

# Terry Christian

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## General fools for a century

ALONGSIDE the impassioned verse about the suffering of the common soldier, First World War poets Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon also wrote of the stupidity of some of the generals.

To bring it all up to date, I would like to propose a big cheer for the blimpish General Sir Nicholas Houghton, whose views on poppies and nuclear weapons have ruffled a few feathers.

With his splendid array of medals and his rallying cry of "Vote Conservative" he serves to remind us that, a century later, our country's troops are still being led by arrogant, blinkered establishment Tory lickspittles.



**GIVEN** their irrelevance, I didn't think I would end up writing anything about the Lib Dems. But news that the lascivious Lord Rennard has been elected to the Lib Dem ruling body is amazing news. To be honest I didn't even know he was standing, though I heard he'd put out a few feelers!



NEWLAND: Nothing like a dame

## I'm behind the times

I REALLY don't know what to make of the bizarre story of Gayle Newland, who pretended to be a man in order to dupe her then girlfriend into having sex with her.

I know it's pantomime season and the principle boy is played by a girl. And from my days going to panto as a kid, I remember lots of thigh-slapping but nothing involving a prosthetic penis.

And I never heard anyone shout: "He's behind you! ... Oh My God! What's he got there?"

## Sepp kicks himself as Seb dithers

ONE has to feel sorry for poor Sepp Blatter. It's little wonder the FIFA president has suffered a minor breakdown.

Imagine spending all those years in the firm belief that you are running the most corrupt global sports organisation, only to now find that someone else has been pulling strokes you never even dreamed of.

The almost beautiful scheme by the IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations) to catch drugs cheats and then blackmail them to bury the evidence must have given Blatter a nasty shock.

If you can blackmail an athlete for half a million, imagine how much more could be extracted from footballers ... all those years of wasted opportunities.

Of course, soon the dark days of the IAAF will be behind us as that shining knight – err, former IAAF vice president Lord Coe – rides to the rescue.

Having bravely stood up to the most powerless and vulnerable in Britain by voting to steal their tax credits, he now stands ready to take on the drugs cheats, or possibly not.

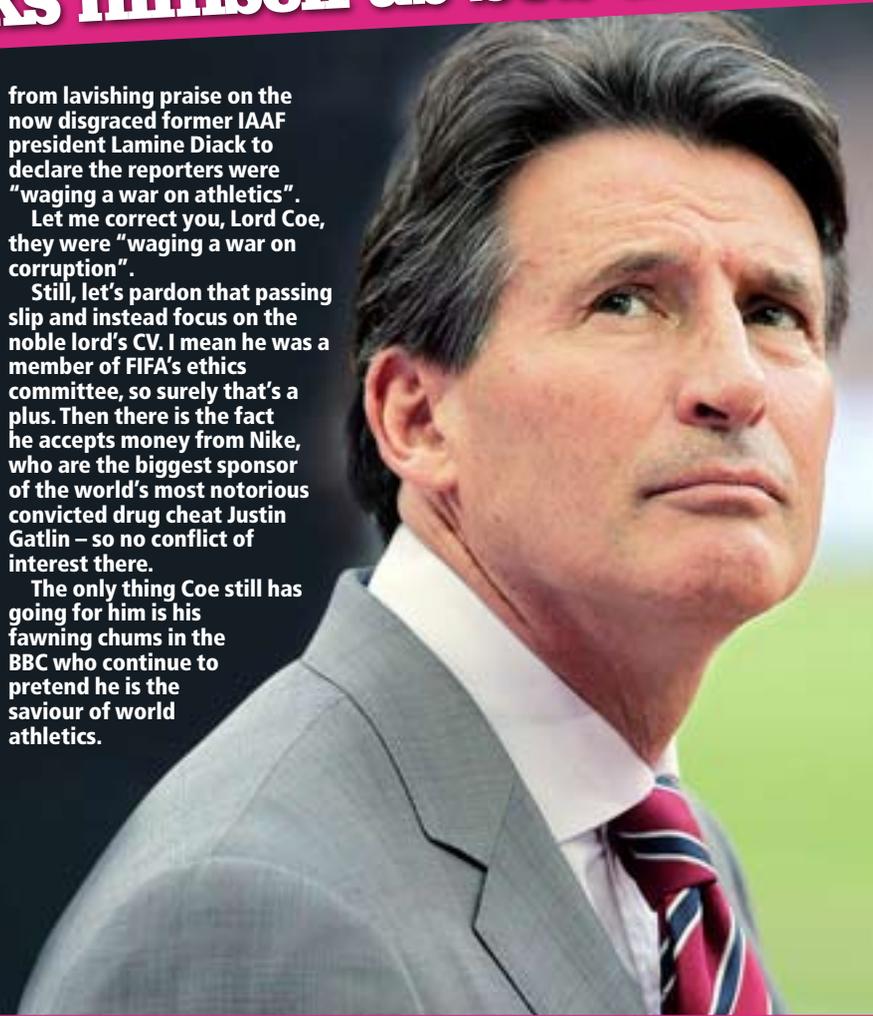
When journalists first raised these stories, Seb took time out

from lavishing praise on the now disgraced former IAAF president Lamine Diack to declare the reporters were "waging a war on athletics".

Let me correct you, Lord Coe, they were "waging a war on corruption".

Still, let's pardon that passing slip and instead focus on the noble lord's CV. I mean he was a member of FIFA's ethics committee, so surely that's a plus. Then there is the fact he accepts money from Nike, who are the biggest sponsor of the world's most notorious convicted drug cheat Justin Gatlin – so no conflict of interest there.

The only thing Coe still has going for him is his fawning chums in the BBC who continue to pretend he is the saviour of world athletics.



# A big, bad Wolf

## Why I'm buying no presents from Next

IT might be too early to be discussing Christmas, especially in my case as a confirmed last-minute Charlie.

Merely thinking about it in November is enough to make me feel dizzy. However, my annual prevarication has been helped in at least one sense this year as I can categorically state I will not be buying any presents from Next.

In case you missed it, Simon Wolfson, the multi-millionaire Tory peer boss of Next, has loftily declared that for poor

sods who toil in his shops £6.70 an hour was "enough to live on".

It has to be hoped that his appalling arrogance and pathetic immaturity sufficiently hits the retail chain's bottom line and that the other members of the Next board decide it is time he was booted out.

If £6.70 an hour is "enough to live on", you wonder how he

sees his annual £4.6million pay packet. I suppose "more than enough to live on" would probably just about cover it.

The usual defence in these cases is that these low-paid workers need to get on in life, get promoted, climb the ladder.

In that case, what better example can there be than Simon Wolfson himself?

A man who started out as a mere sales assistant at Next and after little more than ten years became chief executive.

How proud his father – former Next chairman David Wolfson – must have been to see this magnificent example of meritocracy in action



MULTI-MILLIONAIRE: Lord Wolfson

## A poor idea Tracey can push on TV

THE latest ill-informed bile from a Tory Minister has come from Tracey Crouch.

Her spiteful nonsense was to suggest that the poorest need to simply cut back on pay TV to balance the books.

It makes me wonder why we don't just ask the Tories to come right out with it and make being poor a criminal

offence. They could insist that if you're going to be poor, you need to look the part: Dress in rags, have holes in your shoes, and bring up your children to be hollow-eyed with ribs sticking out.



## Paris fascists target our joy

Simply trying to get my head around the horror of the Paris massacres will, I think, take some time but my heart goes out to those affected by Friday night's truly awful events.

Make no mistake, this was the work of Islamic fascists. Their targets – rock concert hall, football match, cafes. The things we do to bring joy to life. No doubt doubly hateful to narrow minded freedom-hating fascists of whichever terrorist group responsible.

We will hear a lot about these attacks, but there are things I don't want to read... I don't want to hear what lovely people the killers once were. Nor do I want to hear that it has nothing to do with Islam.



## Cam ignores bite of cuts

IS IT blind stupidity or simply the patter of a chiselling conman to pretend there is no link between actions and consequences.

Whatever the reason, it's a miserable recurring theme with David Cameron.

So, people going to food banks has no relation to their money being stopped. The rise in the

numbers of the unemployed committing suicide

is nothing to do with punitive benefit sanctions. And the brutal cuts

to frontline council services

are entirely divorced from massive cuts in funding.

The sheer gall of the PM to write to the head of Oxfordshire council complaining about the closure of elderly care centres and libraries is incredible.

Ian Hudspeth's reply, explaining, as you might to a five-year-old, the link between a lack of funding and a lack of funds to spend, is well worth a read. If Cameron ever knocks on your door I advise you not to invite him in.

Given his history, it would be no surprise if he turned up bearing some fishy gift, then declaring he can't stay as the house smells too bad.

