

# VOICE OF THE DAILY Mirror

## Iraq needs our support

DAVID Cameron's warning that Islamist terrorists in Iraq could attack Britain is a reminder that we are not insulated from the carnage thousands of miles away.

We have a vested interest in the elected Government in Baghdad, whatever its failings, beating back the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

Britain cannot avoid some responsibility for what is unfolding after the 2003 invasion created a power vacuum filled by sectarian violence.

But our military intervention failed once and would very likely fail again.

The best strategy is to support Iraq financially and diplomatically and to share intelligence.

Returning jihadists are unlikely to slip into their old lives and may pose a danger. Tackling them without alienating the wider Muslim community requires tact and sensitivity.

We hope the threat isn't used as a smokescreen for another crackdown on the civil liberties of the law-abiding majority.

## Shameful truth

THE majority of children scarred by poverty live in homes in which at least one parent has a job.

Today's Bristol University report explodes myths peddled by a Government presiding over an explosion in misery.

The number of Britons living below the breadline has soared to one-in-three of the population.

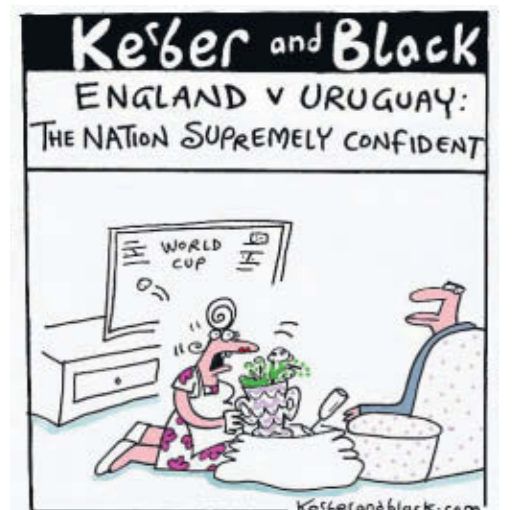
And smearing the poor as skivers, as Tory Ministers regularly do, adds insult to injury as the coalition blames the victims of free market failures and a callous political creed for their own plight.

Condemning millions of Britons to heart-breaking subsistence while gifting a huge tax handout to millionaires is shameful even by the appalling standards of this Government.

## Doctor's orders

TAKING a drink for medicinal purposes is an old excuse transformed by the blessing of a doctor who advises patients to enjoy red wine.

Forget that old tale about an apple - because now it's a glass of red wine a day that keeps the doctor away.



"Just clearing away anything that smashes easily"



DEMAND Mr Field called for action

BY JASON BEATTIE Political Editor

SMUG ministers keep saying they are helping people out of hardship - but their claims have been shot to pieces today by shocking evidence.

In a damning verdict on the Coalition, a report has revealed that 33% of people in Britain are living below the breadline.

It means poverty has more than doubled since 1983 when the figure stood at 14%.

Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary Rachel Reeves said: "David Cameron's government has completely failed to tackle poverty and deprivation."

"Child poverty is set to rise, not fall under his government. And there are more people in poverty in work than out of work."

And Labour MP Frank Field added: "Tackling the causes of poverty is clearly the right strategy - this report shows that the Government's strategy isn't working."

"Here then is the most major

“Ministers aimed to tackle poverty - they have failed”

PROF DAVID GORDON ON THE SHAMEFUL FINDINGS

challenge to all our political parties: what is your manifesto going to say to reverse the horrendous rise in the numbers of people in poverty detailed in this report?"

The major study, led by Bristol University, revealed a string of shameful findings.

■ Almost 18 million cannot afford adequate housing conditions

■ 1.5 million children live in households that cannot afford to heat the home

■ 2.5 million kids live in properties that are damp

■ More than half a million children live in families who cannot afford to feed them properly

■ 12 million people are too poor to have a social life

■ 5.5 million adults go without essential clothing

■ One in every six adults in paid work is still poor.

The study blows apart the idea peddled by the Government that getting a job tackles poverty.

It found the majority of children living below the breadline have at least one parent in work.

The report said: "These results

# POVERTY TRAPPED: SCANDAL OF UK'S GREAT DIVIDE

## 1983

# 14% of Brits living below breadline

## 2014

# 33% below breadline

» 18 million live in inadequate houses

» 12 million too poor to have a social life

» 1 in 6 adults in paid work is poor

» 2.5 million kids live in damp homes



SQUALID HOMES Families are forced to live in damp houses

Picture posed by models



Worth £8.5bn.. up £700m The Duke of Westminster

Worth £9.75bn.. up £2.35bn Ernesto Bertarelli

Worth £3.75bn.. up £1.45bn Mike Ashley

## Forget fair play - we are example of how inequality ruins a nation's prospects

BY DUNCAN EXLEY Director, The Equality Trust

THE UK today is one of the developed world's most unequal countries. Far from being a beacon of fair play, we are now an example of how inequality can ruin a nation's prospects.

A High Pay Centre report says this week that the poorest fifth in the UK now have incomes closer to the poorest in former Eastern bloc countries than to those in Western Europe. And today we cannot afford the basics of a decent life.

In contrast, the wealth of the richest 100 people rose last year to £297 billion - more than the wealth held by 30% of the population. This rise in wealth could pay the energy bill for all 26.4 million UK households for over a year.

People from the Pope to the International Monetary Fund have warned us excessive inequality has negative consequences. So why is the UK so unequal? Many justifications are made for the extraordinary increase in wealth of the richest. But can 100 people really have as much value as almost 19 million people? Others say it doesn't

matter, because the economy is on the up. But our recovery is only being felt by those at the top. Polling this week found only one in five think the recovery is making their family better off.

The contempt such an attitude shows for ordinary people is breathtaking. You may be struggling to pay your rent, you may be forced to choose between heating your home and feeding your children, but don't worry, Britain's on the mend.

GDP figures won't pay the bills, real wage increases will. The UK today is trapped in a race to the bottom of low-paid, low-skilled economies.

Poverty levels similar to those found in former Soviet states cannot just be

blamed on worklessness. Government figures show us that a majority of children in poverty are in working families. This is largely a low-pay crisis.

As bosses have bargained for higher and higher pay, ordinary workers are left with stagnating or even falling real wages. While the poor can't take the blame for their poverty, the rich can't take all the credit for their fortunes. Those who manage our biggest companies are typically paid over £4million a year - far more than is typical in Europe. Others in the UK's top 1% owe their increasing riches to the luck of the stock markets.

Studies have shown how more unequal countries have worse life expectancy, health, educational outcomes, social mobility and crime.

Inequality is also ruining our economy, because the majority of people have little spare cash to spend in the shops, while a minority are using their spare millions to speculate on the housing market, making homes unaffordable for others.

The UK is a country where sales of luxury handbags for dogs are booming while working people are in poverty. These

are the conditions in which extremist political movements traditionally flourish. If this country is not to become a political, social and economic basket case, the Government must take action.

We need to create well paid jobs beyond the capital. We need a proper rise in the minimum wage so the taxpayer doesn't spend so much subsidising Scrooge employers. We need the rich to pay a higher proportion of their income in tax than those on low and middle incomes.

But most of all we need to reduce the growing gap between the richest and the rest, otherwise the United Kingdom will be a fractured, fractious kingdom if it remains as unequal as this.

dispel the myth, often conveyed by government ministers, that poverty in general and child poverty in particular is a consequence of a lack of paid work - a result of shirking rather than striving.

"It found the majority of children who suffer from multiple deprivations - such as going without basic necessities, having an inadequate diet and clothing - live in small families with one or two siblings, live with both parents, have at least one parent who is employed, are

white and live in England." The Poverty and Social Exclusion in the United Kingdom report, which studied 14,559 people, is the largest of its kind conducted in Britain.

While Mr Cameron has allowed fatcats to flourish, the research showed that one in three people cannot afford to heat their homes properly in winter.

And four million people are not properly fed by today's standards.

Professor David Gordon, from the Townsend Centre for International

Poverty Research at Bristol University, said: "The Coalition government aimed to eradicate poverty by tackling the causes of poverty. Their strategy has clearly failed."

"The available high quality scientific evidence shows poverty and deprivation have increased since 2010, the poor are suffering from deeper poverty and the gap between the rich and poor is widening."

The shocking statistics shatter the PM's boast that his welfare reforms are a "moral mission" giving

hope to the poor. But a Department for Work and Pensions spokesman said: "There is strong evidence that incomes have improved over the last 30 years, despite the misleading picture painted by this report."

"The independent statistics are clear - there are 1.4 million fewer people in poverty since 1998.

"And under this government we have successfully protected the poorest from falling behind, with a reduction of 300,000 children living in relative income poverty and

100,000 fewer children in workless poor families. As part of our economic plan, the Government is committed to tackling the root causes of child poverty."

This comes a week after Mr Cameron's anti-poverty tsar Alan Milburn warned that the Government's child poverty plans were doomed to fail.

Ex-Labour minister Mr Milburn said the Coalition's policies were a "farce" and warned that 3.5 million children will be in poverty by 2020.

Despite the size of the economy doubling in the past 30 years, the number of families who cannot afford to heat their homes has also doubled in that time.

There are now 13 million people living in cold or damp homes - three million more than in the 1990s.

Recent figures also show the number of emergency food parcels handed out has soared to more than a million because of the Government's austerity measures.

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