**Remarks by Diane Abbott MP, Abney Park, Bronterre O’Brien address – 17th September 2023**

Thank you all for coming today.

We are to commemorate the life and work of Bronterre O'Brien, and I have been asked to say a few short words.

Bronterre O'Brien was a key part of the revolutionary Chartist movement. This was part of the international revolutionary of the mid-18th century, which extended throughout Europe and beyond.

But like so many other leading Chartists, Bronterre O'Brien was Irish. He was a child of Irish rebellion. This gave him some mettle and some insights into the battles to come and the ruthlessness of his enemies.

But the Irish rebels of 1798 were themselves inspired by the French Revolution. So, we can say that there is always an international bond of rebellion and revolt.

That should give us some heart when we survey the global political landscape. Yes, things are grim here and in many leading industrialised countries. But that is far from true everywhere.

We all know, for example, how much a woman's right to choose is being throttled in the United States. But there has been a huge advance in Mexico. If we remain determined, our day will come again.

Of course, in the end it was not suppression that killed off Chartism, although state brutality played its part. But in effect discontent was bought off with modest reforms and economic crumbs from the table.

Neither of these are going to be on offer in the foreseeable future.

So, we need to learn from leaders like Bronterre O'Brien, adapt their achievements and emulate their strength.

In short, we need to be more like the Chartists.

Thank you.