

display a siege mentality which their current leaders seem unable to overcome.

THE REV DR DAVID L GOSLING
(former principal of Edwardes
College, Peshawar)
Cambridge

Corrections & Clarifications

● We reported a claim that two intelligence telexes had been missed by night staff at GCHQ on the evening before the shooting of WPC Yvonne Fletcher in 1984 ("Spy agency 'ignored Gaddafi message to open fire'", Jan 7). The former GCHQ staff member on whose account our report was based, Mr Mike Arnold, has asked us to record that he does not himself accept this version of events, which was given to him at the time by a supervisor; his personal belief is that the episode was part of a wider conspiracy.

● We incorrectly stated that the Royal Marines 350th Anniversary Beating Retreat would be performed on Wednesday and Thursday next week (picture caption, June 3). The event in fact took place yesterday and, with the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh in attendance, is repeated today. It is the Army's Beating Retreat that takes place next week. We apologise for the error.

● We captioned a photograph as "Fiona Ryder of Mustard TV" ("It's new, it's local, but is anyone watching?"; Times2, June 2). The photograph was in fact of Rachel Stringer. We apologise for the error.

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stars opposed to fracking, but I wonder if any of them can provide evidence of a single, proven instance

Environment Day

Sir, June 5 is World Environment Day, the 20th anniversary of the planting of eco time capsules in Britain (Botanical Gardens at Kew and at Ness) and abroad. Their ethos is the saying: "We have not inherited the Earth from our grandparents, we have borrowed it from our grandchildren".

The capsules contain environmentally relevant items, good and bad, and address our grandchildren two generations later in 2044. We apologised because we anticipated serious damage to their "loan" of this extraordinary, beautiful and bountiful planet which is our only home (ecotimecapsule.com).

We believed then and still believe that solutions exist. The commemorative event on Thursday is in association with the charity Population Matters, which campaigns not only to reduce all our environmental (and carbon) footprints but also the "number of feet" (ie, of humans doing the footprinting): through education and fully accessible, voluntary family planning. Thus children in rich as well as poor settings should arrive by choice rather than chance.

We and the thousand children who in 1994 produced their letters, poems and pictures for the time capsules made a continuing pledge to create "a saner, safer and sustainable world", such that our grandchildren in 2044 would question our need to apologise. PROFESSOR JOHN GUILLEBAUD
SUSAN HAMPSHIRE
SIR CRISPIN TICKELL
Oxford

Sir, The letter from Sir Harold Kroto, a distinguished carbon chemist, and 150 assorted others is a

Unequal outcomes

Sir, Of course we should not dodge a fight, particularly on Europe and Scotland ("Get up, stand up, don't give up the fight", June 3), but the problem with the Scottish referendum is an imbalance between the two outcomes, one of which will settle the matter at least for the foreseeable future, and the other which will not. It is a fair bet that, within an hour of defeat, Alex Salmond will proclaim "The fight for independence continues!" But would you bet on Alistair Darling, in the aftermath of a Yes vote, calling for a reunification campaign?

CHRIS HANDLEY
Kew, Surrey

EUnanigans

Sir, David Cameron could have prevented Jean-Claude Juncker being considered for the presidency of the European Commission. It was felt that Commission presidents lacked democratic legitimacy, so it was agreed that each party grouping in the EP would elect a presidential candidate — and the new president should be the candidate from the group with the most MEPs elected in May 2015.

Mr Juncker was chosen by a right-wing grouping, the European People's Party (EPP). This is the group to which the Conservative party had belonged, until Mr Cameron, in an early attempt to appease Europhobe MPs, withdrew all Conservative MEPs from the EPP. The irony is that, had they stayed in the EPP, the

UK would be viewed very differently. JOHN CULHANE
London W14

Conservatives could have ensured that the winning candidate would have been more to Mr Cameron's taste. Instead, his decision to exclude the Conservatives from participating in the relevant election has led directly to his present discomfiture. ANDREW WARREN
Cambridge

Playing away

Sir, My suggestion (letter, May 31) that British troops' red uniforms gave them an advantage over the French — generally playing in blue — referred to local derbies (as with Liverpool and Everton, Arsenal and Chelsea, and so on).

Michael Williamson (letter, June 3) is moving the goalposts when he mentions Napoleon's many victories over lower-league opposition across the rest of Europe. And, in any case, if other international matches are to be included, then Britain's fixtures in America, Canada, India and South Africa assure her of top spot in the military league table. ANTONY EDMONDS
Waterlooville, Hants

Sir, Michael Williamson says that the French conquered this country. If he is thinking about 1066, he forgets that Duke William was a Norman of Viking descent and certainly not French. One might as well say that Alex Salmond is English because he speaks the same language — imagine how popular that view would be north of the border. JOHN WELFORD
Barlestone, Leics

Oxford

Snoring in the wold

Sir, Surely our increasing need to take a nap after lunch ("National nap time could tackle secret snoozers", June 2) is a consequence of global warming?

I am sure that the boundary of the European Siesta Zone (ESZ) has been steadily moving north since my retirement to southern England. On the evidence of my friends and contemporaries, it has reached as far north as Basingstoke. Every year we find it yet more difficult to remain awake in the early afternoon. There must be a meteorological explanation. PETER POOLEY
Alresford, Hants

Bossy, opinionated

Sir, In the New York subway system, all automated information announcements are made in female voices, all warning announcements — "Stand clear of the closing doors please" — are in male voices (June 3). It is believed that male voice orders are more likely to be obeyed. GERRY & AUSTIN WOODS
London SW10

Unlucky for some

Sir, You report (June 3) that the average British man's shoe size is now a 10. Yet most stores stock socks up to size 11 only. Yesterday I tried to buy size 13 socks, without success, from stores that sell size 13 shoes. A size 13 is not abnormal, merely above average. My complaints, over many years, have fallen on deaf ears. ANDY COLE
Cleethorpes, Lincs