

Police State and Mounting Poverty in Britain: David Cameron's Concept of a "Big Society" is Continuing Jesus' work

Prime Minister Finds God, Bans Bishops, Priests, the Poor – and Crutches

By [Felicity Arbuthnot](#)

Region: [Europe](#)

Global Research, May 03, 2014

When Prime Minister David Cameron pulls a stunt, or indeed, announces a "ground breaking" new policy, it is pretty well guaranteed to back fire. Indeed, his coalition government policy U-turns are heading for encyclopedic.(1)

Is he opportunistic, spineless – or a lethal combination of the two? In opposition, to prove his "green credentials" he headed for the Arctic for a photo-op with Huskies, leaping: "aboard a Husky-powered sled to visit a remote Norwegian glacier to see first hand the effects of global warming." As the (UK) Telegraph put it at the time: "Cameron turns blue to prove green credentials."(2)

In office, the environment is an inconvenience rather than a concern. Protected historic sites of natural beauty, ancient woodlands and sites of special scientific interest are to be sacrificed to quick-build homes in their thousands and a multi billion £ train line that cuts mere minutes off journeys hours long. Homes are needed, but the country is filled with sturdily built abandoned office blocks, warehouses, large homes, smaller ones, which could be restored, converted, refurbished and landscaped at a fraction of the cost, without destroying the irreplaceable.

Ironically, homes across the country are anyway at threat. Cameron has thrown the country open to fracking with the manic enthusiasm of an alcoholic given the run of a liquor warehouse. Never mind that there have already been a few earthquakes linked to fracking and that the scientific evidence of the massive dangers are ever mounting.

Public and scientific concerns are to be over-ridden to the extent that Cameron is to rule that fracking companies can drill on privately owned land and even under people's homes, with the land and home owners having no say. Huskies and "green" are a distant memory for the Prime Minister.

Last year Downing Street denied reports that David Cameron ordered aides to "get rid of all the green crap" in policies. Never believe anything until it has been officially denied", advised the late, great journalist, Claud Cockburn.

However, Husky stunts long forgotten, his new prop is God. And it is not going too well. Following an Easter reception for Christians at his Downing Street residence (3) he wrote an article in the Church Times (4) in which he argues that: "... faith ... compels us to get out there and make a difference to people's lives ... the Christian values (include) charity,

compassion ... Christians ... are the driving force behind some of the most inspiring social-action projects in our country (playing) a fundamental role in our society. So being confident about our Christianity we should also be ambitious in supporting faith-based organizations to do even more."

Cameron urged:

"... supporting local projects. I welcome the efforts of all those who help to feed, clothe ... the poorest in our society (inspiring) belief we can get out there and change people's lives ... to improve our society ... tackle poverty ..."

He also welcomed: "the debate with church leaders" on the issues, especially in the desire: "not to write anyone off" and anticipated seeing: "our churches as partners. If we pull together, we can change the world and make it a better place." The article was entitled: "My Faith in the Church of England."

As ever with Cameron words and deeds are a parallel universe. In his rural Oxfordshire constituency, on the day the article was published, the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard and the Revd Keith Hebden were absolutely committed to helping "feed, clothe, tackle poverty" and making Britain, their part of the word, "a better place." Indeed, Revd Hebden had fasted for the forty days and nights of Lent in solidarity with those who find themselves in the direst straights, often as the result of the Cameron led government's ferocious welfare cuts.

In context, the cuts are cited as being largely responsible for nearly a million people, including over 300,000 children, having been given charity emergency food in the last year, by one charity alone, the Trussel Trust.

Shockingly, at least 4.7 million people living in food poverty in the UK, roughly one in thirteen – yet London has the fifth largest city economy in the world, is the world's leading financial centre, regarded as a "command centre" for the global economy. ("Economy of London", Wikipedia.)

The Trust cites the reason for people turning to food banks as the result of impoverishment by the welfare changes, with some recipients having had their only income completely severed. Ironically this by a Prime Minister and Cabinet largely comprised of millionaires and a Parliament whose meals and hefty £400 per head monthly food allowance are subsidized by the taxpayer.

Poverty figures:

"understated the likely level of people going hungry, because they did not include thousands of people helped by non-Trussell food banks and soup kitchens, those who had no access to a food bank, those too ashamed to turn to charity food, or those who were coping by going without food ..."

Their figures, state Trussel, were the "tip of the iceberg."

An astonishing eighty three percent of recipients reported resorting to the food bank

because their benefits had been completely cut, with the Trust also: “providing essentials like washing powder, nappies and hygiene products to struggling families.”(5)

So as the Prime Minister’s fine words were published the Bishop of Oxford and the Revd Hebden, walked with parishioners to his constituency office to deliver a letter signed by forty five of the UK’s fifty nine Bishops and six hundred vicars, urging action on food poverty. The office had been courtesy telephoned ahead to expect their visit.

The letter cited, at Easter, a terrible rise in hunger in Britain, and urged society to “begin rising to the challenge of this national crisis.”

They wrote:

“Hope is not an idle force. Hope drives us to act. It drives us to tackle the growing hunger in our midst. It calls on each of us, and government too, to act to make sure that work pays ... and that the welfare system provides a robust last line of defence against hunger.”

The parishioners waiting across the road, the Bishop and Revd Hebden approached to door. Not only was it closed, but the police were called. This, as Keith Hebden pointed out, shortly after Cameron had called on those of faith to be more “evangelical” and said that his concept of a “Big Society” was continuing Jesus’ work. A comment, of angry hundreds, in the Independent wrote: “Jesus could have gone to give the letter in. They would have done the same.” Another: “There is only one word for David Cameron and I can’t type it here.”

Speaking on BBC Radio Oxford, the following day the Prime Minister dug himself in even deeper.

“I wasn’t at the office, but my door is always open to the Bishop of Oxford.” Then: “The British government is leading the world in helping to end world hunger”, thus he had not even bothered to appraise himself that this was about British hunger, directly connected to his government’s policies.

Incidentally Britain has a “leading the world” complex. Successive Ministers and Prime Ministers are always “leading” it in declared scientific breakthroughs, medicine, agriculture, technology, childcare, dog walking, pencil sharpening, cheese grating, emery board development (I made the last few up) you name it. Then the latest pronouncement dies a death, never to be heard of again.

David Cameron’s constituency office, it would seem, has form in calling police on citizens attempting to bring about social improvement. In December 2010, twelve year old Nicky Wishart, who lives in the constituency was hauled out of an English class at school to be interviewed by the police.

Nicky had arranged on facebook, a protest of children of similar age outside Cameron’s office, against the closure of the local youth club, which also across the country were being targeted, in government cut-backs. His school was contacted by anti-terrorist officers.

He told the Guardian that the police officer:

“said even if I didn’t turn up I would be arrested and he also said that if David

Cameron was in, his armed officers will be there 'so if anything out of line happens ...' and then he stopped.”(6)

Three months later, in an address which should have shamed the Prime Minister the twelve year old spoke at a mass rally organized by Trade Union UNISON against the “catastrophic cuts” in youth and other services, including libraries.

He said of the youth club, a social life-line for him and friends:

“ I use it three times a week, which is a lot in a five-day working week. If it's closed I won't do anything – sit indoors, or hang around on the streets.

“I also use the local library which is also threatened with closure. I've got two younger brothers, one was born last Friday and one who is three, and both of them are never going to have a chance to know what a youth club is like.”

He told the Oxford Times of the Centre for which he had also raised £150 with various initiatives various towards it's costs: “The youth centre means loads to me. It's the only thing we have to do in Eynsham.” A twelve year old that should truly shame Cameron, his Cabinet and their shameful cuts.

In January this year, Nicky Wishart, now fifteen, with two friends, Tyler Walker and Ollie Hinchliffe were honoured by the same police force that threatened Nicky for his public spirited action over the youth club.

Sitting on a bench in the local park together, they noticed an elderly man in trouble in a nearby stream. They ran to help, called the emergency services and tried to revive him when he became unconscious. He died later in hospital.

The widow June Gwilliam, 85, called for an Award for the three, who had given help and comfort when it was so needed. They were honoured at a special presentation at police headquarters. David Cameron wrote to congratulate them. Another day, another bandwagon after a disgraceful response to a courageous and public spirited child who knew what conscience was.

Incidentally, the Prime Minister has come up with another cost cutting stunt: charging patients for crutches, walking sticks and neck braces – but he has reportedly personally intervened to keep the price of a gun licence at a mere £50 annually, static since 2001. See the full, mind stretching Cameron priority list at (9.) “Kill not cure” comes to mind.

Charity of any kind is clearly not Cameron's brand of Christian faith. Oh, and of the barring of the Bishop and his colleague, Cameron told Radio Oxford: “Sorry if there was a misunderstanding, but to be fair to the police and people in the office, we get some interesting characters turning up from time to time.”

When in a hole, Prime Minister, stop digging.

Notes

1. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/28/coalition-u-turn-list-full>
2. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1516276/Cameron-turns-blue-to-prove-green-credential>

[s.html](#)

3. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/tony-blair-george-w-bush-and-david-cameron-hi-jacking-god/5377707>
4. <http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2014/17-april/comment/opinion/my-faith-in-the-church-of-england>
5. <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/apr/16/million-people-britain-food-banks-religious-leaders-faith-groups>
6. <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/dec/10/schoolboy-quizzed-cameron-office-picket>
7. http://www.witneygazette.co.uk/news/national/news/8850063.Boy_voices_fears_over_service_cuts/
8. http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/yourtown/witney/10976402.Teens_honoured_for_trying_to_save_man/?ref=rss
9. <http://www.monbiot.com/2014/04/28/the-shooting-party/>

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Felicity Arbuthnot](#), Global Research, 2014

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Felicity Arbuthnot](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca