

19 April 2015 12:04 AM

Another wave of migrants is on its way (but don't you dare mention it)

This is Peter Hitchens's Mail on Sunday column

Funny how little we have heard from British liberals about a rather nasty outbreak of anti-immigrant violence this week.

Black South Africans burst on to the streets of Durban and Johannesburg, savagely attacking and threatening black immigrants from other parts of Africa.

Whatever this is, it isn't 'racist'. The assailants and victims alike are almost all black Africans. The fact that it is happening in a country liberals pretend is a rainbow paradise (when it isn't) is also hard for them to handle.

The sad truth is that mass migration, whatever the colour of the skins of those involved, upsets and worries indigenous people, especially the poorest. If it is not controlled – and South Africa has utterly failed to control it for many years – it can lead to serious social conflict.

And if you think this doesn't affect us, you are worryingly wrong. For Africa is exploding north and south, as war and famine uproot its unhappy millions.

David Cameron's irresponsible and ignorant intervention in Libya (which alone should be enough to ensure he never holds responsible office again) is now causing one of the greatest human upheavals of modern times.

A wave of human misery is now heading to Europe – and eventually to Britain – from the fiery chaos of post-Cameron Libya.

In one week, at least 10,000 migrants have been ferried to Italy by greedy criminal traffickers.

These calculating monsters put only enough fuel in the tanks of their boats to get them halfway across. Then they call the Italian coastguard to tell them to pick up the drifting victims before they drown or die of exposure.

And of course civilised Europe does pick them up. What choice do we have? It goes against centuries of Christianity to leave them (as the ruthless traffickers happily do) to their fate, and hope that this will discourage them.

And how can we send them back to the failed and lawless state which has already driven them out after robbing them? So it will not be long before they arrive at Calais and join the queue to be smuggled into Britain.

I can see no obvious solution to this. It reminds me of the great illegal migration of Latin Americans that utterly transformed the USA in the 1990s, and continues to do so.

Should we have listened more carefully to Colonel Gaddafi, whom we drove from power and left to be murdered in a ditch? By assisting in his overthrow, have we replaced the terrible with the horrible?

Back in August 2010, the Libyan despot went to Rome and made a blackmailing offer which many Italian politicians must now be wishing they had accepted.

Gaddafi said: 'Italy needs to convince her European allies to accept this Libyan proposal – €5 billion [then about £4 billion] to Libya to stop illegal immigration. 'Europe runs the risk of turning black from illegal immigration, it could turn into Africa. We need support from the European Union to stop this army trying to get across from Libya, which is their entry point.

'At the moment there is a dangerous level of immigration from Africa into Europe and we don't know what will happen.

'What will be the reaction of the white Christian Europeans to this mass of hungry, uneducated Africans?'

You will have to look up what he said next as it is simply too shocking and unpleasant for me to reproduce.

That's the problem. While we won't think about it, the unthinkable is actually happening, and we have no idea what



to do.

Fairy tale of the Big Bad Bear

Once again there is a lot of squawking about Russian warships passing through the 'English Channel' or antique Russian bombers approaching our airspace.

I will let you into a secret. The Channel is an international waterway through which the Russians are quite free to pass, and over which we have no exclusive right.

And no Russian warplane has entered British airspace.

Meanwhile, military activity by Nato aircraft close to the borders of Russia has doubled since early 2014, totalling 3,000 sorties that year. So it's not just the Big Bad Bear.

Also, do you recall the noisy chorus which pretty much assumed Russia's President Putin was behind the Moscow murder of his liberal opponent Boris Nemtsov?

Well, maybe he was, but oughtn't the same people to be just as worried about the mysterious deaths of ten prominent opponents of Ukraine's new pro-Nato government since February 2014?

The most recent were Oleg Kalashnikov, a supporter of deposed President Yanukovych, found shot dead on Wednesday, and a pro-Russian journalist, Oles Buzyna, murdered by masked gunmen in a drive-by shooting outside his Kiev home on Thursday.

I have no idea who killed them or why. But the belief that Russia is the heart of darkness, and Ukraine is a law-governed, clean Utopia, is ridiculous and silly.

Yet again Tory politicians and commentators are talking up the dull and mechanical Leftist Nicola Sturgeon.

I don't myself think she is anything special, and am baffled by the praise she receives. But do the Tories have another agenda? Do they secretly want Scotland out of the Union? I am certain that they do. They'll never say so openly, but former Tory Cabinet Minister Michael Portillo can afford to be frank now he's become a BBC favourite.

He said in July 2006 that the Scots would probably be better off without English subsidies, adding: 'From the point of political advantage, the Conservatives have a better chance of being in government if Scotland is not part of the affair.'

Challenged on this by Andrew Neil, he said: 'You are continuing to assume the Union is sacrosanct. That is not an assumption I make any more.'

I wonder if the same thought has crossed other minds? It could explain the Government's otherwise inexplicably clumsy handling of the independence referendum and its result.

There is no such thing as a 'right to buy'. Proper conservatives don't believe in invented, taxpayer-subsidised rights, a creation of liberals.

They believe in freedom. And the break-up of council estates was one of the most unconservative things that ever happened, making life harder for young families and destroying settled communities.

I was moved by the picture of two Muslims praying at a football match, and impressed by their courage in professing their faith in such a secular place as Anfield.

How can this be a disgrace, as one fan spluttered? Didn't we once sing Abide With Me at the Cup Final?

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William.
Gaddafi had to go because he wanted to control Africa for himself, he even had plans for a single African currency based on gold. But what has happened since has benefited our greedy business's and politicians. They can't get enough cheap labour and are now looking to Africa because there is only so many Poles and Romanians who are willing to pick fruit and clean washrooms.
I am not afraid to point this out to our slower brained citizens even if they want to call me a racist. Its time people stood up to our greedy elite.

Posted by: Tanya Bowman | [20 April 2015 at 04:50 PM](#)

Paul Taylor.
Paul, If only European leaders had the brains of Marine le Pen.
what she says is true, Europe does not have the employment to offer these people. You fear for Europe? so do I if we continue with centre left parties that are so pro immigration then I really do not know where we will end up. The whole identity of sovereign nations will be threatened.

Posted by: Tanya Bowman | [20 April 2015 at 04:35 PM](#)

20/4/2015

Another wave of migrants is on its way (but don't you dare mention it) - Mail Online - Peter Hitchens blog

@ Mrs B

You've alluded to many relevant points which taken as a whole does build a picture of what's wrong with all the goings on. But it's this :

"So I won't take all this message that immigration has brought anything but good, because I know different."

There's no doubt some immigrants are beneficial to the country - and I know this from personal experience. Some might even be more productive than the native population - but that isn't the point. There are lots who aren't beneficial - either culturally or economically. But some people will always benefit from mass-immigration, namely those near to the top of the Ponzi scheme , which is what this is.

When you ever hear NET figures used to justify MASS-IMMIGRATION it's done to hide the truth ; the truth being that if you add them all together and then average by the MEAN/MEDIAN you'll get a favourable political headline. The correct measure would be the MODE, because that would focus on the most numerous data-point. Put simply, if the migrant doesn't need to access benefits like tax credits, housing etc - then it can be safely assumed they'll not be a drain on the taxpayer because they're earning a good salary or have brought money with them. If they're able to access benefits (excluding genuine asylum seekers) then they're not beneficial to the taxpayer - but crucially, as a recipient of taxpayer's money they will as a consumer be lining the pockets of the crony capitalists/big business lobby. That's the main "economic" reason for mass-immigration, the other being a utopian idea to create the "new man."

Good isn't it ?

Posted by: Paulus M | [20 April 2015 at 03:16 PM](#)

Joshua Wooderson - a blockade is not only desirable, but is actually the only responsible solution , in addition to targeting resources at countries which we have destabilised to restore order and stem the flow of migration. Although most reasonable people probably agree with this, their voices are unlikely to be heard under the First Past the Post System, which in reality is nothing more than a rubber-stamping PR exercise to confer legitimacy on the elite.

The whole basis of our system is inherently unfair and corrupt , and is designed to accentuate the power of monopoly parties, snuff out the voices of smaller parties, and thus the prospect of political change. Put simply, power in parliament is apportioned to people returned rather than votes cast, so that parties whose support is spread across the whole country rather than concentrated in pockets are done for, and yet it is supposed to be a national election.

Similarly, messing with boundaries is able to skew the result one way or another, something which - mentioning no names- various leaders of recent times have exploited with great aplomb. However, we must not forget (we are told) that it leads to "decisive government" - yes it does, we veer from one extreme to the other when the party of government basically ignores other voices and tries to enact revenge against the previous lot. Hitler and Starlin could doubtless have used the same argument in justification .

And thus, the whole basis of our system is negative - and this is where the Greens actually make a coherent point. If one doesn't agree with the mainstream all one is able to do is either not vote or vote tactically against (ie for their main rivals, whoever they may be) the mainstream party you really detest to block them from office . You can only vote against rather than for. However, if one believes they're all the same, much as it pains me to agree with Russel Brand, possibly not voting is a more effective protest as don't they need a minimum participation level to form a government ?

Posted by: William | [20 April 2015 at 03:01 PM](#)

PS Nils,

It wasn't Inverness I stayed in in Scotland, but Dundee. The Scott I was travelling with told me about the Tay the Tay the silvery Tay... Something about 'it flows there and back in a day' or... I dont remember. But he was most unimpressed with the two short lines he knew. I've checked on line but cant find it, but I had thought it was Burns!

Either way, we couldnt get on to the beach. Not because of the weather, I love to watch the sea in a storm!

The explosions had calmed down by then... but really I was just a puppet...

Hanging on to something dont think I'll ever know what.

Posted by: gillian | [20 April 2015 at 01:00 PM](#)

@ Nils McNary

"Rainbows of colour presumably fed
By the fireworks in Sturgeon's head."

Actually they can feel more like bombs going off in the brain... I took to calling them 'land mines' which 'went off' if someone stepped on one by saying something which didn't tally with what I knew to be true. They didn't have to be deliberately lying, just a dumb and insensitive comment, could set it off...

When I did my raging in 1993 I verbalised 'really raged'.... But it really isnt me to rage like that. I was in some measure in control... Well in so far as I would wait til I got to a room where I could rage at an empty chair.

But as things got progressively worse in 1997 ... How does anyone know where 'inside your head,' and 'outside your head' begin and end? I had no clue. Once or twice a lecturer at college actually saw those explosions go off in my head, and accompanying distress. One was lovely. She talked about going home and having a nice long soak in the bath... I remember joking about 'the bells!'...

The other one tried to get thorough to me as well. I cant recall his name (he was a PHD student) and I was so afraid when I called him, all conspiratorial, I bet he wondered what on earth was going on! I could appear so 'normal' and chat away...

"That your central girders would not have given way,
At least many sensible men do say,
Had they been supported on each side with buttresses,
At least many sensible men confesses,"

(McGonegal)

Whod have thought it but to my mind the poem you selected seems almost prophetic... Not like the 'sound in color' I had in mind when I first wrote about it. Things had become very dark by 1997... I did not know I was myself perpetuating the problem...

Posted by: gillian | [20 April 2015 at 12:43 PM](#)

I really believe if we keep going on at this rate, this destabilising will be a huge problem in our country.

That traffickers and I agree with Harriet Sergeant who has just been on Sky News that a lot of traffickers are finding an easier trade and less harsh sentences abroad for people rather than drug smuggling and it is that that has to be the starting point..

That in Australia. their attitude, turning them back, not allowing to settle has stopped the boats, but knowing the Italians will rescue is actually fuelling this trade in misery. It's the same as ransom paying, it just fuels...

Just how many people are we going to keep on letting in this country. It's not that you don't feel sorry for the plight,

It was the politicians who caused problems in Libya..NOT ordinary people here, who are already feeling the burden.

If it wasn't for uncontrolled migration and the increasing illegal entry through the ports on lorries, perhaps we could be talking sensibly, but we can't.

Uncontrolled migration and illegal immigration has had a detrimental effect on those seeking asylum.....politicians again, not ordinary people, with more common sense.

The pressure on all our services biting. Housing especially.

There is a connection here on housing and social housing and the negative side of introducing other culture.

There are streets where there are already bail hostels, mixed with private and social housing, especially near to towns. Problems with vulnerable in my are having houses taken over. Problems with culture.. Within my family a settled female has had to uproot because of social and cultural problems. A settled female of one of my husband's colleague's the same....for safety.

Mums going about daily business to work, school..this was in the wave of immigration from Kosovo and Albania. Ours was several years ago, their problem in the last couple of years...led to complete upheaval.

So I won't take all this message that immigration has brought anything but good, because I know different.

Be in no doubt with a mix of different cultures and those fleeing, who are tipping people overboard over religion...we are storing up problems.

I am worried with the increases promised in minimum wage, we will without serious clampdown, see more undercutting, more driving down of wages.

It has been obvious that as soon as we had minimum wage, jobs were advertised overseas and the queues of locals for factories are less indigenous..

Posted by: Mrs.B. | [20 April 2015 at 12:37 PM](#)

Why, oh, why are people in such denial about immigration!

Wake up. We stopped having babies. We sent our women to work. We decided to have a big party.

They did not stop having babies. It is inevitable that they will end up here.

You are being lied to by business and politicians, and you accept the lies at face value because you don't want to recognise that we ourselves are responsible for the slow motion suicide of the west.

Everyone with a little thought recognises that our prosperity relies on immigration. All those double income western couples need kids to teach and families to buy their wares.

The hypocrisy on this subject of immigration is so repulsive. If you want to end immigration start having babies and stop women working. And if that is not possible then at least have the courage to recognise why they are coming and why they will keep coming, because we have become corrupt and decadent.

Posted by: Patrick | [20 April 2015 at 12:33 PM](#)

Peter Hitchens writes (about the waves of migrants currently embarking on the voyage across the Mediterranean and hence onwards across Europe to the Channel):

"We have no idea what to do".

I know what I will be doing, starting on May 7th. Given the choice, between a cabal of reality denying tax and spenders and the sole party of patriots, it seems ludicrously easy to know what to do.

***PH writes : Generally, if something seems ludicrously easy, than that is exactly what it is.

Posted by: John Main | [20 April 2015 at 12:23 PM](#)

Abide With Me" is still sung annually at the FA Cup Final, and very nice it is too. Long may it continue.
 ***PH asks: Sung by the crowd? Or to the crowd (which doesn't know the words) by a performer?

Correct 'Abide with me' was sung at 15 minutes to 3 O'clock on FA Cup Final day, the traditional Saturday kick off time for the world's oldest football competition and the hymn was seen as integral to that tradition by both the crowd and viewers at home.

Earlier in this decade, thanks to a certain grotesque American beer company the song is now sung 15 minutes before kick-off at whatever time best suits/maximises the American viewing figures. ITV for their part now decides to run commercials during the hymn.

Posted by: gavin | [20 April 2015 at 12:07 PM](#)

There is the traditional Labour Vs Tory battle but the sub-plot is the State wants a winner who will serve the US/neo-con pro-war lobby.

Cameron has shown his compliant Blairite credentials by destroying Libya and by threatening Russia, whereas Ed Miliband successfully opposed the bombing of Syria [his brother would have supported it] and is being attacked by the self-serving Cameron-Blairites/neo-cons as a result.

The neo-con media is promoting Nicola Sturgeon because it's hoped this will damage Labour prospects and assist Cameron, but as with their promotion of UKIP to damage BNP, it is a policy that will come back to bite them, because it could yet result in a Labour/SNP Government that ironically saves the UK by the promotion of anti-EU Austerity and anti-war policies.

PS. The SNP benefits from the same anti-Westminster politics that propels UKIP and not primarily about a wish for 'devolution in the EU' and genuine voting reform that could emerge from a hung Parliament could help restore rather than break up the UK.

Posted by: Dave | [20 April 2015 at 11:51 AM](#)

Mike B -- 'A blockade does not imply violence.'

So what would happen to anyone attempting to run the blockade? I presume they wouldn't just politely ask them to stop.

'Libyans nationals do not seem to form the preponderance of those seeking to reach Europe this way.'

Indeed not. The two largest groups arriving in Italy last year were from Syria and Eritrea (whose government has one of the worst human rights records in the world). Ukrainians increasingly make up those fleeing to Western Europe as well.

'If you are worried about saving lives, preventing these victims from making their way onto the high seas in unseaworthy and minimally fuelled boats seems a good place to start.'

The reason they turn to unscrupulous smugglers, and hence unseaworthy boats, to make the journey is that they are prevented by law from making the trip legally. Smugglers' fees are typically ten times the legal travel costs, so poverty isn't the issue.

In any case, I dare say the number drowning at sea is negligible compared with those dying, or suffering other misfortunes, in the countries to which you wish to return them.

Posted by: Joshua Wooderson | [20 April 2015 at 11:32 AM](#)

Another point on those who buy council house to rent out. I have just read an article on the MP. Emily Thornberry. You will remember her from question Time when she made much of being brought up on a council estate by a single mum. I am sure Peter was on the panel. I've just read of the purchase of a council house to rent out by her. I don't know how you can have a council tenant paying a subsidised rent in one house and the situation arising of a private rent at a higher one in another. That isn't good for community cohesion. Housing benefit to my mind should have been capped when it was brought in and subsequently. I say that as someone who rented before housing benefit. When you rented what you could afford. I say it's like today's tax credits which are given an inflated idea of standard of living which isn't really there. Not allow buy to let landlords charge over the odds rents. Nor should landlords be allowed over occupancy with many migrant tenants...up to 20 in a house.

Posted by: Mrs.B. | [20 April 2015 at 11:05 AM](#)

James K;

*** "The "right to buy" did have an upside - the idea of a "property-owning democracy"." ***

How many of those houses ended up in the hands of profiteering landlords that have pushed the price of housing up to insane levels?

Also, as I asked before, how can the government tell housing charities to sell their property - these houses do not belong to the government, do that, so what right do they have forcing their sale?

Posted by: L Porter | [20 April 2015 at 10:56 AM](#)

@ Ray Allen | 19 April 2015 at 10:01 PM

A good post Ray. Do you think this could be a proxy for what they actually want ?

I say this because for years (pre Libya war) I've heard several representatives from various think tanks /pan national organisations (mainly from the UN) complain about "Europe" not being open enough, or being "discriminatory" towards people from the African continent.. This way they get what they want - shattering an agreement with Gaddafi under the proxy of regime change, opens a channel for unlimited numbers of cheap labourers, doubling up more importantly as consumers. The hand wringers will naturally lobby for more well remunerated sinecures to manage this human menagerie - and scream the usual chorus at those who oppose and see what's on the cards. The big multinationals will get more mouths to feed/house/clothe/educate at a higher cost to those already in "Europe".

Cui Bono ?

Posted by: Paulus M | [20 April 2015 at 09:55 AM](#)

@ Joshua Wooderson 19 April at 09:23PM

- 1) A blockade does not imply violence.
- 2) Libyans nationals do not seem to form the preponderance of those seeking to reach Europe this way.
- 3) If you are worried about saving lives, preventing these victims from making their way onto the high seas in unseaworthy and minimally fuelled boats seems a good place to start.

Posted by: Mike B | [20 April 2015 at 09:18 AM](#)

Ray Allen: There is no response possible to any modern liberal (European) power in answer to the (African) invasion (from Libya)

Echoes here of the book The Camp Of The Saints written by Jean Raspail back in the 1970s. It's an alternate apocalypse, the secular apocalypse envisioned by the author. (The book title is taken from Revelation: 20:9, but the plot should resonate with believers and non believers alike.) Check it out on Wikipedia.

Posted by: Kevin 1 | [20 April 2015 at 09:11 AM](#)

Different times now with regard to the sale of social housing.
 There was no immigration crisis. More to the point no ever growing, non stop immigration pressure on housing. Newcomers who often have a much higher birthrate.
 I agree on some points and disagree on others.
 I agree with Andrew Pitt that it was very wrong to let relatives buy the homes of the elderly who couldn't afford them and make a profit.
 Different era. Council homes were for married couples, family homes. You waited on a points based system. Gardens neat and tidy, council maintained, but very basic.
 Councils sold off a lot of the houses that were going to cost a lot to bring up to standard.
 Those houses, near me have been improved by those who bought, bettering the area and many are long term residents, some have died and have new owners. They would have been in their homes, whether rented or bought.
 The failure to use the money to build more was so silly.
 I personally today would not want to buy on a housing estate with social housing.
 Purely and simply because I'm afraid the standard of some tenants has changed. I hear too many stories of bad behaviour, drug issues and sub letting.
 The rise of the sink estate in my opinion is to the pull away from marriage and stability, the absence of fathers or so many different fathers on the scene and the rise in drug and alcohol abuse.
 I live part private, down most of one side council. We've had one or two problem families in those still renting, one in particular moved on, thank goodness.
 I do see an argument for the sale improving areas, I've witnessed it, and those people would have still lived in those houses. If you don't rebuild like for like then it won't work. They should make sure tenants income only gets the mortgage.
 Another problem of years of need over points and locals not getting the houses but newcomers with large families moving up list, immigration, I'm afraid again.
 No matter people might raise their hands and say you can't say that. For those of us who live in communities and know of those passed over ..we can..
 Also, even tenanted houses have problems.
 We had a nightmare trying to move a member of family suffering through the sub letting of the next door of a housing association house and what it was being used for.
 So I am mixed on all this. A complex problem.

Posted by: Mrs.B. | [20 April 2015 at 09:10 AM](#)

Regarding immigration Peter and the abhorrent violence in South Africa not only are British liberals silent but they produce tweets like this in relation to their own country:

"Saira Grant from @JCWInews There's not just economic benefits to immigration. There's cultural benefits too #bbctbq"

Does any one know what Saira was talking about and provide any specific examples?

Posted by: JohnMack | [20 April 2015 at 08:35 AM](#)

Anyone who is considering voting for Labour, SNP or Conservative candidates should also take into account the mess these parties have made of Britain but more importantly the terror and strife that they have inflicted across the world in our name and in the name of 'freedom and democracy'. Another five years of their despotic rule will ensure that from the southern Straits of Gibraltar to the Baring Strait there will be an arc of war, approx. 25,000 miles long, between East and West resulting in the destruction of life and property along its entire length - and on both sides. This, I have no doubt, is what the Lib/Lab/Cons, at the behest of "their" allies, America and the EU, will inflict upon the world - given the chance and position of power that they seek again. We may not be able to stop it happening but we do have the power to ensure that Britain is no longer prepared to watch as nations are destroyed in our name.

Posted by: Michael Wood | [20 April 2015 at 08:21 AM](#)

Perhaps, compared to the others on the platform, Nicola Sturgeon deed appear to 'sparkle' somewhat on both her recent appearances on the national stage.

It might even be, policies aside, that many watching from all sides of the political spectrum, rather wished she was the leader of their own choice of party. Indeed, if the election outcome turns out as expected, the SNP might be the only party whose members won't be muttering about a change of leader...

Posted by: Alan Thomas | [20 April 2015 at 07:52 AM](#)

"And how can we send them back to the failed and lawless state which has already driven them out after robbing them?"

Heres the horrible truth, unless you accept the odium of doing exactly that you will be indirectly drowning many thousands of people, funding criminal and terrorist groups and eventually wrecking your own nation.

Point 1: Drowning: This is what the smugglers do, its part of their business model to have 10% or so losses, so the bigger the numbers the more die, brutal arithmetic.

Point 2: Please check google and see how the Tamil Tigers funded much of their operations, I saw it working in detention in Australia. Young men, with families still securely held in tamil areas sent over to Australia by the Tigers in order to get work and send a "tithe" back to fund the ongoing fight. Thats not an allegation a short search will show you cases in Australia, Germany, the USA and Canada. I personally witnessed a man sent mad by the criminals he borrowed money off to fund his trip to Australia, after an initial unsuccessful refugee application he began to receive calls from his wife and kids still back "home" as collateral for the loan. The calls became increasingly desperate, the criminals began pimping her and the kids out because he couldnt pay as quick as they liked. Both of those are hard realities of being "compassionate". We also had a terribly evil old man and his family (Iraqi from memory) who threw 3 Afghan boys overboard to their deaths 1/2 way from Indonesia to Australia. I was on the crew who picked them up and no-one at the time could explain why 3 lots of baggage were left on the boat till later on.

Point 3: Nations exist as a "commonwealth", there is a broad agreement that people belonging to "your place" should be looked after by services paid for by members of the commonwealth. Introducing enough "not us" to a commonwealth and the bonds needed to keep it running and functional vanish, leaving the "I've got mine jack" state instead.

I dont doubt most of the people calling for compassion mean well, but the practical results are terrible.

Posted by: Rohan | [20 April 2015 at 07:44 AM](#)

@gillian | 19 April 2015 at 03:29 PM, speaking of Ms Nicola Sturgeon.

"Rainbows of sizzling colors as well as pastel shades. Sound in color?"

Rainbows of colour presumably fed
By the fireworks in Sturgeon's head.
Though mentions of auras
Usually bore us
When she opens her mouth I see red.

" 'The Tay the Tay the silvery Tay' "

I'm not sure whom it is you're quoting, Gillian, but the words put me in mind of the magnum opus of my own sweet inspiration and spiritual master, the Bard of Edinburgh, that gem among men and most lapidary of poets, Mr W. Topaz McGonagall. It's called, appropriately enough, 'The Tay Bridge Disaster'. Here's the last verse: enjoy.

It must have been an awful sight,
To witness in the dusky moonlight,
While the Storm Fiend did laugh, and angry did bray,
Along the Railway Bridge of the Silv'ry Tay,
Oh! ill-fated Bridge of the Silv'ry Tay,
I must now conclude my lay
By telling the world fearlessly without the least dismay,
That your central girders would not have given way,
At least many sensible men do say,
Had they been supported on each side with buttresses,
At least many sensible men confesses,
For the stronger we our houses do build,
The less chance we have of being killed.

Posted by: Nils McNary | [20 April 2015 at 07:15 AM](#)

The "right to buy" did have an upside - the idea of a "property-owning democracy".

***PH writes: What is this supposed to mean? I believe the originator of this phrase was not referring to home ownership, but rather to share ownership. Germany, now a far more prosperous and industrialised country than ours, succeeds partly because its middle-class is not beguiled by the housing obsession, and invests its money in productive industry rather than in interminable, vast mortgages. Renting is normal, there is a good supply of reasonably priced good-quality rental accommodation and it is easy to move to another city to pursue a career.

Posted by: James K | [20 April 2015 at 01:20 AM](#)

There are perfectly sensible solutions to the problem of unwelcome immigrants. We could learn from the Israelis - who send them to a safe African country that is willing to take them for a cash payment.

If our rescue ships in the Mediterranean are re-flagged by the same African country, then activists and lawyers from the EU will not have the opportunity to wreck the operation.

Best of all, this solution would quickly deter people from trying to sail across the Mediterranean and then claim asylum. It would even cost less than the bribe demanded by Colonel Gadaffi.

Posted by: James K | [20 April 2015 at 01:18 AM](#)

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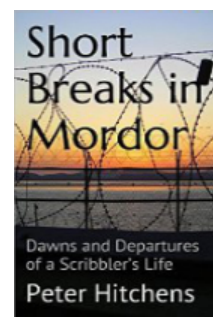
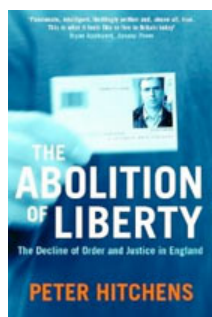
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