

PRESS RELEASE: 18 January 2012 – no embargo

For the attention of all journalists reporting about Street Trading Regulation and Legal Counsel for UK Local Authorities, Chief Licensing Officers, CPO's, APPG, LGA, ATCM, IoL, NABMA, FMT, ACPO, BIS, HMG, EU, pedlars and 48 million people above 17 whom this affects should they choose to trade as a pedlar.

Person of the Year - London Times leading article 28th December 2011

"This fruit seller did not aim to change the world" but it is clear that Mohamed Bouazizi who set himself alight was suffering oppression by his local authorities.

He has set a benchmark that **"it is not possible any longer for a regime to trust that overbearing power will be tolerated and will work"** and also **"His sacrifice exposed the limits of public lying"**.

It is all too easy to find similarities between what provoked his extraordinary gesture with the sorts of activity carried out by misguided and wrongfully informed actions by local authorities in the UK.

"Because he did not have a licence, the authorities confiscated his produce" is familiar to many regimes in the UK who have adopted stringent and severe Authorisation Schemes that are now cited by HMG as being "illegal", including Lords findings that Private legislations that include seizure, confiscation and forfeiture are no longer justified.

The history of how pedlars are reacting to harsh treatment by wealthy and self-interested associations and public authorities concerns the courage of **"the common man"** - people who dissent from **"illegitimate rule"** and see through **"the charade of oppressive rule"** that is a sign of the **"spiritually and intellectually impoverished"**.

Although defining the event of the past year, along with the New York Times Square trader who saved the City from the catastrophe of the Maverick vehicle bomb, and the South Wales pedlar who alerted the press to the 'phone hacking scandal, it is doubtful that pedlars in the UK will be lighting a match **"in the face of tyranny"** - but a flame has been lit to expose **"a model that visibly failed"**.

Pedlars are gathering information and expertise to show how the **"development"** of the local government proposals to regulate Street Trading is fundamentally flawed and will only have effect to **"stunt the hopes and imagination of generations"** and diminish the cultural viability of the High Street.

This is the point - any result that does not include cooperation between interested people in both good and difficult times will engender perverse outcomes and any action taken without the basis of good law is liable to have negative effect and erode all opportunity for just and purposeful authority.

End

see original article next page

Person of the Year - Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian fruit seller, burnt himself to death and sparked revolt across the Arab world. His sacrifice exposed the limits of public lying

Times, The (London, England) - Wednesday, December 28, 2011

The history of nations is not only the narrative of affairs of state. It concerns also the courage of citizens who withdraw consent from illegitimate rule. The Times Person of the Year is a man who paid with his life to make that simple but essential stand. Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street seller, died four days into this year after setting fire to himself. His suicide sparked protests that toppled a regime and set a precedent for popular revolts in the Arab world. The eventual outcome of these uprisings is far from clear, but the timeliness of protest was beyond argument.

In sacrificing his own life to make it, Mr Bouazizi takes his place with other figures whose willingness to see through the charade of oppressive rule elevated them beyond the drudgeries and petty humiliations of commonplace existence. His brief life and agonising death are a fanfare for the common man.

Mr Bouazizi, from the town of Sidi Bouzid, was 26 when he died. In another country, on another continent, at another time, his prospects may have been brighter. He was without work and resorted to selling fruit and vegetables from a street stall. Because he did not have a licence, the authorities confiscated his produce in December last year. In frustration, he lit a fateful match. Its fire spread rapidly beyond himself to immolate a regime that had systematically misruled a country, and a way of thinking that had spiritually and intellectually impoverished the Arab world.

This tormented, suicidal gesture left Mr Bouazizi in intensive care, swathed in bandages. His selfsacrifice shocked the nation and provoked widespread rioting, in which dozens died. A chastened President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali paid obeisance at the hospital bedside. It was unavailing: Mr Ben Ali's regime lasted little longer than the remainder of Mr Bouazizi's life. He dissolved his government and parliament, declared a state of emergency and fled the country.

The protests that Mr Bouazizi's suicide precipitated, if not inspired, have been widely termed the Arab Spring, on the model of the Prague Spring of 1968. The parallel is arguable but not absurd: reform in Czechoslovakia was crushed by Soviet tanks but freedom eventually prevailed 21 years later. The most visible symbol of the revolt was a student called Jan Palach, who set himself on fire in protest at the Soviet occupation.

In Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen autocrats have been driven from office, but the essential institutions that exercised power remain in place. In Libya, a popular revolt assisted by Nato toppled a tyrant but must now build a civilised state and reconstruct the economy. The Syrian regime is engaged in murderous assault on civilians to maintain power. Saudi Arabia appears untouched by revolt but has helped Bahrain to suppress discontent.

Eventual liberty and even improvement in people's living conditions are far from assured. But it is not possible any longer for a regime to trust that overbearing power will be tolerated and will work. Tunisia once combined domestic repression with purported economic development. It was a model that visibly failed. Its immediate weakness was it did not provide the development that it claimed. Its fundamental crime was to stunt the hopes and imagination of generations. Mr Bouazizi demanded that the repression stop and that the regime notice him and others like him.

.This fruit seller did not aim to change the world.

No single person has been at the forefront of any of the many revolts which have spread across the Arab world, and no figure has yet emerged as an obvious leader for the future. The Arab League has changed for the better. Qatar has played an important helping hand. But the defining events of this year have been driven by the courage of countless people in the face of tyranny. Mohamed Bouazizi was one of them.