

Marie Goldman

MP for Chelmsford



Act drew abhorrent equivalence between terrorists and veterans

THERE'S a popular view that politicians aren't to be trusted. Speaking as a politician who tries hard to counter that perception and do my very best to uphold the Nolan principles (the seven principles of public life: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>), I find it hard when I'm accused - baselessly - of not acting in accordance with that.

Speaking as a member of the public, a British citizen who lives in our wonderful country and has a personal, vested interest in wanting it to be an even better place to be, I am also incredibly disappointed when I see others not acting with honesty and integrity. Especially when that means deliberately misleading the public.

I'm also disappointed when I see the public being so easily misled. It's clear we've got a lot of work to do to educate people to do their research before blindly believing what others tell them.

I say this because I am incredibly frustrated and disappointed to see the Conservatives, in particular, misrepresent the motivations for the way MPs from other parties vote, especially when they must know the truth.

They've done this before, telling the public that some of us voted against a new grooming gang inquiry, without explaining that the amendment we were voting on, had it passed, would have stopped in its tracks the progress of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, which included - amongst other things - additional protections for children. Funnily enough, they didn't mention that.

And now they're at it again - this time disgustingly trying to enlist our veterans into their dirty little game. I want to state for the record how vile this is. It needs to stop. It has no place in decent society - and it certainly does nothing to support the very people it claims to.

There's a rule in politics that if you're explaining, you're losing. Well, you'll have to forgive me because I'm going to explain this one. Last week, the Liberal Demo-



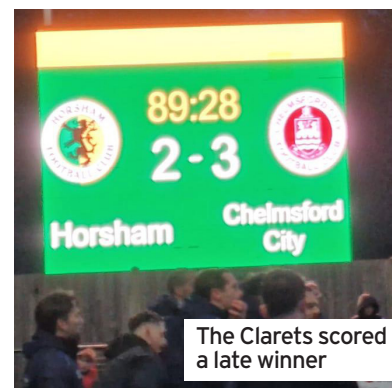
Marie Goldman MP with the MP for Horsham, John Milne, at the Horsham v Chelmsford match
PHOTOS: MARIE GOLDMAN MP



Marie Goldman MP with Chelmsford City FC team captain Adam Crowther, away man of the match



Marie Goldman MP outside Horsham FC



The Clarets scored a late winner

“It's a genuine shame that there are some who seek to mislead the public to suggest otherwise.”
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crats supported the Labour Government to vote in favour of something called 'The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (Remedial) Order 2025. This disappplied parts of the Conservatives' Northern Ireland Legacy Act.

Perhaps this is the real reason why they were peeved and seem to have launched a national campaign against MPs who voted for the Remedial Order.

The Conservatives' flawed Legacy Act gave immunity to the terrorists who killed and maimed so many during the Northern Ireland Troubles, via provisions later declared unlawful by the UK courts. It drew an abhorrent equivalence between those terrorists and our brave veterans who served with honour to maintain the rule of law, whilst leaving them in a legal limbo with false promise of protections that do not exist.

The Liberal Democrats voted for

this Remedial Order to uphold the rule of law and end that disgraceful equivalence by removing the unlawful provisions that granted blanket immunity even to the most violent of terrorists.

We now need to make sure the Government listens to Liberal Democrat calls to ensure British veterans are given the protections they are demanding. Our new clauses and amendments to the Government's legislation to replace the Legacy Act will guarantee our veterans are treated fairly and never again equated with terrorists.

I hope that's clear. Far from betraying veterans, our vote does the exact opposite. It's a genuine shame that there are some who seek to mislead the public to suggest otherwise.

It's been a particularly tough time for veterans recently. Like many people, I have friends who have served in the Armed Forces.

I thank them wholeheartedly for their service - and join them in condemning, unequivocally, the disgraceful insult aimed at them by the President of the United States who claimed, disgustingly, that they were somehow not fully involved in con-

flicts such as Afghanistan. To all those who lost friends and loved ones, I say we know the truth and we will continue to honour your sacrifice. Donald Trump does not speak for us.

I hope you'll now forgive me for moving on to something altogether a lot lighter. This is an article of two halves, and I'm going to talk briefly about that wonderful game of two halves: football.

Last weekend, I was invited by my Lib Dem colleague, the MP for Horsham, John Milne, to join him in Horsham for what was obviously going to be the match of the year: Horsham v Chelmsford!

OK, so I'm going to admit that I'm not a huge football fan. I'm not going to pretend that I avidly follow any particular team. My football viewing is usually confined to the big international tournaments such as the Euros or the World Cup (men's and women's, of course).

But I share an office with John in Westminster, so I thought it was a lovely idea when he suggested I pop down to West Sussex on Saturday afternoon to watch the match - an opportunity to show some support

for both a colleague and my home team.

And it was a genuinely lovely afternoon. I mean, it was helped a lot by the nail-biting finish, which saw Chelmsford clinch it by three goals to two, with the decider scored just a few minutes before the end. It was also wonderful to be able to select Chelmsford team captain, Adam Crowther, as away team man of the match and to present him with a bottle of fizz in recognition. (Good grief, I look short next to him and next to John in the photos!)

It was helpful that the January sun shone and that both Clarets and Hornets fans were in such good spirits - creating a fabulous atmosphere at the community football club just outside Horsham town centre.

Lots of Chelmsford fans braved the traffic - and the part-closure of the Dartford crossing - to show their support for the team. Such brilliant dedication.

I'm looking forward to seeing the Clarets play a home match in the not-too-distant future!

Thanks for reading. Keep well.

Marie