one step up from Patrick Mayhew) took an extremely dim view of that sort of Parliamentary self-sabotage, and held a (metaphorical) knife to his (metaphorical) throat to force an inquiry into the matter.

On the 9th of January, Thatcher convened yet another Cabinet Meeting in Downing Street on the subject of Westland, at which both Brittan and Heseltine put forward their cases once and for all. Thatcher concluded that, since negotiations were still ongoing, any further Parliamentary answers on the subject should be cleared through the Cabinet Office first. Brittan and Heseltine concurred. Then Transport Secretary Nicholas Ridley, played by Michael Foot's skeleton, piped up with a crucial detail: should this not apply to statements already made? In other words, can we use this rule to shut Heseltine up completely? Thatcher nodded. Heseltine was therefore instantly banned from reaffirming anything in the original letter. Heseltine, inevitably, was furious. Thatcher told him to eat it, citing Cabinet Collective Responsibility (the principle that the entire Cabinet has to support the bottom line whether the individual members like it or not). At this point, Heseltine took his papers, stood up, and said "I cannot be a member of this Cabinet anymore". Successfully resisting the urge to turn the table over and start slapping people in the face, he immediately walked out of the room and out of the Cabinet. Two hours later he was in Parliament, delivering a furious twenty-two minute speech about how Thatcher was stubborn, ignorant and self-important — which everyone already knew, but no-one had actually pointed out before.

Warned not to contradict the PM in front of Westland, Heseltine doubled down and contradicted her in front of the entire nation.

This sorted out the immediate problem of the Cabinet being at each other's throats, but there was still that leak. Who ordered Bowe to let the Press Association read Mayhew's letter to Heseltine? Could it possibly have been Leon Brittan, the frustrated little man who'd just suffered a demotion from a position he had no business inhabiting before Heseltine showed up as the perfect anger-deflector? Of course, it was, as the Michael Havers-ordered inquiry discovered just a few days later. A further question did arise — was he, in turn, acting under orders from Thatcher? — but no-one was dumb enough to pursue it, and besides, Thatcher was as shocked as anyone — at least according to Havers, "Unless the PM is the most marvellous actress I've ever seen in my life." It remains possible that she was exactly that good an actress, but everyone wisely decided to quit while they were ahead. Except Brittan, who quit while he was at his absolute lowest ebb.

Labour, rubbing its collective hands with glee, set out an adjournment motion — which basically means a parliamentary free-for-all with no need to come to any sort of a conclusion — and prepared to kick the Thatcher Government to death. The PM got her most trusted white men to help her with the defence speech, and (she admitted in her memoirs) privately braced herself to not be Prime Minister anymore by the end of the day.

She needn't have bothered, because Neil Kinnock fucked up. Instead of a surgical strike at the heart of the affair, a probing examination of how much Thatcher *really* knew about the leak, he went down his usual route of blustering rhetorical outrage, which just galvanised the Tories behind Thatcher and left him with no defence for her comeback. Kinnock was ultimately the most frustrating Labour leader in history (Gordon Brown coming a close second); he was clever and even

charismatic, and probably would have made a fine Prime Minister, but he kept falling at the final hurdle. In particular, Kinnock was a great orator, except when it mattered. He could give a great speech, but he couldn't debate, because debating requires a different set of skills. You can't just bellow grand gestures; you need the ability to improvise, to spot the other guy's weaknesses and exploit them, and to be witty under pressure. Kinnock just got redder and louder under pressure. This was the greatest opportunity he'd ever have, including the post-Thatcher election, and he fired it, like Chris Waddle four years later, into the sky.

If you looked toward the back-benches while Kinnock was giving his speech, you might have seen Michael Heseltine gritting his teeth. It was his big chance, too, and the first of several. It would be 1990 before he genuinely challenged Thatcher for the leadership, and lost. He spent John Major's premiership stalking behind him, a knife on his thigh which would ultimately stay sheathed. With his heart acting up, he settled for the power-behind-the-throne role of Deputy Prime Minister, and when Major stepped down after the party's decimation in 1997, he took his own pulse and declined his very last chance. He retired from the Commons in 2001 to move to the Upper House, where he now works on Tory policy behind the scenes.

You know what happened to Thatcher, but Westland was the first major wobble of her Premiership. Heseltine hadn't been the first person to stand up to her since she became PM — there were the likes of Francis Pym and Anthony Barber, and Ted Heath of course, but they were quickly consigned to the dustbin. Heseltine actively resigned, and did it in spectacular fashion. He couldn't defeat Thatcher, but he didn't surrender. The veneer of invincibility got just a tiny smudge.

Kinnock went down his usual route of blustering rhetorical outrage.

Westland eventually went with the Sikorsky bail-out. The NDAs' agreement was quietly forgotten. With the American money, Westland eventually recovered enough to eventually be bought out by the Italians after all. They were force-merged with Augusta (who had been the subject of a highly similar scandal over in Belgium) at the turn of the century.

As for Leon Brittan, his UK parliamentary career had just been detonated. Thatcher still felt sorry for him, however (to the extent that she was capable of feeling sorry for anyone or anything), and she finally gave him a new job (and a knighthood) in 1989, albeit at the European Commission. He was much happier there, rising to become acting Vice-President after the rest of the Santer Commission resigned en masse for being bent. He left the EC after being made a baron and spent the rest of his life running banks and things, occasionally being rung up by David Cameron to give Gideon help with his sums. He died at 75 in January, just in time to not have to answer any questions about his history of alleged sexual assault against young boys, or the mysterious disappearance of a dossier of names and locations pertaining to same. It was almost the only stroke of luck in his entire miserable life.



A helicopter yesterday.

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Measles. Have you forgotten how good it tastes? Well, America is re-acquainting itself with the delicious, fatal flavours thanks to idiots who think negligence is freedom and ignorance is intelligence. Truth serum from **Thierry Henry Thoreau**.

THE NEEDLE AND THE D

There is a book on Amazon that argues in favour of a fatal disease. You might have heard of it. It's called Melanie's Marvelous Measles and it's by a mad Australian woman (we won't name her, because fuck her) who is either misguided or one of Roald Dahl's Witches, determined to wipe out children worldwide. This would be ironic, because Dahl would happily force you at gunpoint to get your children vaccinated and spare you pain he went through when his daughter died. Of measles. Because it's *fatal*, in around 15% of cases. That's quite a big chunk. Especially considering that it can also cause blindness, lung scarring, deafness or permanent brain damage. Not a lot of room left in that 100% for people who just get better with no permanent ill-effects, is there? So what the hell is this woman's deal with promoting it?

From the back cover: *"Often today, we are being bombarded with messages from vested interests to fear all diseases in order for someone to sell some potion or vaccine, when, in fact, history shows that in industrialised countries, these diseases are quite benign and, according to natural health sources, beneficial to the body."*

Nothing like a bit of first world complacency, is there? Yes, the book is based entirely on ignorance b/w stupidity, not malice. Not that it makes it any better. Measles, the disease that kills hundreds of thousands worldwide every year, is actually good for you because mumble mumble whole earth homeopathy. And they don't work anyway.

There are other, more swivel-eyed arguments, of course. How dare the Government try to tell me what to do? They don't decide what's best for my child, I do! I don't care if they know better by orders of magnitude, this is an unconscionable violation of my freedom to be stupid and do stupid things! And of course there's the conspiracy nuts. Fluoride and mind-control serum in the syringes. The NWO keeping us docile. Jews are involved somehow, because they always are. Measles is a myth. Controlled detonations.

And then there's the autism thing. Which has been disproved approximately 9000000 times and will be unto infinity before people stop believing it. All this adds up to an epidemic of a disease which should not be in that position in this day and age, because the giant puff-cloud of idiots have managed to place a doubt even in the minds of reasonable people about the efficacy of vaccines.


We're not going to repeat the obvious truth that *the fucking things work don't be fucking imbeciles get your kids immunised you fucking idiots you fucking *idiots** because if you're reading this magazine you're probably reasonably aware of that. Really, we just wanted to point out how depressing it is that it's that easy to make the human race not do something obviously and provably beneficial. A movement could probably be started up against breathing. Hell, another mad Australian woman claims eating is bad for you and unnecessary and she never does it — and one or two poor stupid bastards fall for *that*. If aliens wanted to invade, they'd just need a convincing leaflet and a shitload of patience, and we'll decimate ourselves in the belief that the need for air is an NWO mind-control conspiracy blown out of proportion by corrupt know-it-all scientists, and really you only need a couple of lungfuls a week to get by, and you'll be much healthier for it. We're not saying everyone would go along with it. Just enough to make it easy for the aliens to take over.

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