



the Socialist

www.socialistparty.org.uk

4-10 July 2013

Issue 772

Price: £1 (Solidarity: £2)

Spending review shows they're all the same:

TORIES CUTS

LIB DEMS CUTS

LABOUR CUTS

Sean Figg

What is the point of the Labour Party? Its leaders support many of the cuts being made by the Tories and Liberals. Labour councils are the transmission belts for government cuts, working out how to implement them locally.

And when Tory Chancellor George Osborne announced another £11.5 billion in cuts and extending austerity past the next general election, rather than saying 'we will tear up this spending review if we win power,' Labour promised to abide by it.

These cuts will hit workers and their families hardest... again! Osborne, and now Labour too, promise more cuts to welfare spending, cuts to all government departments, hundreds of thousands more public sector job cuts and threats to universal benefits.

Fightback

This is not a reflection of overwhelming support among the millions of workers, pensioners and young people in Britain for austerity. In fact huge opposition to cuts exists.

Witness the hundreds of thousands who have marched against cuts and the millions who participated in the 2011 public sector pension strikes.

We are told cuts are 'necessary'. However, the £351 billion-increase in the total wealth of the 1,000 richest people (that's 0.003% of the adult population) since Labour's election victory in 1997 indicates this is not the case. For starters, taxing the mega-rich and the tax-avoiding corporate giants would allow jobs and services to be expanded, not cut.

Stand against them

Yet Miliband tells all those fighting cuts and opposed to austerity: don't expect anything from us! That means the rest of us have to build an alternative and we have



They're all in it together

to turn to it urgently.

The Socialist Party is part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC). TUSC is an electoral platform for all who want to challenge austerity, in reality planned poverty. At the RMT transport union's recent conference it voted to continue its full participation in TUSC (see page 4).

TUSC is appealing for people to stand as candidates in the local council elec-

tions in May 2014 as part of a strategy of mass fightback, challenging all the keep-the-cuts parties.

TUSC appeals to all those who are suffering due to austerity, angry about losing their job, have had their hours or pay reduced, or benefits squeezed, to play a part and help.

Help build the TUSC challenge, and join the socialists.

TUC - name the day for a 24-hour general strike

Model motion from the NSSN

This branch notes that last year's TUC agreed to explore the practicalities of a general strike. However some union leaderships have obstructed any attempt at planning it. The impact of austerity has continued to mount with the destruction of public services, a general decline in living standards and increasing numbers driven into poverty. Faced with pay attacks some groups of workers have no alternative but to fight and our branch will continue to support any group of workers who ballot for action. It is vital to link together the struggles to fight pay cuts and austerity; the need for a 24-hour general strike has never been greater.

This branch agrees to support the lobby of the TUC in Bournemouth on 8 September, initiated by the National Shop Stewards Network [at its conference, see page 2] and calling for the TUC to name the day for a 24-hour general strike.

shopstewards.net



National Shop Stewards Network seventh annual conference

The 'activists who don't give up'

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge

There has been no pause in the Con-Dems' vicious austerity drive. The spending review included a further £11.5 billion of cuts. Councils will face a 10% budget cut from 2015. Automatic annual pay progression in the public sector is to be axed.

Three days later, on 29 June, opening the 400-strong conference National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) secretary Linda Taaffe made the point that while struggles are "bubbling away" in many workforces there has been a pause in terms of a concerted, united, coordinated response to the cuts.

But the NSSN is not a body that bemoans what could have been – as Linda said: "We're the activists who don't give up". Rob Williams, NSSN national chair, explained the NSSN supports many tactics that can be used to challenge austerity but the trade unions, with their over seven million members, have a central role and a central responsibility to organise mass action that can pull all the other sections of society behind them.

Strike impact

A one-day general strike would have a transformative effect on the conditions in Britain today. It would inject confidence to stand up to the divisive and bullying Con-Dem government. Workers would sense their power and strength as the most significant social force in society.

Unison branch secretary Adrian O'Malley gave a glimpse of this when, from the floor, he described the impact nine days of strike had on hospital workers in the Mid-Yorkshire Health Trust. Their strike forced important concessions from a vicious employer. The strike provided a glimpse of workers' essential role and their potential power.

Chris Baugh, assistant general secretary of the PCS civil service union, speaking in the opening session showed how the Tories seem to recognise the threat to their austerity agenda posed by the unions more than some trade union leaders do. Vicious anti-working class warrior Tory Cabinet Minister Francis Maude has targeted facility time in the PCS in an attempt to undermine its strength.

The PCS has been to the fore in the battle so far with action in every week of the last three months but members ask about the general strike motion passed at the TUC congress last September.

Chris argued forcefully, and to huge applause, that if the TUC doesn't now act on the 2012 general strike motion then the left trade union leaders must get in a room together to coordinate it.

Rob Williams moved the action statement of the NSSN calling for a lobby of the TUC on 8 September in Bournemouth on the anniversary of the passing of the resolution to consider general strike action and for



Left: the audience at the Camden Centre responded enthusiastically to the clear strategy put forward
photo Senan

Below: last September up to a thousand shop stewards and anti-cuts fighters marched to lobby the TUC in Brighton to demand they support Motion 5 to consider a general strike
photo John Gillman



Never thought I'd say this a year ago (when I first attended NSSN), but striking helps! They ignored us, now they talk to us and are negotiating, offering more money. They hate us, but they take us seriously!

A rep involved in striking from Unite LE1111 housing workers' branch

union branches and other bodies to pass supportive motions.

He also called for the biggest possible turnout to the TUC demo to defend the NHS on 29 September in Manchester with an NSSN contingent that calls for a one-day general strike action after the demo. "How much more powerful would that demo be if it gave notice that a date has been set for a 24-hour general strike?" he asked. This was unanimously agreed and later the new steering committee was elected and the annual report was passed.

While the point had been made that the pause in the anti-cuts movement had invited aggression, the opposite is also true. Giving the closing speech of the day Fran Heathcote, DWP group president in the PCS, confirmed this basic but important

fact – action gets results. PCS members had defeated attempts by the employers to inflict compulsory redundancies – and in the end they didn't even have to strike.

Martin Powell-Davies, national executive member of the NUT teachers' union spoke of the regional teachers' strike in the North West. He argued this should only be the beginning with national action a priority – given both the enormity of the attacks on teachers and education, and the greater impact a country-wide strike would have. Teachers don't want to just protest – they want action that can defeat the attacks.

Mood

Michael Olugun, Unite shop steward for Equinox support workers, had started out as the only rep but their strike action deferred cuts – but also built the union structures. A rep from the Thera support workers in the East Midlands spoke about another group involved in determined action for the first time.

Donald McDougall and Paddy Brennan, two of nine reps there from Honda in Swindon, spoke en-

thusiastically about the role of the NSSN in building solidarity and support for victimised workers such as helping Paddy to get reinstated, and for the centrality of the tactic of the general strike.

Padraig Mulholland, president of the Nipsa public service union in Northern Ireland and member of the Socialist Party's sister party there, brought official greetings from the union's general council which now has a left majority.

The new union leadership has been discussing what concrete steps it can take to address the disappointment and confusion that has set in after the TUC failed to call a follow-up to the magnificent 30 November 2011 public sector pension strike – which was particularly successful in Northern Ireland. A 24-hour general strike would be a key unifying point.

Suz Muna, branch secretary of the Unite housing workers' branch, explained that through privatisation housing workers are isolated in small workplaces. For them the need for a general strike to overcome this is plain to see.

Labour betrayal

A prominent theme that ran through the conference was condemnation of Labour's acquiescence to the Tory austerity programme, committing to form a cuts government should it be elected in 2015. Steve Gillan, POA prison officers' union general secretary, called for the trade unions to take a lead on the fightback. He said that Labour was failing to be a credible opposition and that as a Labour Party member he was ashamed.

CWU general secretary Billy Hayes spoke about the mood for a fight on pay among Royal Mail workers. He reported that on a 74% turnout 99% voted for a campaign for a pay rise and that action was on the cards. There was big support for this but also huge applause for the demand from Mary Cooke, a retired nurse

who spoke from the floor, that the CWU discusses disaffiliation from Labour who instigated much of the privatisation linked to the attacks on pay and conditions.

The closing session addressed a number of the key campaigns and questions facing the labour movement. Scottish socialist and chair of the Scottish Anti-bedroom Tax Federation, Tommy Sheridan, denounced the bedroom tax forcefully. Although he was "not personally affected by the bedroom tax" – he "was personally offended by it". The Federation has promised to build "walls of human solidarity" around anyone faced with eviction for the bedroom tax.

Lois Austin, former chair of Youth Against Racism in Europe (YRE),

Lobby the TUC

Sunday 8 September
12noon-3pm

Hardy Suite, Hermitage Hotel,
Exeter Rd, Bournemouth (opposite Bournemouth International Centre – TUC conference venue)

rejected the idea that the recent exposé of police spying on the family of Stephen Lawrence and infiltration of the YRE was the work of rogue elements in the police – it was and is state policy. Lois called for a lobby of Scotland Yard on Tuesday 9 July (see www.socialistparty.org.uk for details) to demand an end to such attacks on campaigners. The Socialist Party demands a genuinely independent public inquiry made up of democratically elected representatives from the trade union movement and the anti-racist and environmental protest groups that have suffered infiltration.

Internationalism was present in references to the struggles in Brazil and Turkey. There were important contributions from Oktay Sahbaz, an NUT rep and a leader of the Day-Mer Turkish and Kurdish community centre which puts building solidarity with the trade unions to the fore, and Stephan Machieux from the SUD union federation in France (solidarity, unity and democracy) which is looking at how to build the resistance to the avalanche of cuts facing the working class in France.

By the end even the venue's workforce were enquiring about union membership and were clearly very supportive of the ideas they'd heard. And rightly so – the NSSN conference will be a powerful shot in the arm in a difficult period as serious workers' leaders at every level plot a fightback against austerity.

the Socialist

The paper of the Socialist Party. Issue 772.

The Socialist, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Socialist Publications, printed by Sharman & Co Ltd. ISSN 1366-9621.

Have you got news for us? Phone us on 020 8988 8777 editors@socialistparty.org.uk fax: 020 8988 8787. editor Sarah Sachs-Eldridge, international news Dave Carr, letters/reviews Roger Shrikes, workplace news Alison Hill, campaigns/party news Bob Severn, news/youth news/sales Sarah Wrack, photographer Paul Mattsson. DEADLINE: Friday before publication date. Urgent news - Monday

National Shop Stewards Network conference workshops

Fight for a 24-hour general strike

Health workers will resist

Healthcare workers, campaigners in defence of the NHS and NHS users met to discuss what strategy and tactics are needed to stop the government's NHS privatisation juggernaut.

Health worker union activists exposed the Tory lies about 'protecting the NHS'. Helen O'Connor from south London and Roger Davey, chair of Wiltshire and Avon Unison Health (personal capacity), explained the devastating scale of privatisation, with NHS free services contracting as privatisation accelerates.

Unison rep Len Hockey, a porter at Whipps Cross Hospital in east London, said members have had to take strike action on two occasions to defend pay and conditions against their private employers. On top of Osborne's latest attacks on pay (see page 5), Len reported that 'precarious' workers are being reduced to arriving early at the hospital hoping to get a day's work.

Unison branch secretary Adrian O'Malley described the bitter fight by 500 workers employed by Mid Yorks Hospital Trust. Management tried to make workers pay for a financial crisis caused by a three-year PFI contract, through savage pay cuts. This was resisted through strike action but there remains the possibility of further action if stewards are attacked and threatened with the sack.

Many speakers were highly critical of those trade union leaders who fail to put forward an effective strategy to fight privatisation, and who seem to accept the false trade-off between pay and jobs. As blood transfusion worker Andy Ford remarked, "union leaders are very good at telling us what the problems are but not so good at organising a fightback". Andy has written a model resolution on a fighting strategy for trade unions which NSSN activists can use.

An NUJ member sparked controversy when he suggested that a Labour government was necessary to defend the NHS. However, many delegates challenged Labour's record in government. Nursing worker, recently elected to the Unison NEC (personal capacity) Jacqui Berry reminded delegates that Labour had introduced cuts and many of the pro-market changes in the NHS.

Len Hockey explained that his fellow low-paid union members in the NHS had to strike to defend pay and conditions against private employers under Labour. To applause, he

Clockwise from right: Fran Heathcote, PCS DWP group president, one of the workshops discusses events in Turkey, Glenn Kelly, Unison branch secretary Bromley (personal capacity), April Ashley, Unison NEC (personal capacity), Rob Williams, NSSN national chair photos Senan



shopstewards.net

It was great to see so many new shop stewards with a real determination and belief that we can push the TUC to name the day for a one-day general strike. I found the blacklisting workshop very enlightening after Steve Leadbeater explained how construction workers, through the rank-and-file committee, are circumventing the anti-trade union laws with unofficial 24-hour stoppages that are winning concessions, giving workers a reason to be unionised and active.

Dave Walsh, branch secretary, Liverpool plasterers

On behalf of the four-strong delegation from Bracknell Unite, I would like to say how much we were inspired by attending the NSSN conference on Saturday. Speakers from both the platform and from the floor raised all the political issues facing workers and their families as a result of the government's austerity policies. It was great to see youth, pensioners, blacklisted workers, health workers, private sector workers and many others united in discussing how to build mass action against austerity. This was not a talking shop it was about preparing action such as a 24-hour general strike in defence of workers' jobs and conditions. It was about fighting ALL cuts to jobs and services in the public sector. Part of this fight is to build for a lobby of the TUC in Bournemouth on 8 September with the demand to NAME THE DATE for the general strike.

Terry Pearce, chair Bracknell branch of Unite

'We need a political voice too'

For my money one of the most important contributions at conference was Tony Mulhearn's, one of the leading figures of the Labour council that ran Liverpool between 1983 and 1987. He pointed out that trade unionists need a political alternative and called for the NSSN to back the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC).

In Wales, we are uniquely placed to know both what a Labour government will be like and the pressure that will come on trade unionists to not criticise them, even as they attack our jobs, pay, services and terms and conditions. As Mark Evans, Carmarthenshire Unison branch secretary (speaking in a personal capacity), pointed out, the Labour Welsh Government is making deep cuts in the Welsh NHS which will mean that, by the general election, Wales will spend the least per head of population in the UK. Only this week, Cardiff and Vale Health Board has announced up to 385 redundancies, making a mockery of the no redundancies agreement in

the NHS in Wales.

Welsh councils have been zealous in carrying through Con-Dem cuts with Rhondda Cynon Taff trying to force existing homecare workers onto zero-hour contracts. Yet the leadership of many unions, particularly of the Labour-affiliated ones like my own, Unison, either pretend that there are no cuts in Wales or that they are 'Con-Dem UK government cuts'.

When so many trade unionists are fighting cuts from Labour councils, they need the support of rank and file trade unionists, such as the NSSN can provide, because in many cases their union leadership will attempt to hold them back. This will be even more the case when a Labour government is cutting the NHS, education and other services. As Tony said, not to challenge those making the cuts electorally is to fight with one hand tied behind our backs.

A Swansea Unison activist

'Striking helps'

The workshop on housing heard from housing workers who were "creating their own strike wave" as well as local campaigners who were tackling the government's assault on the right to a decent, affordable, and secure place to live.

Brian, a worker at One Housing, gave an inspiring account of those workers' battle against pay cuts. Like many housing providers, One Housing's care and support section was trying to compete for local government contracts by driving down the wages of its workforce.

But the One Housing workers stood up against this, in spite of being lectured about the market by managers and being told they should be grateful for just having a job.

Workers were facing cuts of several thousand pounds a year, after a four-year pay freeze. After taking strike action and building the membership of Unite in the workplace, the management have stopped lecturing and started talking. "Striking helps," Brian concluded.

There has been a similar battle in Equinox and several other housing organisations so the Unite housing workers' branch is campaigning for a national agreement on wages, which already exists in Scotland.

Others explained about community campaigns against the bedroom tax and the housing shortage in general. All made the point that it was important for these campaigns to be linked to the battles in the workplaces. The government must not be allowed to divide and rule between tenants and housing and other workers. A coordinated and confident struggle by housing workers can have a big effect on boosting the confidence of others to fight back against the Con-Dem attacks.

As Wally Kennedy from Hillingdon pointed out, 82% of council housing in the borough has been sold off and nothing has been built since 1983, so the trade unions also need to take up the campaign for the building of affordable social housing.

The meeting agreed that a socialist housing policy was urgently needed, which would include demands like the repeal of the bedroom tax and an urgent affordable house building programme.

People interested in developing this programme should contact the NSSN to be put on the housing email list.

Alison Hill



socialistworld.net for a report of the recent 24-hour general strike in Portugal

Teachers strike in North West

Now escalate the action!

Teachers in the North West were on strike on 27 June in the first part of a programme of regional strike action against the

There was no mistaking the mood of up to 3,000 teachers, members of NUT and NASUWT, as they marched through Manchester. The hatred of Tory education minister Michael Gove, and Ofsted head Michael Wilshaw, was unmissable. Many younger teachers joined the march pushing push chairs or with toddlers in tow.

Gove's proposals on performance-related pay are intended to abolish teamwork, solidarity and teacher trade unionism, and to give heads free rein to pay teachers what they want. No doubt pupil achieve-

ment statistics will be fiddled to 'prove' which teachers deserve a pay rise, setting teacher against teacher, and don't expect to get a rise if you're a union rep.

The spending review has made it clear that automatic increments, which not all teachers get anyway, are a thing of the past for all public sector workers from 2015.

This strike in the North West was intended as the first in a series of regional strikes, with Yorkshire and the West Midlands to follow in the autumn, though by then the new regulations imposing performance-

Con-Dem attacks on teachers' pay and working conditions and on education in general. Paul Gerrard reports from Manchester.

related pay will be in force, and the unions will be fighting a rearguard action with headteachers and education authorities.

That's why there is increasing recognition that the unions are putting a small bolt on the stable door after the horse is five miles down the lane. This will fuel the demand to escalate the campaign and for national action early next term. Gove's latest instructions to the pay review body to 'consider' removing all restrictions on teachers' working week/year, will pour more petrol on the fire.

Literally hundreds were turned

away from the indoor rally because of fire regulations at the hotel but 800-900 heard the speeches and all received stormy applause.

One young teacher who called for Gove to go got a standing ovation. A TUC speaker promised 'we at the TUC are 100% behind you' (why are they never in front?), and called for a big demo against the Tories in Manchester in September. That went down a storm. If this rally is anything to go by the September demo will be mega.

• **Lobby of Tory Party conference 29 September, Manchester**

Calls for more strikes at packed Liverpool rally



Young teachers angry at Gove's attacks photo Tanya Rybko, via YouTube

Over 2,000 teachers from across Merseyside in the NASUWT and NUT marched and rallied in Liverpool city centre in a massive show of strength. 98% of schools in the Liverpool area were effectively closed and this was reflected by similar numbers on Merseyside.

The march started in the Pier Head and culminated in a rally in St George's Hall. The hall was full and an overflow venue was closed because so many teachers had packed into it!

There were hundreds outside straining to hear the speakers. The loudest cheer of the day went to Onli Cheung, a Liverpool teacher, who said that this regional protest must be just the start of a series of strikes until "we beat Gove".

The overwhelming mood could be summed up by the sentiment that Gove wants a fight and we're going to give him one.

Teachers are so angry that this action, now that it has started, would be very difficult to turn off at the whim of any leader.

Teachers are looking forward to linking up with the PCS civil service union in the autumn for coordinated action.

Socialist Party member and Merseyside and Cheshire NUT national executive member Peter Glover also spoke at a lunchtime rally organised by the PCS where the overwhelming mood was for a united struggle of civil servants and teachers.

For more pictures of the strike see www.socialistparty.org.uk

RMT reaffirms support for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

Nick Chaffey

Transport union RMT delegates meeting at their national conference discussed the continued attacks on jobs, pay, pensions and the horrors of privatised and casualised transport industries. Central to these problems is the need to build a political movement that will support workers' rights and provide a clear alternative to the failed policies of the current Con-Dem and previous Labour governments.

The debate this year on continuing support for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) bought out many of these issues and overwhelmingly rejected the call to return to supporting the Labour Party.

Motions supporting TUSC from London Underground Engineering branch and Neasden branch were moved by Socialist Party member Lewis Peacock: "We don't have a voice, it is necessary to build and develop the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition."

Paul Reilly explained how support for TUSC was growing. He had stood previously as a lone candidate in Nuneaton, but twelve candidates stood this year. "The Labour council is making the cuts worse than the previous Tories. We didn't win, that will take time. We need an alternative," he explained.

Two delegates spoke against the motion, raising criticisms of TUSC's share of the vote and the obstacle of

'first past the post' to justify a return to supporting Labour. These points were strongly answered by delegates such as Bill Rawcliffe, sacked Jarvis worker who had suffered at Labour's failure to save 1,500 jobs at Jarvis, when in government. "The Labour Party is dead as far as socialism is concerned, it is rotten to the core." Bill called on delegates to continue supporting TUSC.

An attempt was made to undermine the democratic credentials of TUSC and the involvement of RMT members by arguing against "a blank cheque to support TUSC candidates". Speaking on behalf of the Council of Executives, Bob Crow reminded delegates that RMT support for TUSC candidates was subject to the backing of RMT branches and regional committees and that the Labour Party had removed all democratic structures to change policy.

As the general election approaches, renewed calls will inevitably surface over support for "lesser-evilism" and backing Labour. The decisive vote of two thirds of RMT delegates showed that determined support continues for the building of a real electoral alternative that will "put forward the alternative to cuts and win the arguments" which will build for future electoral success for TUSC.

Reflecting the interest and support for TUSC, close to half the conference delegates attended the TUSC fringe meeting to hear Southampton rebel councillor Keith Morrell who later spoke to the full conference.

In brief

One Housing

Following a report from reps indicating scope for serious negotiations, a One Housing Group members meeting agreed to postpone strike action planned for later this week.

Unite reps argued that management had given an indication of willingness to negotiate improvements in the package for support staff and it therefore made sense to postpone action while negotiations take place.

After a detailed discussion members accepted this position on condition that notice of future strike action is given simultaneously. In the event that management does not behave reasonably industrial action and the wider campaign will be stepped up. Management continue to reject referral to Acas for conciliation.

All speakers agreed that the last three-day strike had been hugely successful. Many managers had expressed their support to pickets stating that the executive's position was incomprehensible given the surpluses generated by One Support services. Members were delighted by the support they received more widely from passersby, from other unions, from councillors and even from the police. For example, one police officer commented that they faced similar problems and said: "we should have a proper union, we should be doing what you are doing". In this light, complaints from management about picket line behaviour were seen as a transparent attempt to intimidate members.

Paul Kershaw

Royal Mail

The Communication Workers Union (CWU) has rejected Royal Mail's pay offer of 8.6% over three years, because of the many strings attached to it. In the recent ballot over pay and privatisation, 99% of postal workers voted for an above-inflation pay rise. But Royal Mail has come back with an offer which the union believes does not protect working conditions, pensions or jobs. "If we can't get the assurance we want over our members' future then industrial conflict is inevitable", warned the CWU.

VIP Polymers

On 26 June the GMB members at VIP Polymers in Huntingdon took a second day of united strike action against a 10% cut in wages and cuts in leave, sick pay, benefits and pensions. Ten years ago the main company GB Cables split into three. Two are thriving but VIP is struggling.

A lot of the workers have been working for 30-35 years here but they have been joined by Polish and other workers from around the world who enthusiastically supported the strike.

The workers have the support of the Socialist Party, the local trades council and TUSC in Huntingdon. According to Alan Costello, the local GMB organiser, not one GMB member went into work on the evening shift.

Huntingdon Socialist Party

Socialist Party website

For more workplace reports and updates, see our website at: www.socialistparty.org.uk

'Future Directions' strike solid

The strike action by 115 care workers in Rochdale continues. Privatised to a charity in 2006, and then taken over by a private care company before Christmas 2012, every aspect of terms and conditions - holidays, sick pay, enhancements - has come under attack from the new employer Future Directions, itself a wholly owned subsidiary of Calderstones NHS Trust.

The court injunction which the company won to stop a strike over the spring bank holiday has not dented the confidence or resolve of the workers, and the first week in July will see the ninth day of strike action.

150 joined a noisy demonstration of support through Rochdale town centre on 29 June. Three Unison national executive members spoke at the rally, including Socialist Party

member Roger Bannister, to show the importance of this dispute for the union.

The union has lodged nearly 100 unfair dismissal claims - as Unison steward John Morrison explained, the company knew it couldn't afford to run this contract unless it drove down pay and conditions, so it is in breach of TUPE legislation.

The strike is solid, and well supported in the town.

None of the workers involved enjoys taking strike action but they care too much about their clients to see the service crumble if staff leave and are replaced by temporary or agency staff, which is what would happen if the employers succeed.

Messages of support to John Morrison at: morrisonmoz1@aol.com
Salford Socialist Party

What the other half get paid

Ronnie Job

I don't know how my TV has lasted so long given the first thing I turn on in the morning is the news. This morning what set my blood pressure rising was the story that MPs will get a pay rise rumoured to be around £10,000, on the recommendation of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA).

I'm a Unison shop steward who represents many low-paid workers in further education, some of whom don't take home £10,000 in a year. Alright, the ones with the lowest incomes are only paid to work term-times but the 38 or 39 weeks they work is still more weeks than Parliament actually sits for.

Of course many MPs, despite their tax payer-funded second homes, their luxurious expenses and their subsidised dining and

£86,000
the average MPs
think they should be
paid

drinking in House of Commons bars and restaurants, will think this increase is too low. £10,000 a year extra would take a backbencher's salary to over £76,000 but when IPSA surveyed MPs on what they think their salaries should be, it averaged £86,000.

So far short of their inflated expectations does their salary fall that many of them moonlight, taking second jobs. Analysis by the Guardian showed that for 20 MPs last year, representing constituents was their second job, as they earned more from work outside Parliament.

Some of my workmates have two or more jobs but for them it's not a matter of choice, it's the only way to pay at least most of the bills. I know



photo Paul Mattsson

cleaners that have three or four jobs to go to in a single day but I also know of teaching staff who are delivering fast food in the evenings, such is the effect on incomes of increasing casualisation on top of frozen wages.

While we struggle...

Four years' pay freeze while the prices of everything else goes up and up means that those of us lucky enough to keep permanent, full-time, jobs are struggling to stay afloat, often getting through the last

week of the month only by using the plastic to pay for essentials like food. The £740,000, according to the Guardian, earned by Tory MP Steven Phillips for working 1,700 hours as a barrister, sounds more like a lottery win than annual pay for a second job.

Meanwhile the Queen gets the equivalent of a multiple roll-over Euro-millions jackpot every year. Her income, at our expense, will rise 5% to nearly £38 million next year. I missed that item on the morning news or I certainly wouldn't still have a TV.

St Petersburg Pride rally attacked

Over the weekend of 29-30 June lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people took part in Pride events in various cities in Britain. At the same time a Pride march in Russia was viciously attacked. Michael Johnson reports.

Pride in St Petersburg on 29 June was met with violence, both from anti-gay protestors and the police. Attendees at the Pride rally were pelted with rocks and eggs, shouted down with homophobic chants and attacked by riot police. Dozens were arrested.

For Pride marches and rallies in Russia this is not an uncommon occurrence. Unlike the stereotypical photos you might imagine coming from Pride marches, of revellers and carnivals, from Russia you're more likely to see photos of marchers being dragged off by the police or having abuse hurled at them.

However the attacks this year

come following the passing of the 'gay propaganda' law. This law claims to be centred on 'protecting' minors from information about LGBT issues. This bill is similar to Section 28 of the local government act brought in by Thatcher and the Conservatives during the 1980s that basically made it illegal to acknowledge that LGBT people existed within schools and can be seen as a large contributing factor to the amount of homophobic bullying that goes on in schools even today.

Fines

But the 'gay propaganda' law in Russia manages to surpass what Section 28 and its devisors dreamed: making it illegal to 'promote' homosexuality in the media, on the internet, even within viral videos! Anyone believed to be informing minors of LGBT issues may be fined up to 5,000 rubles (around £100) for an individual, up to one million rubles (over £20,000) for a company. Foreigners could be fined the same amount, held in jail and deported!

This law means that, as we saw

at St Petersburg, Pride rallies and marches can expect to face even more fierce opposition from anti-gay groups and repression from the state.

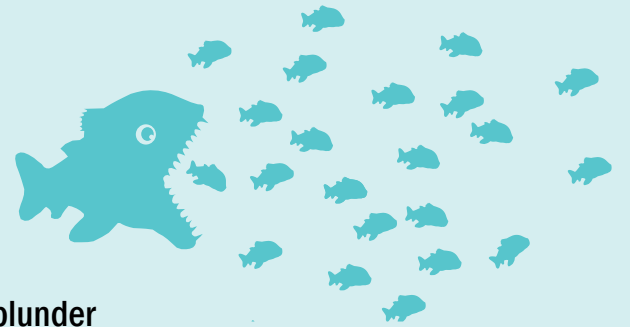
Fight repression

It's no coincidence that this law and subsequent repression and censorship comes at the same time as other laws censoring protest (such as laws inspired by the arrest of Pussy Riot activists, banning protests that may offend religious beliefs). It's also no coincidence that Russia's government is facing fierce protests due to corruption.

These laws are a way to further censor and repress the Russian working class. LGBT rights campaigners must join forces with campaigns to defend women's rights and the mass of the working class to fight these repressive laws and campaign for true equality.

The Socialist Party's sister organisation in Russia has a very strong record of fighting these repressive laws and of fighting for an end to prejudice and for a socialist alternative.

Them...



Burger blunder

Picture the scene - the day before Chancellor George Osborne announces more devastation to come our way in the Comprehensive Spending Review, he and his advisors desperately try to think of ways to get people to connect more with him. Some bright spark comes up with food - the one commonality between us all. Not just any food - burger and chips, a nice commoner's dinner. So staff are sent out to source the meal, it arrives, a photo is taken and for a modern twist posted on Twitter.

But so unused to this lifestyle is Osborne that it didn't occur to him to check the price of his feast - the burger alone being £6.75 from upmarket chain Byron. Nice try, Gideon.

ently been hardest hit of all government departments by staffing cuts. By 2016 it will have lost 40% of its workforce. And of course it has also had huge cuts in terms of the benefits it administers. We're told all these cuts are necessary because the benefits bill has spiralled out of control and is simply unaffordable now.

But DWP documents show that in fact the cuts could lead to a net increase in the department's spending. For example, they have discovered (you might be forgiven for thinking it would be obvious) that cutting the staff who help people find work might mean fewer people find work and so more have to claim benefits.

Failure

Thierry Breton, chief executive of benefits assessment firm Atos, has received a £280,000 pay rise. This is presumably a reward for being so successful at driving poor and disabled people off benefits after finding them 'fit for work'. The cruel Atos assessments have brought misery to thousands and helped the Con-Dems drive through their discriminatory cuts. But Breton's company hasn't even been successful at that - 40% of appeals against failing the Atos tests are successful.

Nesting

If only all expectant parents could rely on such public generosity to help with pre-birth 'nesting' as Prince William and Kate. The public purse is forking out £1 million to refurbish their new family home - Apartment 1A at Kensington Palace. The word apartment is a bit misleading in this situation - 21 rooms spread over four floors, including staff quarters and a drawing room. We've also been told recently that they're planning a "very normal" upbringing for the child. Hmm...

Dismal failure

Only one in ten people who've been forced onto the work programme since June 2011 are now in employment. Latest figures show that in half the areas the work programme has been used, people would have been more likely to find a job if they hadn't taken part! And less than 6% of disabled people (some deemed fit for work by Atos) who have taken part now have jobs.

Bad impressions

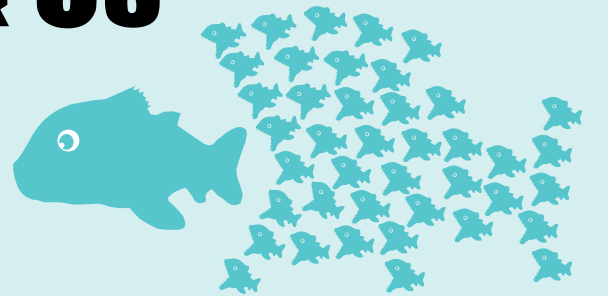
Nothing gives a bad impression of a place like a not-up-to-scratch loo. This is the situation facing the poor House of Lords and its VIP visitors. The two cubicles and two urinals concerned haven't been refurbished for a while and according to parliamentary documents give a "poor image" and are in an "unacceptable condition for the high profile area they are in". These aren't for use by lowly tourists of course, they're mainly for peers and visitors from foreign parliaments.

False economy

Iain Duncan Smith's Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has appar-

It seems only reasonable then that we spend somewhere between £90,000 and £100,000 to sort them out - that's only the price of a small house for most of us!

...& Us



Have you got news for the 'fishes'? Email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk

What we heard

I was selling the Socialist on a protest recently and met a Unison shop steward who told me she had already bought the paper the day before. I thought she might be mistaken, because she lives in an area where we don't have a regular sale, but she said she was positive because she had read out the article reporting from Unison conference in her union office!

Paula Mitchell, London



Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

www.socialistparty.org.uk • Phone 020 8988 8777 • Text 07761 818206

65th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NHS

photo credits Senan, Paul Mattsson, S Beishon, Becky Davis

How workers won the National Health Service



The National Health Service (NHS) is 65 years old on 5 July. Those people who remember life before it are getting fewer. With non-stop news of overflowing Accident and Emergency departments, hospital scandals and whistle-blowers, is the NHS just another brand going through a tough time? Maybe one whose time has been and gone. The Tories and their press deliberately encourage this view. After all, the goods sold by those companies can still be obtained elsewhere - so does it really matter if the NHS disappears in all but name? Wouldn't treatment still be available from GPs, clinics and hospitals? And so long as they're free to use does it matter who provides them? The NHS was created after World War Two, when working class people were determined there would be no return to the poverty, hunger, squalor and diseases of the 1930s. The history of healthcare and the struggle to win a national health service has vital lessons for today's health workers, trade unionists and all of us who use the NHS at some time in our lives. Jon Dale writes on the birth of the NHS.



Illness, injury and childbirth meant terror for working class families before the NHS. The Workers' Birth Control Group had the slogan, "It's four times more dangerous to bear a child than to go down a mine." The ruling class feared that if it did not concede real improvements, workers would take action and fight for even bigger change, threatening the entire capitalist system. A similar situation had existed after World War One. There was a strong mood for real change. Workers had had enough of pre-war poverty and the horrors of the trenches. Russian workers overthrowing their ruling class and starting to create a workers' state gave an inspiring example. The Labour Party agreed its socialist Clause 4 in 1918. The election pro-

gramme of Labour, then still a new workers' party, called for widespread nationalisation and minimum standards of health, education, leisure and income for all. Its vote jumped from 400,000 in 1910 to 2.5 million in 1918. Labour's growth was one reason why Liberal Prime Minister David Lloyd George set up the first Ministry of Health in 1919. Workers did not wait for government action to give them a better life. Almost seven times more days were lost in strikes in 1919 than in 1918. Troops and tanks were sent in to break up a huge strike in Glasgow. Tens of thousands of British soldiers and sailors mutinied in Calais and started to establish a trade union. Liverpool police went on strike. London dockers refused to load a ship, the Jolly George, with weapons destined for imperialist armies sent to crush the gains of the Russian revolution.

Russian revolution
Lloyd George promised to build "a land fit for heroes". He meant that workers could depend on his government to deliver reforms and there was no need to follow the revolutionary road of the Russian working class, or Germany and Hungary where revolutionary uprisings also occurred. In 1920 Lloyd George asked the king's physician, Lord Dawson, to re-

Bevan's plan to create a national health service involved nationalisation of 3,000 voluntary and municipal hospitals. There would be free hospital treatment for all

port on an organised health service. Dawson proposed a watered-down version of plans already put forward by a group of radical doctors, the State Medical Services Association. But his plan was soon shelved. In 1921 a new slump sent unemployment soaring to two million. Right-wing union leaders called off solidarity strikes by rail and transport workers against cuts in miners' pay. Seeing the weakness of the working



Working class struggles won the NHS as a welfare reform. Today, renewed struggles are needed to defend it

class leadership, the government decided there was no need to make concessions. Four months later public spending cuts were announced - on a scale not repeated until today's Con-Dem coalition.

By 1925 workers were regaining militancy. A new threat of a general strike was made against attempts to cut the pay of a million miners. A Royal Commission on National Health Insurance recommended extending it to workers' dependents. The 1926 general strike was defeated when right-wing union leaders called it off, although it was growing and paralysing the government. The Royal Commission's plans were scrapped. Healthcare for many remained dependent on ability to pay for it.

The 1930s were a period of mass unemployment, terrible poverty and humiliation of working class families through the means test. Socialist ideas gained support and the Labour Party reflected this with a programme calling for widespread nationalisation.

Many middle class people also moved towards left-wing ideas, feeling that capitalism was failing as a system. This move to the left was given added impetus with fascism seizing power in Germany and war on the revolutionary Spanish workers.

The Socialist Medical Association grew from 200 to 2,000 members.

Left-wing doctors within it drew up detailed plans for a socialised health service, both preventative and curative. In 1934 it moved a motion at Labour Party conference calling for a national health service.

The ruling class felt far from confident that it had the mass support they needed during World War Two. Calls to defend king and country - the 'British way of life' - did not inspire workers in factories, mines or the armed forces who had suffered in the depression. Pre-war health services were completely inadequate for mass casualties from air raids and the forces. Many middle class people, forced to use municipal former Poor Law hospitals for the first time, were horrified at their primitive state.

Voluntary hospitals provided better medical and nursing care but were bankrupt. Run as charities, they relied on fees from private patients, legacies and fund-raising events but could barely keep going, asking for government bailouts.

Faced with this grim situation, the government formed the Emergency Medical Service. For the first time, aspects of healthcare were planned on a national basis.

The advantages of cooperation between hospitals and doctors instead of competition for business were soon

seen. (The disadvantages of competition are being seen now it has been driven into the heart of the NHS by Cameron's government.)

Beveridge report
To show the working class it would not return to 1930s' mass unemployment and misery - and fearing a revolutionary wave as followed World War One - the government asked William Beveridge to produce plans for social security.

When this civil servant's report came out in December 1942 60,000 copies were sold overnight, with 600,000 sold in two years. He wrote: "A health service providing full preventative and curative treatment to every kind of citizen... without an economic barrier at any point... is the ideal plan."

Beveridge's plans were opposed by some of the ruling class. Even before Beveridge, an editorial in the Times in March 1941 warned of their post-war fears. "In the aftermath of the war there will be a strong and widespread temptation to abandon the sense of a common effort for a common cause, to resume the rivalry between capital and labour for the extraction of a maximum profit from the process of production... If such trends were to prevail... our whole society - national

as well as international - might well be in sight of disaster."

On Beveridge's proposals, Prime Minister Winston Churchill claimed they were unaffordable. Sir John Forbes Watson, director of the Confederation of British Employers said (in private): "We did not start this war with Germany in order to improve our social services."

Other ruling class members were more far-sighted. Tory MP Quintin Hogg, later a cabinet minister, warned in the 1943 parliamentary debate on Beveridge's report: "If you do not give the people social reform, they are going to give you social revolution." Tory Health Minister, Henry Willink, proposed healthcare should be free but the existing hotchpotch of hospital services should be left untouched. Today's Con-Dem Health and Social Care Act is returning towards his plans.

Labour's individual membership climbed sharply at the end of the war, with a million members by 1950. With pressure from trade unions, workers and their families, and the ranks and junior officers of the armed forces, Labour was committed to real change after the war.

"The Labour Party is a Socialist Party and proud of it," said its 1945 election manifesto. "... the best health services should be available free for all. Money must no longer be the passport to the best treatment."

Labour won a huge majority in the 1945 election. Aneurin Bevan, a former Welsh miner, was appointed minister of health. Bevan's plan to create a national health service involved nationalisation of 3,000 voluntary and municipal hospitals. There would be free hospital treatment for all.

He proposed general practitioners be paid salaries, new health centres where they would be encouraged to work and controls on new GPs entering wealthier areas to promote services in poorer areas. Everyone could register with a GP and dentist, receiving free consultations and treatments. Opticians would also give examinations and prescribe glasses without charge.

British Medical Association leaders strongly opposed these plans (although they did not speak for the whole medical profession). Dr Alfred Cox, a former BMA secretary, described them as a big step to dictatorship under "a medical Fuehrer". The British Medical Journal warned that it was inconceivable that "private practice as we know it today can survive as much more than a shadow of itself" (Today the BMA's position is to the left

A national demonstration in defence of the NHS on 29 September outside the Tory party conference in Manchester should be promoted energetically and followed by a 24-hour general strike

drugs in its first year (that's £1.13 billion at today's prices). It now spends about £12 billion a year on drugs. The pharmaceutical industry is one of the economy's most profitable sectors, making 80% profits in some cases. It should be nationalised and integrated into the NHS with compensation only paid on the basis of proven need.

Bevan expected NHS costs would fall once the untreated burden of illness was dealt with. In fact, NHS costs have risen faster than general inflation throughout its history. New drugs, joint replacements, transplants, radiotherapy, scans and much more have been developed.

Improved living standards and prevention of many infectious diseases have contributed to an ageing population. Many more people now live with chronic conditions needing

long-term treatment and care, leading to rising costs.

Life in unequal capitalist society is still responsible for ill health, including many cancers, much mental illness and rising obesity. There is now a widening gap between the health of the richest and poorest - and their access to healthcare.

Low pay, benefit cuts and the bedroom tax will force more into overcrowded, poor quality housing. Many can't afford good food or adequate heating. The infectious diseases and malnutrition of the 1930s are set to return.

Counter-reforms
In 1945 the ruling class feared workers' revolution and conceded the NHS. It was so popular that later Tory governments dared not attack it. Bosses benefited from a fitter workforce. Unemployment was very low for 25 years after the war so they needed workers back at work after illness or injury. That started to change after the 1979-81 recession, which saw unemployment soar.

The decline of manufacturing industry left big business looking for alternative sources of profit. Public services have been in their eye since then.

But even Thatcher took a cautious line with NHS privatisation, restricting it mostly to cleaning, laundry and catering. What held her back was fear that Labour and the unions could mobilise the tremendous support for the NHS among the working class and throw out her government.

She needn't have worried. Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's New Labour accelerated down the privatisation road. Health workers and working class families have our arms tied behind our backs without a party opposing all cuts and standing for renationalisation of the NHS.

Union leaders who rejected a national campaign of demonstrations and strikes to defend the NHS gave the Con-Dems confidence. As in 1921 and 1926, union weakness led to government aggression.

At last, unions have organised a national demonstration in defence of the NHS on 29 September outside the Tory party conference in Manchester. This should be promoted energetically and followed by a 24-hour general strike. Despite all the negative publicity, the NHS still has tremendous support. A massive strike could be built, splitting the government apart. What was won through struggle in the past will not be given up without a fight.



Needed: a strategy to stop the destruction of the NHS

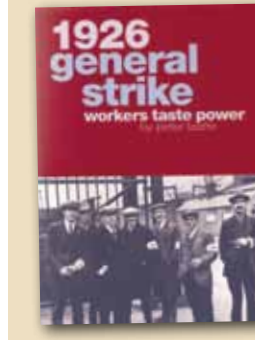


A collection of articles from the Socialist £2 including postage

Available from Socialist Books PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD 020 8988 8789 www.socialistbooks.org.uk

The 1926 General Strike

Workers taste power by Peter Taaffe



The 1926 General Strike in Britain was a critical moment in the history of the British working class. Peter Taaffe explains its historical importance but also the lessons for today's struggles against capitalist austerity.

Special offer - £7.50 including postage

Available from Socialist Books PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD 020 8988 8789 www.socialistbooks.org.uk

The Year of the Paper - boosting the sales of the Socialist

Sarah Wrack

The Socialist national sales organiser

A new sales quarter for the Socialist has now begun. We reached 74% of the national target in the April to June quarter and had some good successes. For example 200 copies were sold at Unison conference - that means 200 conference delegates read the Socialist Party's fighting programme for what the union needs to do to lead the battle against austerity.

To improve on this next time, this quarter will see the Year of the Paper really get going. This campaign was agreed at the Socialist Party's national congress in March and aims to significantly increase sales and subscriptions of the Socialist

but also to make sure every member contributes to the paper.

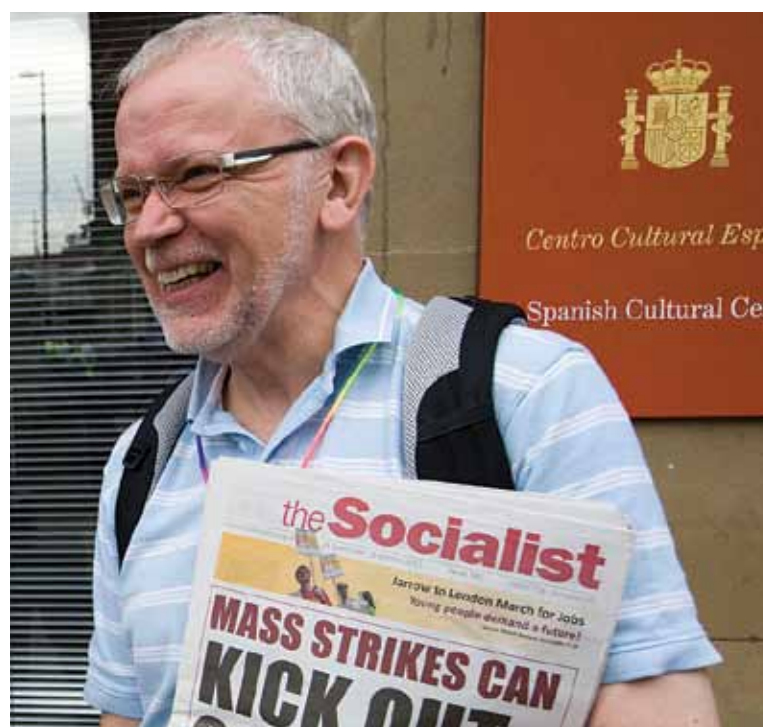
Each local Socialist Party branch should have a meeting to discuss the Year of the Paper, elect a branch paper campaigner and set two or three targets for the campaign. My own branch, Waltham Forest in east London, had our meeting recently. We have a good tradition of well-attended Saturday stalls, but there is still plenty of room for improvement.

We agreed to have a 'paper buddy' system which pairs members up to arrange sales whenever both are free. Hopefully this will mean we can do even more workplace and station sales than we do now. Our paper organiser, Lee, also pointed out that this will make it easier for newer members to take part in regular sales.

We agreed to try to incorporate the paper into our branch meetings more. We begin our meetings with a 'newsround' and decided to start including one item that is in the Socialist but not in the mainstream press. As one of our members said in the meeting: "The best thing about the Socialist is that it tells the truth." We will also make sure that there is time in each meeting for Lee to give a report on paper sales and what's needed to reach our target.

If your branch hasn't discussed the campaign or made plans yet, schedule in a discussion as soon as possible. Get in touch if you would like one of the editors of the Socialist to come and speak at the meeting and keep us informed on what your branch's plans are.

editors@socialistparty.org.uk
020 8988 8777



Selling the Socialist in Manchester photo Paul Mattsson

Leeds: Building support for workers in South Africa

Whats on?
see:
socialistparty.org.uk/whatson

Leeds City Socialist Party

On 24 June the Socialist Party held a public meeting in Leeds on the struggles in South Africa. It was introduced by Sean Figg, who outlined how huge inequalities, coupled with the historic legacy of fighting apartheid, led to the strike by mine workers last year and the subsequent massacre at Marikana.

The Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM) has helped link up the

strike committees and fightback against the repressive ANC government. This led to workers across South Africa coming to the conclusion that the ANC wasn't a party of the mass of South Africans, only a small wealthy elite. What is needed is a new mass party to represent them which has led to the launch of the Workers And Socialist Party (WASP).

Since WASP's launch it has been the focus of a huge smear campaign by the government. Activists and

workers have been met by repression with leading members of the workers' committees losing their jobs. Liv Shange, a leading member of the DSM, is even fighting against an attempt by the ANC to deport her.

There is an appeal for messages of protest against the South African government's threats to deport Liv. Please see <http://www.socialist-world.net/doc/6368>

Over £150 was raised at the meeting in support of the work in South Africa.

Fighting Fund target smashed!

Ken Douglas

Socialist Party national treasurer

Socialist Party members raised over £10,000 in the last two weeks of the March to June fighting fund campaign, smashing the national target and reaching the magnificent total of £28,207.

This was a great effort - it shows that our members are prepared to pull out all the stops to ensure that we have the funds to step up our campaigns for a one-day general strike against the cuts and a socialist alternative to the austerity policies of the three main capitalist parties.

Branches put on fund-raising events as part of the Collectathon fund-raising fortnight. Mansfield and North Derbyshire branch raised £27 at a showing of 'The Spirit of '45' in a local pub. Tower Hamlets branch has raised £260 so far from a sponsored bike ride and Newcastle branch raised over £90 at a barbecue for members, friends and family.

Sheffield South branch raised £124 at a local festival, including £100 from sales of plants grown by members.

Contrast this with New Labour, where the two Eds austerity-lite policies are sinking them in the polls. What an indictment of Labour's abandonment of the working class that the opposition is losing popularity against one of the most vicious cuts governments in history. Desperate for funding, they are currently contacting their existing members and asking them to take out additional direct debits.

One Usdaw shop workers' union member was rung and asked for £12 a month, then £10, then £8 until



Donations are a vital part of building support for socialist ideas

they got down to £4!

There is no enthusiasm for Labour among ordinary workers - that is the message that our members hear when we are out campaigning in the town centres, on the doorstep and on the picket lines. That is why people are willing to make a donation to support our work and buy a copy of the Socialist.

One reader sent in £10 with the message: "I hope my meagre donation helps to fund resistance to the coalition and their nefarious cuts and realpolitik."

Every donation and all the amounts that are raised, no matter how big or how small, are important and help fund the fight for socialism.

Our members will now be gearing up for the new fighting fund quarter over the summer with the aim of ensuring that we again reach the target of £25,000.

Socialist Party Summer Camp

A weekend of socialism and sun*

From Friday 23 to Monday 26 August at a new site near Ware, Hertfordshire.

- There will be discussions and debates every morning and evening with plenty of time for relaxation and leisure/sporting activities in the afternoons.
- A crèche will run during all meetings.
- Activities available include climbing wall, archery, zip line, paintball, golf, fishing.
- There will be a quiz night, live music and campfires.

Costs:

Waged adult: £50

Unwaged: £30

Family of 4: £100

Child over 4: £12.50

Deposit: £20 per person

Breakfast, lunch and evening meals are available at reasonable costs or do your own cooking.

For more information and a booking form ring 020 8988 8782

or email alisonhill@socialistparty.org.uk

*Only the politics come with a guarantee!

Get involved

I'd like to join the Socialist Party I'd like more information about the Socialist Party

Donate

I'd like to donate £ to the Socialist Party please make cheques payable to Socialist Party

Subscribe

12 issues £15 6 months £28 1 year £50 please make cheques payable to Socialist Publications Ltd

Western Europe: 12 issues £16, half year £32, year £50 Rest of world: 12 issues £25, half year £50, year £90

Return slip or pay at www.socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe

Name

Address and postcode

tel/email

Return to: Socialist Party, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Phone 020 8988 8777 to pay by card, to arrange a direct debit, or to join

SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	April-June 2013	Final chart June 2013
North West	1,200	2,222		
West Midlands	2,100	3,439		
Northern	600	957		
East Midlands	1,600	2,339		
South West	1,400	1,896		
Wales	2,300	2,452		
London	6,100	6,414		
Eastern	1,200	1,200		
Yorkshire	2,900	2,538		
Southern	2,900	948		
South East	750	496		
England & Wales	3,650	3,307		
	25,000	28,207		

Mass street protests as Egypt is swept by revolution and counter-revolution

As the Socialist goes to press, Egypt is gripped by revolution and counter-revolution, with mass protests against the country's Islamist president Mohammed Morsi. Demonstrators in Cairo ransacked the Muslim Brotherhood's party HQ and several deaths of pro- and anti-Morsi supporters have been reported throughout the country. In this deepening political crisis the army chiefs have shown their hand by issuing a 48-hour ultimatum to the president and leaders of his political opponents to resolve the country's crisis or else face a military coup. Morsi, however, insists he will continue with his own plans for 'national reconciliation'. Today's political crisis comes only two years after the revolution which ousted president Hosni Mubarak in January 2011 but then stalled due to the absence of a mass revolutionary socialist party committed to overthrowing capitalism. David Johnson reports on the economic and social unrest that forms the background to Egypt's political crisis.

Mohammed Morsi's first anniversary as president of Egypt was marked by even bigger demonstrations than brought about the downfall of Hosni Mubarak in January 2011. According to military and interior ministry sources, 14 to 17 million people protested on Sunday 30 June in cities and towns across the country.

22 million signatures have been collected on a petition demanding that he resign. That's more than a quarter of the population and many more than the 13.2 million who voted for him in 2012!

These huge demonstrations are a new stage in the revolution. But, as we have seen over the last few years, in the absence of a strong socialist movement other forces can take advantage of the new movement.

There are many reasons for anger with Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood (MB)-dominated government. Drivers queue for up to seven hours to buy petrol. Electricity cuts last more than ten hours a day in many areas. Food prices have shot up faster than official inflation, which is now 8.2% a year.

Unemployment remains high while economic growth has slowed, with falling foreign investment and tourism. Hotel occupancy rates are barely 15% in Cairo and below 5% in Luxor, although Red Sea resorts are still busy.

Business cronies of the Mubarak regime are now courted by Morsi's government. Some businessmen facing prosecution for corruption and profiteering under Mubarak have been given reprieves.

Many people fear that a new MB client state is being created and are angry at Morsi's appointment of MB

members to public posts such as state governors and to leading positions in the Egyptian Trade Union Federation.

Journalists have been attacked and some well-known critics of the MB have lost jobs in state-run media. Comedians have been arrested for 'insulting the president'.

Protests have reached an "all-time high" according to the International Development Centre (IDC). In the last year of Mubarak's regime there was an average of 176 protests a month. The 2013 average has been 1,140 a month, with a total of 9,427 protests during the first year of Morsi's presidency. Half of these have been workers' protests.

Those who hoped the downfall of Mubarak would mark the opening of an era of democratic rights have been increasingly angered at repressive measures adopted by Morsi's regime. In contrast to the light treatment of Mubarak-era businessmen, dockers' strike leaders were sacked.

Opposition

A new group, Tamarod (Rebel), was launched in April. It set a target of collecting 15 million signatures to a petition calling on Morsi to resign. Their aim is "to avoid the mistakes of the past period and to continue on the path of the 25 January Revolution," according to co-founder of Tamarod, Mohamed Abdel Aziz.

Organisers said "there will be no flags or banners except Egyptian flags in the demonstrations, as well as photos of Egypt's martyrs, starting with the martyrs of the 25 January Revolution."

While there is an understandable mood for unity, an anti-party political mood reflects the disappointment many feel with the dozens of parties that sprung up after the overthrow of Mubarak.

Most of these called for some form of capitalist democracy, while leaving the real rulers of Egypt in place - unelected big businessmen and generals. The enthusiasm of party leaders for well-paid elected office has not inspired confidence among workers and poor people.

Those on the left who supported Morsi in June 2012 in opposition to the Mubarak regime presidential candidate, Ahmed Shafiq, such as the Revolutionary Socialists, have served to spread further confusion. The development of independent action and organisation by the working class and poor is key, they need their own mass party to fight for their interests and democratic rights.

Tamarod calls on Morsi to resign, to be replaced by an independent prime minister for six months who



Hundreds of thousands of anti-Morsi protesters have taken to Egypt's streets

"will head a technocratic government whose main mission is to put together an urgent economic plan to save the Egyptian economy and to expand social justice policies."

'Saving the Egyptian (capitalist) economy' will mean more attacks on workers and the poor with cuts in subsidies of basic foods and more privatisation to satisfy the International Monetary Fund - the opposite of the January 2011 demands for 'bread, freedom and social justice'.

Workers and the poor need a living minimum wage, a shorter working week without loss of pay,

Any government - Islamic or secular, civilian or military - that defends the continuation of capitalism will attack the interests of the vast majority of Egyptians

a massive building programme of houses, schools and hospitals and investment in public transport, which would create much-needed jobs. Socialist demands, combined with a programme of democratic rights, could gain massive support if put forward by a workers' party built by the growing trade unions. It could split away significant layers of Morsi's support.

General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, commander-in-chief of the armed forces and defence minister, on Monday 1 July issued an ultimatum to Morsi and opposition political leaders: reach agreement with each other within 48 hours and halt the dangerous polarisation within Egypt.

This dangerously confused position of some Tamarod leaders suggests they would support the military to retake power. Mahmoud Badr, a spokesperson, welcomed the military leaders' statement. "The army responding to the demands of

the people crowns our movement," he said. Crowds in Tahrir Square reportedly cheered when they heard the news, chanting: "The army and the people are one hand."

It seems possible that behind the scenes, the US government has switched emphasis from backing Morsi to backing the army as being the best means of stabilising the country and its capitalist economy. Ten government ministers resigned on 1 July, suggesting that Morsi may struggle to hang on much longer.

Most senior officers do not want to take direct responsibility for government at this stage. The armed forces own key sections of the economy, with senior officers making fortunes from their control over them. They want economic and political stability as much as any other capitalist businessmen so they can continue to make money.

It is only 18 months since the military government was shooting demonstrators in Cairo. Any government - Islamic or secular, civilian or military - that defends the continuation of capitalism will attack the interests of the vast majority of Egyptians.

Workers' action

The lack of a programme addressing workers' day-to-day needs from Tamarod or any major party is allowing a dangerous vacuum to exist into which the poison of sectarianism could explode. Coptic Christians have felt threatened by the MB's programme of Islamisation

and by attacks on churches.

Morsi and the MB have lined up with the reactionary Saudi Arabia and Gulf sheikhs supporting the Sunni opposition to Assad's regime in Syria. There are three million Shia Muslims in Egypt. Extremist Salafi clerics have denounced Shias and in this sectarian atmosphere a crowd of 3,000 attacked Shia homes in one village on 23 June with four killed.

Socialist and trade union activists can build movements that overcome sectarian divisions by building support for a programme of class solidarity against the common enemy of big business, whether imperialist or Egyptian.

A general strike can draw together oppressed sections of society and could gain support from many of the middle class. But a general strike must not be to overthrow one dictator and see him replaced by another, whether a general, businessman or capitalist politician.

Democratically elected strike committees and mass committees of action in every large workplace and local community and college could discuss and draw up a programme for real revolutionary change. They could link together at local and national level, laying the basis for a government of representatives of workers' and the poor.

Appealing to workers across the region to take similar action against poverty, sectarianism and repression could build a movement for socialism throughout the Middle East and North Africa.



Morsi - struggling to keep power

Committee for a Workers' International (CWI)

The Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) is the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated.

The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against global capitalism and to fight for a socialist world.

For more details including CWI publications write to: CWI, PO Box 3688, London E11 1YE. email cwi@worldsoc.co.uk



The CWI website contains news, reports and analysis from around the world.

www.socialistworld.net

the Socialist postbag

Do you have something to say?

Send your news, views and criticism in not more than 150 words to Socialist Postbag, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD, or phone 020 8988 8771, email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk. We reserve the right to shorten letters. Don't forget to give your name, address and phone number. Confidentiality will be respected if requested.

Home truths...

After the discovery of the dreadful secret police surveillance of Stephen Lawrence's family following his racist murder in 1993, Jack Straw asked why he wasn't informed while Labour home secretary in 1997-2001. An undercover police officer infiltrated Youth Against



Racism in Europe (YRE), a mass, democratic, anti-racist youth organisation led by Militant (now the Socialist Party) in the 1990s.

Jack Straw's outrage is somewhat ironic. It seems he was happy to use detailed, secret surveillance by a certain Michael Gregory in the early 1980s of Blackburn supporters of Militant, who were socialist members of the Labour Party until expelled by a Straw-backed initiative in 1983-4.

Straw made two very serious allegations in his recent biography about this, including the siphoning off to Militant of funds collected for striking miners – allegations which he now admits were untrue (Lancashire Telegraph 20 June). Could Jack Straw tell us did he know, and approve of, secret police surveillance of socialist, trade union, anti-racist and environmental organisations when he was home secretary?

Dave Beale

... and state lies

It is scandalous that policemen tried to find 'dirt' on Stephen Lawrence's family. But it is disappointing that the Dispatches programme on Channel 4 did not see the infiltration of groups like YRE as equally scandalous. The programme accepted that socialist, trades union, anti-racist and environmental and other activists are subversive so it was legitimate for the police to target and infiltrate them.

The state now aims to deflect atten-



YRE campaigning photo R Newton

tion from the wrongs that it is perpetrating today. The Special Demonstrations Squad (SDS) is now the Counter Terrorism Unit which targets what is considered 'domestic extremism' and still infiltrates groups. There is no clear definition of domestic extremism and, it seems, extremism on the right is more acceptable than any socialist, anti-racist or workers' or students' campaign. Protesters are criminalised while EDL and BNP thugs are left to incite racial hatred in our towns and cities, despite this being against the law. We need to ask who controls the police and what purposes they serve.

The police tried to discredit undercover cop Peter Francis, saying his unit was 'rogue'. Lord Condon, Met police chief at the time, says he knew nothing about SDS operations but it's not credible that instructions did not come from the very top. Meanwhile the US says Edward Snowden is a traitor and a spy, although he told the whole world what he found and did not tell a 'rival' state or sell secrets. States do not like their methods to come to ordinary people's notice.

Clare Wilkins

Community Care ungranted

The government-run Community Care Grant (CCG) was cut at the last budget. This hardship grant allowed people to furnish a new house, purchase a bed, furniture and white goods. I found out it was gone while getting a landlord agreed transfer with Bristol city council. When a tenancy begins in a council



property, except in special cases, it is totally bare save for water and electric. No fridge, cooker, bed or carpets. In my first council property (before CCG was axed), while I was waiting, I was living on Marmite sandwiches and doing my washing at a friend's house, over a mile away. Now it will be even worse.

Michael Wright, Bristol

One's pension's up!

One benefit scrounger ought to be smiling and the Bishop of London won't be pontificating about her greed as he has every other pensioner in the land. The Sovereign Grant, which funds the Queen's spending as Head of State, will rise in 2014 from £36 million to £38 million.

No benefit cap or cuts for her. And she won't have to go to Wonga.com to tide her over. We all know what it's like living in a draughty old palace - or several palaces - and trying to make ends meet. So as we watch the winter fuel allowance dwindle into insignificance and prepare to join the 2,500 pensioners who will die from the cold in the run up

to Christmas, we can rest easy knowing that one greedy pensioner at least is getting a warm glow from our money.

Derek McMillan

Guardian gloom

Steve Cawley of Peterborough Socialist Party wrote to the Guardian after a John Harris article "Why young voters are backing the Tories". This is the text of his letter:

We strongly disagree with John Harris that Britain is pre-ordained to become a



permanent neoliberal economy or society. Why do some young people seem to have views contrary to their own material interests? How deeply attached are they to such views?

The overwhelming barrage of "there is no alternative to massive cuts in living standards" propaganda had an effect over the last half decade. But so has the Labour party's refusal to guarantee any significant alternative. Secondly, in Peterborough, we have had almost immediate agreement with our views on this legalised theft of wages and benefits, among them many who assumed the millionaire-financed smaller right-wing parties to be the only organisations in favour of better material provision for working people.

If socialists had similar media coverage to Ukip, then hundreds of thousands would be supporting a socialist programme, starting by expropriating the big companies and ultra-rich in order to plan the economy democratically for the benefit of all. Coming events will change minds!

Council tax

Many councils are passing the ConDem cuts to council tax benefit directly onto the lowest paid. Many more people are therefore having to pay council tax. In my area people who were unable to pay are now receiving magistrates court dates.

The purpose of the court hearing is to grant the council a "Liability Order" so that they can take steps to get it taken out of the person's benefits or wages and failing that, by using bailiffs.

If you have received a court letter, I would advise you to turn up and bring support from as many people as possible.

Nottingham Defend Council Tax Benefit Campaign (NDCTB) can provide information for anyone wishing to start a campaign and copies of our information leaflets are available from: All Souls Community Centre, Ilkeston Road, Nottingham, NG7 3HF
Chris Jackson Nottingham

Campaign Kazakhstan

Campaign for democratic, social & workers rights in Kazakhstan

Cameron and Blair's support for Kazakhstan regime blasted



Cameron and president Nazarbayev

The following letter was sent to the Guardian in response to an article about Prime Minister David Cameron's trade deals with the repressive regime in Kazakhstan

"I continue to be astonished at the hypocrisy of both David Cameron and Tony Blair in their dealings with the Kazakh regime of Nazarbayev. Your article correctly highlights the lack of human and democratic rights that exist there.

I visited Kazakhstan last November as part of a trade union delegation to investigate the killing of oil workers at Zhanaozen. The official number of workers shot in the back by the police and killed is 12 as your article reports.

However, after speaking to eye-witnesses and survivors, I am convinced that the actual number of those killed is nearer to 70. This figure does not include those who, a year after the attack, are still too injured to work. Neither does it include those who were rounded up and imprisoned for the 'criminal' offence of publicly opposing the regime by being on the square at Zhanaozen. Many of these, including the lawyers that tried to defend them, like Vadim Kuramshin, are still held in Kazakh jails.

The Kazakhstan state officially sanctions the repression of any op-

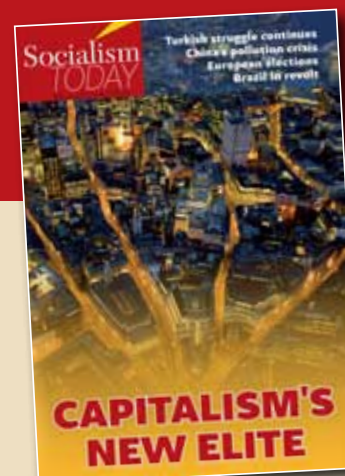
position elements. This ranges from threats and intimidation right up to murder. The activists that I spoke to claim that the situation is getting worse not better. Blair and Cameron are experienced politicians who are acting as apologists for one of the most repressive and corrupt regimes in the world.

Blair's friendship with the Kazakh regime might have something to do with an alleged salary of millions of pounds sterling from Nazarbayev for his 'advice'. Cameron shows that he is more interested in getting deals for the 1% than securing human rights for the 99% - in Kazakhstan as in the UK.

Trade unionists in the UK and across Europe will continue to campaign for human and democratic rights in Kazakhstan.

Mike Whale Secretary, Campaign Kazakhstan"

While David Cameron is building links with Kazakh dictator Nursultan Nazarbayev and his cronies, workers in Britain were linking up with their counterparts in Kazakhstan. The recent RMT transport union conference agreed unanimously to support Campaign Kazakhstan and donate £1,000 to support the work. At the 29 June National Shop Stewards Network conference it was agreed to send a message of support to Kazakhmys workers in their dispute with management. For more information see www.campaignkazakhstan.org



£2.50 including postage:
Socialism Today
PO Box 24697,
London E11 1YD.

Socialism TODAY

The Socialist Party's magazine
July-August 2013 issue includes:

Plutocrats

Ultra-free-market capitalism has produced a new breed of super-rich

Turkey

Mass movement against Erdogan is just the beginning

Europe

The need for a workers' alternative in the Euro-elections

'Sick Of Your Boss?' week of action 8-13 July

The profit-hungry, super-exploitative companies who employ the nation's 'precarious' will be targeted by young workers and campaigners in a national week of action from 8 to 13 July.

The events, planned all over the country, are part of an initiative demanding an end to the insecurity, low pay and bullying that are a daily experience for millions of workers in Britain - especially the young. Street meetings, stalls, rallies and protests are planned, and the campaign aims to help young people get organised inside their workplaces as well, through joining and being involved in trade unions.

Actions will focus on targeting Primark stores in particular - a company whose bloody desire for cheap labour, and contempt for the lives of workers, was made shockingly clear by the horrendous collapse of a garment factory in Bangladesh.

In Britain, improvements won by the labour movement in the past mean workers have some protection from these hellish conditions. But the continual assault on workers' rights, made by the government at the behest of companies like Primark, shows that we need to fight back.

Some examples of plans for the Sick Of Your Boss? week of action:

- In Tower Hamlets, east London, where there is a large Bangladeshi community, Sick Of Your Boss and the Socialist Party are holding a meeting on 11 July about the Bangladesh garment factory disaster
- A call centre worker has pledged to talk to three workmates during the week of action about joining the union
- In Leeds, Youth Fight for Jobs activists will be spending the week of action building for a rally the following Saturday (20 July)



photo Paul Mattsson

See youthfightforjobs.com for details of what's happening near you

Trade unions in Coventry using Sick Of Your Boss? leaflets

Even in traditionally well-unionised workplaces, the conditions many young workers face can be tough and degrading. Zero-hour contracts mean that many workers at Coventry council bin depot go to work some days not knowing if there will be any work for them that day!

In BT and Royal Mail, bullying and sackings have increased to unprecedented levels in the last few years. After a motion from Coventry Communication Workers Union (CWU), strong supporter of Youth Fight for Jobs, the union nationally has decided to investigate the levels of suicide among BT workers - we think heavily due to the degrading performance management programme the company enforces.

Because of this a number of trade union branches locally in Coventry have begun using Sick Of Your Boss? leaflets in their recruitment material and in local offices to help persuade young workers who may never have encountered trade unions and what they're for, that they don't have to take the exploitation, bullying and harassment - that workers can stand up and fight back.

Lenny Shail
Coventry



Letter to student left groups to discuss joint call for a national demo

A recent survey showed that many new graduates are taking jobs as road sweepers, hospital porters and lollipop ladies because they can't find work in 'professional posts'. More than 20,000 graduates were unemployed six months after completing their degrees.

Combined with sky-high fees and vicious cuts, this highlights the desperate need for a fightback by students. This letter has been sent by Socialist Students to other left student groups to begin discussions about calling a national demonstration in the new academic year.

Dear National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts, Education Activist Network and Student Broad Left,

The recent spending review saw a further declaration of war on education. As part of the government's relentless austerity programme, 'savings' of over £400 million are planned from higher and further education budgets in the next two years. Attacks include a £60 million cut to maintenance grants, £260 million to be taken from colleges and a further £45 million to be snatched from higher education teaching budgets. This comes just two weeks after the announcement of shady government talks about making the remainder of the publicly owned student loan company look attractive to private buyers [confirmed by Lib Dem chief secretary to the treasury Danny Alexander the day after the spending review]. They are setting the stage for the retrospective revision of conditions on student loans, potentially resulting in massive interest rate hikes and a lowering of the threshold at which repayments are made. Running parallel to all this, we have [Tory education minister] Gove's assault on teachers and school students. Privatisation, in the form

of academies and free schools, is transforming the landscape of state education. This is coupled with an ideologically based rewriting of the curriculum, threats to school holidays and continuous assaults on teachers' pay, pensions and workload. The 'revamped' GCSEs will ensure more young people are branded a failure before life has really begun. In the face of this, the supposed leaders of our movement have abdicated their responsibility to fight. So far, not so much as a statement has been issued by the National Union of Students (NUS) condemning either the Comprehensive Spending Review or the specific cuts made to education. And if they can't even get out of bed to condemn cuts, what hope do we have of them leading a fight to stop them? While we must continue to put pressure on the NUS to change this, in the face of attacks on this scale, it is not possible, nor correct, to simply wait and hope for a lead to descend from on high. So far, no national student action has been called to take place in the autumn by any group. Yet the mass campaign at Sussex [university, against privatisation], as well as the actions taken by groups on many other campuses this year, show that willingness to fight is not

in shortage when campaigns are built with clear aims. While many conferences are planned, there is a clear need for direct action, starting with a national demonstration in the autumn term. We propose a meeting of all national groupings on the student left to discuss calling a demo and jointly building towards it. It's clear that any action would be far stronger if it is called and built for by a coalition of groups rather than just one. Therefore it makes sense to get together so that we can call a united demonstration that's fully mobilised for. In contrast to last year's NUS-run demo we would need to develop a clear set of demands and slogans which chime with students. We will need to continue to develop local campaigns which will feed into this and to appeal to local student unions to back the demonstration, provide transport, etc. We propose a meeting within the next month to discuss this. Please email back letting us know if you wish to take part and which dates you would be available to send some representatives.

In solidarity,
Claire Laker-Mansfield
Socialist Students national organiser

See socialiststudents.org.uk

Impressive national youth organisers meetings

Jules Moore-Cook
London Socialist Party

On Sunday 30 June young Socialist Party members from branches all over the country convened in London for a national youth organisers meeting. We discussed plans for the party's youth work for the rest of the year, particularly over the summer.

The day began with a speech from GéGé who works for the Committee for a Workers' International (the international organisation the Socialist Party is affiliated to) talking about the mass action that has been taking place in Turkey and Brazil. The role young people have played in these processes was also discussed. We concluded we can expect similar movements in Britain in the future.

The Socialist Party supports the Sick Of Your Boss? initiative of Youth Fight for Jobs. Members in every area have plans on how they can promote Sick Of Your Boss, particularly during the upcoming week of action. We were all in agreement that the initiative has helped people begin to realise their rights in the workplace.

Working alongside Socialist Students was also on the agenda and it was something I didn't really have much experience in as I'm not a student, but there were plenty of students there with ideas on how to improve conditions on their campuses, not just for students but for staff as well.

The day was fantastic and as someone who was at my first Socialist Party national meeting, I was really impressed by the level of political awareness and the way people put their ideas across. The meeting



The Socialist Party has campaigned in solidarity with the protests in Turkey photo Neil Cafferky

brought out a lot of ideas we can use to help fight against the conditions young people face today. It was exhilarating to see the comrades from all over the country my age that I will be working with in the years to come.

Tenants and campaigners unite FIGHTING BACK AGAINST HATED BEDROOM TAX

The Con-Dems' hated bedroom tax - which penalises low income social housing tenants claiming housing benefit, deemed to have 'spare bedrooms' - came into force on 1 April. Rent arrears owed to councils and housing associations have inevitably soared throughout Britain and many indebted tenants are facing eviction and homelessness. On the same day as the bedroom tax was introduced the government reduced the top rate of income tax on high earners and lowered the rate of corporation tax on big business. Socialist Party member Kevin Pattison reports on how anti-bedroom tax campaigners in Leeds are fighting back.

Hands Off Our Homes has held over a dozen public meetings in Leeds and from these formed eight anti-bedroom tax campaign groups.

These have assisted tenants with appeals and with applications for Discretionary Housing Payment. The groups stick together and support each other.

In April, 1,000 people demonstrated in Leeds against the bedroom tax supported by many onlookers. There has also been massive support for the campaign at public stalls held throughout Leeds.

We have lobbied individual councillors at their surgeries. Many Labour councillors have told us that they are against the bedroom tax and against evictions.

So many Labour councillors have declared themselves against the tax and against evictions that it is difficult to see how the majority Labour group and Leeds city council has not got a 'no evictions' policy! But so far no Labour-led council has agreed not to implement the tax, as the Socialist Party demands.

The council has made much of the fact that they have redesignat-

ed 800 rooms, so they don't count as bedrooms. We support this but only 275 of these rooms belong to the 8,000 households who are affected by the bedroom tax, so the vast majority are still getting further into rent arrears.

The council has made some concessions after debates with Hands Off Our Homes and the lead councillor for housing came to speak to the delegation.

The statement has been referred to the Executive Board and Leeds tenants and campaigners will be watching closely. We will organise action to ensure that there are no evictions in Leeds.

On Monday 1 July Hands Off Our Homes lobbied the full council meeting. Socialist Party member Iain Dalton led a delegation and read a statement explaining how the bedroom tax was hitting people hard.

"We have talked to parents in Harehills and in Armley who have started to miss meals in order to feed their children.

We have spoken to a grandmother in Beeston whose home of 23 years is the only place that her grandkids can see their dad; to a grandmother in Morley who looks after her disabled grandson to give her daughter some respite; a grandmother in Seacroft whose grandchildren stay over so their mum can work nights.

None of these are 'spare' rooms - they are part of a home and all the different functions that a home plays in the life of families. Every case is an injustice."

The statement also called for a 'no evictions' policy for people in arrears because of the tax, and for the council to build more social housing.

We demand:

- Scrap the bedroom tax and write-off all the resulting debt
- Defend all those who cannot or will not pay
- No evictions for rent arrears due to the tax or austerity cuts. Build an anti-eviction army
- End all cuts - tax the bankers and the billionaires not bedrooms
- For a programme of new council house building to meet social need
- Build a mass movement against austerity starting with a 24-hour general strike organised by the trade unions

What we stand for

The Socialist Party fights for socialism - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.

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 socialist international that organises in 45 countries.

Our demands include:

PUBLIC SERVICES

- No to ALL cuts in jobs, pay, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
- 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.

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.
- Reject 'Workfare'. 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. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.

- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

ENVIRONMENT

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled 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! Support the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition as an important step towards this.

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 the banking system 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' neoliberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!