

Fight for jobs, homes and services

DON'T LET THE RACIST EDL DIVIDE US

Socialist Party members
Leicester

The racist and hooligan English Defence League (EDL) claims its demonstration through the heart of Leicester on Saturday 4 February, is in opposition to "discrimination in the justice system". But this is not about there being 'one law for the rich and another for everyone else' - it is about what they ludicrously claim is discrimination in the British legal system in favour of Muslims!

The EDL is a racist organisation which is based on a travelling circus of thugs going from town to town in an attempt to stir up division amongst working class people. They scapegoat Muslims, basing themselves on the fear of terrorism that was exacerbated by the 'war on terror' - initiated by the British and US governments to justify the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq.

In the process they divert attention away from those causing the real problems people face - such as unemployment, cuts in services, low pay, and lack of housing. They hamper the fightback against governments and big business by attempting to divide working class people.

The EDL claims: "We have marched

through many cities and towns across the country with zero disruption to communities and that is our full and only intention for 4 February." This is a lie. In October 2010 they came to Leicester and attacked people and shops they saw as 'not English'.

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YouTube footage of their attack on innocent men, women and kids in 'Big John's', a Halaal fast food restaurant, is available for all to see.

Hundreds of EDLers attempted to attack the Highfields area, where there is a large Muslim population. Only a massive mobilisation of local people stopped them. The huge police operation was ineffective, indicating that communities and workers have to defend themselves.

On that day the Unite Against Fascism protest was kettled by police at the same time as some of the EDL were allowed to roam free. We need to avoid this happening again. At the

time of writing there is no official arrangement between the police and anti-racists, and the EDL plans are being kept secret.

On 4 February there will be a big counter-demonstration supported by the Socialist Party in Leicester city centre to oppose the EDL.

But, alongside this demonstration there will be community self-defence organised in areas that feel under threat. We fully support this, and believe that trade unionists and anti-racists should stand shoulder to shoulder with local communities. There needs to be coordination between us all to be as effective as possible on the day.

And to undercut any support EDL might get in the wider community, we need to make it clear: We don't just oppose the EDL, we are also fighting for jobs, homes and services for all.

Demonstrate against the EDL

Assemble near the Clock Tower, Leicester city centre, Saturday 4 February, 11am



Counter-demo against the EDL in Leicester, 2010 photo PW

What we stand for

The Socialist Party fights for socialist change - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also fight, in our day-to-day campaigning, for every possible improvement for working-class people. As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a democratic, socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

Our demands include:

Work and income

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £8 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards £10 an hour. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state

retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstatement of the link with average earnings now.

- Reject 'Welfare to Work'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

Public services

- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.
- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and 'free schools'!
- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs - free at the point of use and under

democratic control. Kick out private contractors!

- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

Environment

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and unrecycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly-owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

Rights

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

New workers' party

- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers' party!

Socialism and internationalism

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and banks that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses' neo-liberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!