

CALL TO ARMS

Gunning for Obama

JONATHAN FARLEY puts forth a modest proposal as to how US liberals can resist the gun-nuts



AT A recent public discussion about health insurance with US President Barack Obama, a New Hampshire man with a gun strapped to his leg waved a sign saying: "It is time to water the tree of liberty" — a reference to a quote by Thomas Jefferson that finishes: "With the blood of patriots and tyrants."

When asked by a reporter if the gun was loaded, the man, William Kostric, laughed.

"Wow," he said. "Who would be silly enough to carry an unloaded firearm?"

Not only was Kostric not detained by the police, they even assisted him by telling him where he could stand.

A few days later, a dozen people showed up with guns at an Obama speech in Phoenix, Arizona. At least two had semi-automatic rifles.

The police made sure that the men with guns were protected from the people without guns.

One reporter said he had never seen civilians with automatic weapons at any of president George W Bush's events.

But, the reporter added, in the infuriating style characteristic of the US media which pretends both left and right act the same, that doesn't mean they weren't there.

Very soon, it will be commonplace for dozens of people with automatic weapons to be at Obama's speeches.

Obama in fact recently removed restrictions on carrying guns, so these men are not protesting against Obama because he is curbing their "rights."

They are sending a not-so-veiled threat to Obama — so you want to be like JFK?

They want him to stop going down the path to what they call "socialism." You know, the kind that failed in western Europe. Or was it eastern Europe? Whatever.

The constant comparisons of Obama to that arch-socialist Hitler also have this aim. They saw the Tom Cruise movie. Any action against a Hitler is justified.



DANGER? Obama greets the crowd after a speech

"The right-wingers want Obama to stop going down the path to 'socialism.' You know, the kind that failed in western Europe. Or was it eastern Europe? Whatever"

The secret service will be unable to watch all the potential taxi drivers, which is the plan, thus making it that much easier for the next person wanting to get his name into the history books.

And afterwards the media, crying crocodile tears, will ask: "How did we let the hate reach this point?"

"You call my kin nazis, I won't let that pass," Christopher Barwick once wrote to me.

"Get a bodyguard or carry a gun. You will need it."

This gave me an idea. If conservatives won't cool it, liberals should start packing heat.

When police arrest crippled black Harvard professors but assist men who threaten the life of the president, white liberals must start coming to Obama's speeches armed and stand right behind the gun-nuts.

Indeed, a modest proposal is that liberals should stand outside Kostric's home and follow him wherever he goes. With guns loaded of course. Carrying unloaded guns would be just silly.

If Kostric should ever confront Obama and make a move that is

"misinterpreted" by someone on our side ... oops.

Hope he has health insurance!

Besides, show me when, in the entire history of the US, any right-wing organisation has ever been bothered by an "accidental" shooting when the shooter was a white policeman and the "shootee" an innocent, unarmed black child.

The right-wingers comparing the US today to Germany in the 1930s are kooks, but their comparisons are apt in one respect — the Weimar republic fell because there was an insufficiently muscular response to the stormtroopers.

Squeamish liberals and hypocritical conservatives will scream that I am advocating violence.

To which I say that the Black Panthers carried guns legally and you murdered them. That's violence. I'm calling for piece-keeping.

If you don't want the US moving back and to the right then lock 'n' load, liberals. Let's not say "never again" ever again.

■ *Dr Jonathan Farley is a teaching and research fellow at the institute of algebra at Johannes Kepler University of Linz, Austria.*

Fighting Fund with Mac O'Connell

We must raise... £10,130 We've got 10 days

IT was a familiar problem over the weekend — no post. Mind you, this time it's just our regular lack of weekend mail rather than the postal strikes that ensured we had little last week.

Casting an eye over the front pages of today's paper, it looks like the strikes and disputes are going to keep on coming. That means we've got to keep going strong to fight the strikers' corner, which means in turn that we've got to keep on hitting the Fund target.

The last few days have shown what can be done, but it's going to have to be a group effort if we're going to make it. I sometimes wish we had a better way of keeping in touch with each other to spur us all on, but for the moment I guess this column will have to do!

Mulling over the Welsh walkers who boosted our total last week through a sponsored ramble, it struck me that not only was it a great way to raise money for our paper but also a great way of raising our profile in communities. Maybe there's an example there for all of us?

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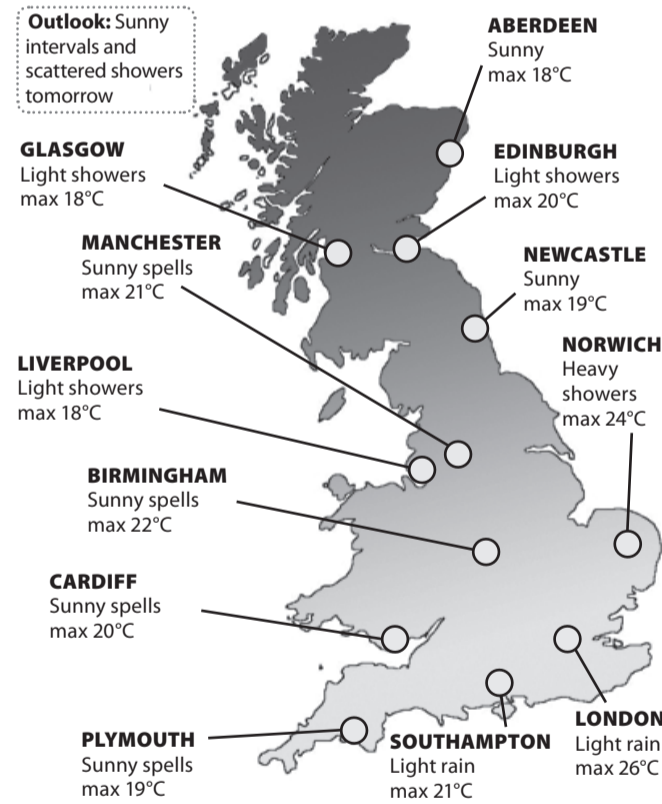
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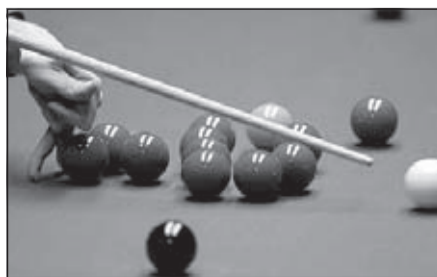
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The Quizmaster

Test your general knowledge with our new daily quiz – and see if you can beat The Quizmaster...

1. What name, also that of a TV programme, is given to a small blue flag with a white rectangle on it, flown from ships?
2. Which railway is nicknamed "Old Ratty"?
3. Leon Trotsky spent the last years of his life in which country?

Answers tomorrow...



Weekend answers

1. Who painted *Starry Night*? **Vincent Van Gogh**
2. How many red balls appear on a professional snooker table? **15**
3. John Flamsteed and Harold Spencer Jones were both what? **Astronomers Royal**