



'We've had enough'

ALL STRIKE TOGETHER!

'Cut, cut, cut' go the Con-Dems as they attack pay, welfare, jobs, services and pensions. No wonder the mood for action against the government's austerity agenda is growing.

Teachers in the NUT and NASUWT unions have called a rolling programme of strikes, culminating in a national strike in the autumn. Lecturers in the UCU are consulting about strike action over pay. CWU members are preparing to fight the privatisation of Royal Mail. PCS civil service union members are discussing further action to defend pay, jobs and working conditions. FBU members are balloting over pensions. Unison members in Scottish local authorities are balloting on pay. All workers have a reason to strike - let's do it together. Come to the lobby of the TUC to demand a 24-hour general strike.

Gary Clark
Assistant branch secretary, Scotland
No.2 branch CWU

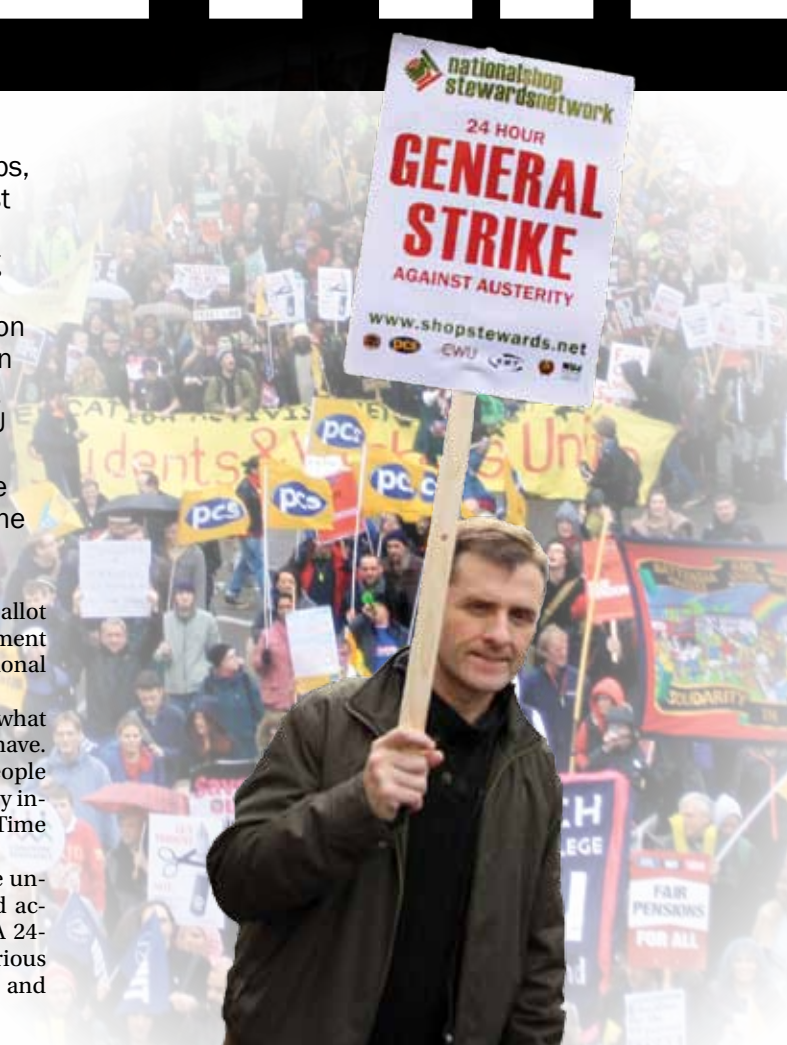
The Con-Dem government has announced a stock market floatation of the majority of Royal Mail within nine months, with the rest to follow at a later date. This is the biggest potential privatisation since the dark days of Thatcher. It threatens a national service which has been in public ownership for 479 years. It puts the universal service under threat, almost certainly means higher postage rates, and is a major threat to postal workers' jobs and working conditions.

In its recent consultative ballot CWU members voted by 96% in opposition to privatisation on a 74% turnout. The union must now capture this mood. The CWU has announced that it will have no choice but to proceed with an industrial action ballot if it can't get a watertight agreement on protection of its existing national agreements.

This is a fight which will decide what type of postal service we will have. One to serve the needs of the people or one to serve the needs of greedy investors only looking for a profit. Time for united action now!

The CWU should call for all the unions under attack to build united action. There is no time to waste. A 24-hour general strike would be a serious blow to all the government's cuts and privatisation plans.

ceed with an industrial action ballot if it can't get a watertight agreement on protection of its existing national agreements.



Teachers will build on the success of recent strike action in the north west, with 90% of schools closed or partly closed. Further action has been called by the NUT and NASUWT.

In the week commencing 30 September there will be strikes in the Eastern, East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside regions and in some of Wales.

In the week commencing 14 October there will be strikes in the North East, London, South East, South West regions and in the rest of Wales.

And there will be a one-day national strike before the end of the autumn term.

"NUT and NASUWT members have every reason to build the strongest possible action to defend our pay, conditions and education. However, we are not the only unions looking to oppose attacks on our livelihoods and our services. Instead of striking separately, wouldn't it be better for unions to strike together and have the biggest possible impact?"

Martin Powell-Davies, member of the NUT executive

Lobby the TUC conference - For a 24-hour general strike!
Bournemouth, 8 September - 12.30-3pm Hardy Suite, Hermitage Hotel, Exeter Road (opposite Bournemouth International Centre)
National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) rally followed by a lobby of Congress.
Speakers include: RMT general secretary Bob Crow, PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka and POA general secretary Steve Gillan.
Transport details email info@shopstewards.net For more information and a model resolution on the lobby see: www.shopstewards.net



The paper of the Socialist Party. Issue 774.

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

Urgent - trade unions must build a political voice for the working class

“If others want to stick around and be insulted by those whose only interest is our money and not our ideas then that’s a matter for them.” RMT general secretary Bob Crow made it clear that the Labour leadership’s attack on the unions, and Unite in particular, should be a defining moment for working class political representation. From the platform at the 129th Durham Miners Gala Bob made the case for a new mass party for working people: “We need an alternative party of labour.” (See RMT press release on www.tusc.org.uk)

He reminded the massive crowd in the Gala’s Big Meeting on Saturday 13 July how the trade unions broke from the Liberal Party over 100 years ago, because it was incapable of representing workers’ interests, to form the Labour Party.

On top of all the crimes of New Labour over the last two decades – privatising public services, maintaining Thatcher’s anti-union laws, conducting wars, etc – the Labour leaders’ recent confirmation that a Labour government will stick with the Con-Dem cuts surely urgently raises the question of a political alternative.

Unite

Bob Crow’s speech got a huge response from the crowd. There was also support for the Unite general secretary Len McCluskey as he rose to speak. As with many trade unionists around the country, the Gala audience wanted to show solidarity with a trade union leader under vitriolic attack from all the enemies of the working class, including the Blairites, the Tories and the right-wing press.

Len got the best reception when he attacked the Labour leadership for their attempt to scapegoat the unions around the Falkirk selection process where Unite had pushed for its preferred candidate. “Labour doesn’t have an automatic right to exist... The Parliamentary Labour Party today does not look like, or think like, the working class communities it seeks to represent. That is a serious problem... That is what Unite was fighting for in Falkirk – to give the working class a stake in our democracy. I make no apology for that.”

But as with the week before, when he cautiously welcomed Labour leader Ed Miliband’s ‘reform’ of how the unions affiliate to Labour, even agreeing with Tony Blair, Len’s refusal to draw the necessary conclusions, left many bewildered and disorientated, if not angry and frustrated.

Len posed questions without answering them: “But if we are to go out and convince

thousands of working class men and women that they want to sign up to be associate Labour Party members they will not be interested in the rulebook, or even the history. They will want to know – will Labour make a difference? ... Will it be different not just from Cameron and his crew but from the Blair-Brown years as well? If we can say ‘Yes, Labour has learned, and Labour is on your side’ then this scheme will work. But if our people – our members – are unclear as to the answer then no amount of persuading will get them to sign up.”

This doesn’t address Miliband’s proposed ‘reforms’ of the Labour Link which will further dilute the already neutered role of the trade unions in the Labour Party as a collective force for the working class. Miliband is under pressure from representatives of the capitalist class to block a voice for the working class in this way.

Moreover, given Labour’s commitment to working within the limits of capitalism and to maintaining cuts if it forms the next government, and Labour councils’ record of implementing cuts, the answer is clear – Labour offers no alternative to austerity.

Rank-and-file trade union activists are disgusted at Miliband’s actions, particularly calling in the police to investigate the Falkirk allegations, but also Labour’s out-and-out anti-working class policies.

As Bob Crow angrily said on Saturday, why hasn’t Miliband called in the police to investigate the scandalous injustice meted out to miners at Orgreave, or the Shrewsbury pickets 40 years ago still continuing today after successive Tory, Labour and Con-Dem governments?

We encourage Unite branches to discuss the model motion (see box) and all members of the affiliated unions to raise Falkirk and the question of disaffiliation in their branches.

Break with Labour

We say it is time for the trade union movement to take the bold step of breaking with New Labour, not to go into ‘non-political’ trade unionism, but to use its political strength to form a new collective voice, a mass workers’ party, that could appeal to the disenchanted, the poor and all the victims of austerity and the capitalist system by putting forward fighting socialist policies.

Undoubtedly, there will be some in the unions and on the left who argue this is impossible. Ultimately they hope against hope that, despite all the evidence to the contrary, Labour can somehow be reformed.

The Falkirk debacle is a damning demon-

What Unite should do:

Unite members, in their branches, stewards committees and constitutional committees of the union, should pass resolutions defending the union against these attacks and calling for a full, democratic discussion of the alternative. In particular, they should call on the leadership to implement the following plan of action:

- An emergency executive council should be called to discuss the crisis.
- The EC should pass a resolution for a recall rules conference which would have the objective of removing the references to Labour Party affiliation from the rulebook, thereby facilitating disaffiliation. This conference should also discuss political representation for the working class.
- Should this be carried, Unite should call meetings and conferences of trade unionists, from affiliated and non-affiliated unions, including those linked to TUSC. These events should have the aim of forming a new workers’ party, which would have the programme of fighting the cuts, scrapping the anti-trade union laws and opposing privatisation of public services. Such a party would truly reflect the needs of the working class and fight in workplaces, communities and in elections for socialist ideas.

stration of the lengths to which the Labour leadership and their ruling class backers, including in the press, will go to resist any challenge to their complete control of the party and its policies and candidates.

New formations

The early Labour pioneers, such as Kier Hardie, prepared the ground for the advances Labour made from 1906 onwards when workers’ mass struggles against the system showed the need for the working class to take independent political action.

Who could question that, given the pro-cuts policies of all the traditional main parties, alternatives can’t develop rapidly in the resulting political vacuum. Despite their limitations new formations have emerged in Europe. In Italy, Beppe Grillo’s Five-Star Movement appeared to come from nowhere and in Greece, Syriza’s anti-austerity programme sparked its rapid electoral rise.

In Britain, anger at the main parties has been demonstrated by abstentionism and votes for the right-wing nationalist Ukip, including by a section of workers who want to ‘kick the main parties’. This adds urgency to the need to build a real workers’ alternative.

Imagine a left challenge with the financial resources of the unions or even just the £3 million an-

nual affiliation fee of Unite to Labour compared to the shoestring that the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) attempts to operate on, notwithstanding the involvement and backing of the RMT.

The Socialist Party is also a key component of TUSC and we believe that it is tenaciously playing a pioneering role, arguing the case for a political voice for the working class and providing a way for anti-cuts fighters to stand as candidates against councillors voting through austerity.

TUSC sees itself as facilitating and campaigning for the building of a new mass workers’ party. A new formation, based on the unions and the resources provided by their millions of members and the basic anti-cuts and anti-capitalist policies expounded at Durham by Len McCluskey and Bob Crow, embracing all those being battered by these brutal cuts would have a massive appeal across society and, in fact, shove the political debate to the left.



Durham Miners’ Gala shows mood for new workers’ party

From the platform of the Durham Miners’ Gala Davie Hopper, general secretary of the Durham Miners’ Association, mentioned this was the first time in 115 years there hadn’t been a Labour MP speaking.

There was huge applause when he went on to say it was probably just as well considering recent events. Bob Crow, RMT transport union general secretary, who called for a “new party of labour” also hit a chord.

The overwhelming majority of people we spoke to at our Socialist Party stall agreed that New Labour was no longer a party that represented working people, and now was the time to build an alternative. This included Labour Party members, one of them telling us: “I am a member – unfortunately!”

We also had the opportunity to speak to members of Unite who were sickened by the attack on their union by Labour leader Ed Miliband. We pointed to the centre page article in the Socialist (issue 773) and suggested



they put in resolutions to their branches calling on Unite’s leadership to discuss disaffiliation from Labour and the need for working class political representation.

The following day I received a phone call from a Unite member whose branch meeting had just taken place that morning. The resolution had been unanimously accepted.

In total we had around 22 members selling our paper, and many others involved on their trade union contingent. Many older workers we spoke to commented on how impressed they were by the number of young members we have.

Our stall also raised many smiles as people noticed the ginger bread bankers for sale – eat the rich! Reflecting this enthusiastic response we sold 230 papers and raised around £100 in fighting fund. Well done to all of our comrades (young and not quite so young).

Elaine Brunskill

MPs' pay to rise to £74,000...



Many MPs have lamented how wrong it is that they're in line for another whopping pay rise of 11%, bringing their basic salaries to £74,000 a year. And that's never mind the other jobs and business interests many of them have. But alas, they tell us, there's nothing they can do – an independent panel (Ipsa) decided that's what should happen so their hands are tied.

Well that wasn't the position of Dave Nellist, Labour Party MP in Coventry from 1983 to 1992, and member of the Socialist Party and its forerunner, Militant. A recent article on the BBC website pointed out Dave's principled stand:

Mr Nellist, now 60 and still an active member of the Socialist Party, was unemployed for the six months before he was elected, but had worked in a factory for many years.

He would only accept the average wage of a skilled factory worker in Coventry, which amounted to 46% of his salary as an MP.

...Mr Nellist said he saw his political career as being akin to that of a union rep in a factory.

"At the time, we were going into

the [MP] job like a convenor in a factory, we had the time to do the job but not three times the wage or holidays," he said.

"The engineering union used to work out the returns of all the factories in Coventry and averaged their wages - equivalent to £28,000 or £29,000 nowadays - so that was what I took home."

"I accepted every penny of the full salary, but as the Labour Party we gave away roughly £35,000 [per year in today's money] to help the families of miners in the 80s, community groups, pensioners."

He dismissed the idea that the more someone is paid, the more they will achieve.

"The suggestion by [Ipsa chairman] Sir Ian Kennedy that the pay

rise would be a way of keeping MPs from claiming more expenses is frankly amazing - I was almost lost for words," he said.

"It's basically saying they'll get a bung on their salary as a way of keeping them in line."

Mr Nellist believes public representatives like councillors and MPs should be able to empathise with the people affected by political decisions.

"With a 9% average fall in people's earnings, MPs should not be getting a rise - it insulates them from those day-to-day problems like food and fuel which have rocketed.

"Millions have to get by on much less [than MPs] so that is why we should pay them so they share the pain and the gain."

...while they slash benefits for the poorest

The rolling out of the Con-Dems' cruel cap on benefits has now begun.

Benefits for out-of-work families will be capped at a total of £26,000. This can mean a cut in income of hundreds of pounds a month for some.

Despite being challenged on his facts and figures, Tory Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith continues to look gleeful at the prospect of plunging thousands into dire poverty.

Now the Con-Dems are threatening to lower the cap further and to attack benefits for teenage mothers even more.

The policy is based on making the working class pay for the bankers' crisis and the lie that those on benefits are better off than those in work.

They want to set us against each other in the hope that we don't fight them and their system.

The main reason any comparison is even possible is because the minimum wage is so low and jobs so poor and insecure that in-work poverty is sky-high.

But measly benefits are no better. And what Duncan Smith and his cronies ignore is that many of the poorest people in work have to claim benefits too. If the cap was based on average income rather than average

wages it would be £31,500 (according to the New Statesman).

The cap takes no account of how many people are in a family so those with four or more children will be particularly badly affected.

Homelessness is expected to increase by 40,000 – which will actually make the policy more expensive than the current system because councils will have to spend so much more on temporary housing. The use of foodbanks will undoubtedly sky-rocket even further.

But none of that matters to Duncan Smith, Osborne and Co. With their pay about to hit three times what the cap is, why would it?!

Another drugs company scam

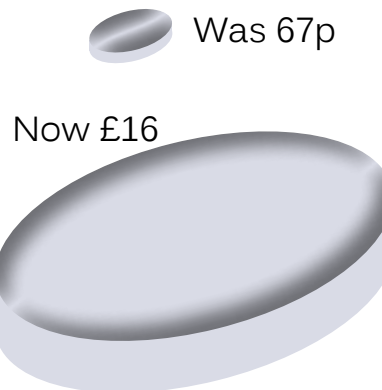
Up to £100 million has been stolen from the public purse by profit-hungry pharmaceutical companies according to the British Medical Association (BMA). A 'legal loophole' that allows drugs to be "flipped" between one company and another can push up the price of drugs by up to 2,000%.

Companies can sell on medicines used by the NHS to companies that are not included in the government's price-regulation scheme, who can then simply change the name of the drug and massively increase the price. The NHS is scammed out of more and more money for the same products – potentially leading to the NHS being priced-out of using particular treatments.

The worst example is a drug previously called Epanutin and costing 67p per 50mg, now called Phenytoin and costing £16 per 50mg. The drug is prescribed to about 100,000 sufferers of epilepsy and the price increase will mean an extra £50 mil-

lion cost to the NHS.

The BMA is calling for the legal loophole to be closed – this must be done immediately. But this isn't the first or only scandalous practice by



multinational pharmaceutical companies that's bleeding the NHS dry.

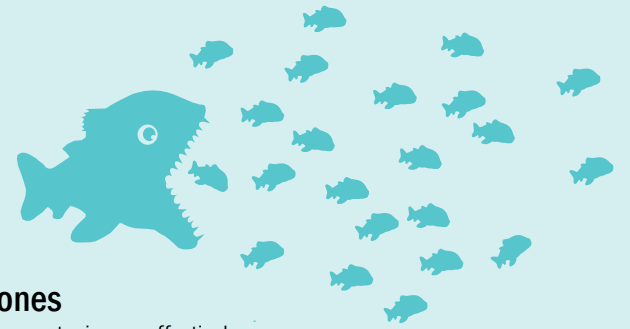
It was recently revealed that 14 hospital trusts are said to be failing.

The government is demanding £20 billion of 'efficiency savings' from the NHS. Surely the biggest efficiency saving would be to cut off the billions of pounds given to corrupt drug companies who only have an interest in profit, not healthcare.

The pharmaceutical companies should be nationalised under democratic working class control and management so that NHS workers and patients can decide what medicines are needed and scrutinise practices and pricing. We demand a fully funded healthcare system freed from the iron grip of private vultures.

Join the national demonstration outside the Tory Party conference, called by the North West TUC and backed by the national TUC, Unite and Unison in Manchester on Sunday 29 September. Join the NSSN contingent on the demo to demand a 24-hour general strike.

Them...



No-go zones

A third of the country is now effectively a no-go zone for low-income families because of high rents. A recent report from the Resolution Foundation shows that a couple with one child and an income of £22,000 would have to spend more than 35% of their income on rent in all but a third of local authority areas in the UK. Rents that bear no relation to what people can afford to pay are the main reason for the rocketing housing benefit bill – essentially a huge subsidy to private landlords that allows them to charge whatever they like. A rent cap combined with investment in building affordable social housing is the only sensible solution.

Tax inequality

Figures from the Office for National Statistics:

36% of income paid in tax by poorest fifth of households

35.5% of income paid in tax by richest fifth of households

Golden goodbye

Being knighted wasn't quite enough for turning his back on the trade union movement for former TUC general secretary Brendan Barber. Now it's emerged that he received a one-off payment of £104,379 when he retired in 2012. It's alright for some - the public sector workers who he failed to lead

to victory in the dispute over public sector pensions won't be living quite the same retirement lifestyle as him.

What type of jobs?

Whenever unemployment figures show a tiny increase in the numbers in employment, the government cheers its success at solving the jobs crisis. But what type of jobs are people getting? More than 75% of the net rise of jobs in the last three years has been in low-paying sectors like retail and care. Most of these new jobs are paying below £8 an hour – in reality well below what people actually need to live, particularly in the cities and the south east.

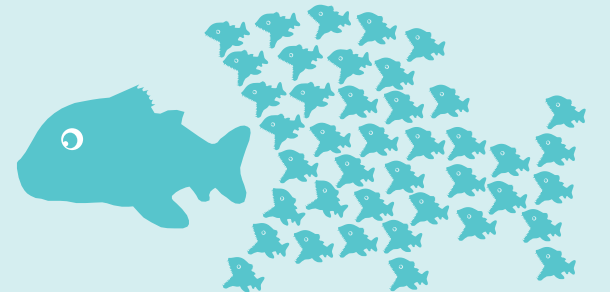
Looks like a corporation...

The committee set up to investigate tax avoidance by companies like Google and Starbucks has also challenged Prince Charles on his tax affairs. A landed estate, the Duchy of Cornwall, pays Charles £19 million a year but pays no capital gains or corporation tax itself. The aide who represented Charles at the committee insisted the estate is a "force for social good" and should not be counted as a corporation. Yet its properties include a distribution warehouse used by Waitrose. We can't help but agree with the MP on the committee who commented: "If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, and swims like a duck you sort of assume it's a duck."

Home alone

A record number of children may be left home alone this summer because of unaffordable childcare costs. The average cost of just one week's childcare during the summer holiday this year is expected to be £109.23. Many childcare centres have closed completely after local authority cuts. And youth services have been ravaged by austerity so parents with older children are likely to particularly struggle.

...& Us



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

@tweets this week

John McNally
Government claim #welfarecap will get people back into work is cynical lie: 500,000 jobs, 7 million on job market. Support not punishment. #alternative

NSSN

Solidarity with Greek workers on their 3rd general strike of the year, fighting huge job cuts, Britain needs to follow Greece #NSSN

Socialist Students

No surprise, latest poll shows most people don't trust a single word coming out of greedy greasy-palmed #politicians mouths - #TUSC



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Lecturers in Wales expose poor working conditions

Two education workers in Wales

A Welsh Further Education (FE) college has hit the local headlines because of a story about a lecturer who has to deliver pizzas to make ends meet.

This was one example provided by members of lecturers' union, UCU, from across Wales, to Assembly Members (AMs) when they attended an event hosted by Bethan Jenkins AM at the Senedd on 9 July.

But zero-hours contracts are not the only form of casualisation affecting education workers in Wales. Other measures include: temporary contracts which terminate before the summer vacation.

This means skilled lecturers looking for casual seasonal work in summer when they should be preparing course work for the following year. In some colleges these contracts are repeated year on year for four or five years, or more.

Variable contracts are another measure which greatly increases the employer's flexibility but make it extremely difficult for workers to plan financially. As the fraction of a full-time contract that you teach can be varied at short notice, it can make



UCU members in Wales are prepared to fight the cuts photo SP Wales

it almost impossible to take out a mortgage.

One lecturer had this to say: "I love my job, and the opportunity to help young people and adults alike work toward the life they have always wanted. But, I do the exact same job as people who earn three or four times more than me, and who get paid for

all the things I am expected to do for free, and sometimes it feels demoralising and belittling."

Use of agency workers is also widespread. Casualisation is an increasing problem for teaching and non-teaching staff organised in Unison. In addition, workers in services like catering, cleaning, grounds

maintenance, etc, have either seen their jobs outsourced or are under threat of it.

UCU were trying to convince Assembly Members to intervene to force colleges to end casualisation. But the Welsh Labour government is unlikely to be of much help.

They are currently bringing legislation that, as well as opening up colleges to the risk of privatisation, will increase the autonomy of colleges, narrowing the Welsh government's scope to intervene on issues relating to workers' terms and conditions.

Welsh Labour's recent record on casualisation is not good. Swansea council is planning to take away summer retainers for thousands of workers, including nursery nurses working in schools who stand to lose several weeks' pay. Labour-led Rhondda Cynon Taff is bringing in zero-hours contracts for existing homecare workers.

Welsh workers will have to rely on their own efforts and fight increasing casualisation with action through their unions. We also need politicians that will vote against cuts and casualisation - standing as many TUSC Wales candidates in the next elections to the Assembly and Welsh councils as we can.

Victory for teachers at UEL

The state has been withdrawing funds from higher education for over three decades. The cuts began in the 1980s with the new era of marketisation. One of the consequences of this has been a change in the structure of academic employment with increased casualisation of teaching.

Universities have discovered that PhD students are cheap, highly motivated and disposable labour. But they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. But PhD students at the University of East London (UEL) have fought off attempts to make them teach on low wages or even for free.

This particularly affected international students who receive a bursary to cover only the cost of their fees. They are tied into a contractual agreement with the university in which they undertake

this exploitative labour.

But a joint campaign was launched which won a major victory. Now all schools will be encouraged to employ postgraduate students. They must contract postgraduates as hourly paid lecturers, paying them for marking and preparation. Schools will also have to advertise such vacancies to their postgraduate students and postgraduates will undergo teacher training. Students on scholarships/studentships who are asked to teach will be paid.

But it's important that postgraduates who teach do not become complacent. It wasn't until 2000 that postgraduates employed by British universities became eligible for full membership of the University and College Union (UCU). So the fight for decent pay and working conditions must go on.

Equinox workers strike again

On 10 and 11 July, Unite members who are support workers at the Equinox housing charity in London took strike action. Workers who are helping some of the most vulnerable people in society are facing a 25% pay cut.

Equinox CEO Bill Puddicombe claims that these cuts are being made because the company hasn't got enough money. Yet much to the anger of workers at the charity, he will face no pay cut except the 'sacrifice' of his performance related bonus which amounts to 6% of his wages.

On the picket line workers held placards with an image depicting Puddicombe as a fat cat.

The Socialist spoke to one of the striking workers at the New Cross picket line. She said that what she wanted to see most was "management sitting round the table

and at least talking," and that she "didn't want to be on strike, I want to be working with the clients".

She also said the support from other union branches and the public was fantastic.

On the strike days only one person went into work and one refused to cross the picket line when he realised what was going on.

There was also an offer to help the Equinox workers deliver leaflets to houses in the area by a passer-by who was concerned about the effect that damages to the service would have on the local community.

At the moment the Equinox board is still refusing to negotiate. But Unite members at the charity are looking at how to step up the campaign with further strike action on the cards.

Paul Callanan

Fight Royal Mail privatisation!

Bankers' snouts in the trough

A Royal Mail worker

Some of the investment banks being used by the government for the privatisation of Royal Mail are the very banks that created the global financial meltdown. While millions are at the receiving end of austerity, these banks are in line for a big pay cheque of around £25 million as the Coalition rush through the stock market flotation of yet another public service.

Royal Mail bosses have been churning out the propaganda on why it needs "external investment", while at the same time ignoring the wishes of its workforce, the public and even their own managers - all of whom oppose privatisation. We all know that under private ownership, Royal Mail will be lining the pockets of institutional investors rather than

investing in a quality public service.

Having already sold his soul to the devil by getting into bed with the Tories, Business Secretary Vince Cable now seeks to divide the British public. He thinks they should choose which services are more worthy than others, saying: "The public will always want to invest in schools and hospitals ahead of Royal Mail."

Unlike the fat cats and big business who avoid paying their fair share of tax, the working class have seen their overall taxes rise at the same time as public services have been slashed. This government has no mandate to sell off our postal service and only an urgent all-out battle can stop it.

The CWU urgently needs to organise a nationwide demonstration against privatisation and link the pay dispute with other unions - calling for a 24-hour general strike.

Shareholders will come first

James Evans

Royal Mail is working very well under the capitalist economic system. The BBC has reported that: "There has been a strong recovery in profits over the past three years - from a loss of £165 million in 2011 to a profit of £324 million before tax last year."

We can attribute these profits to the huge increase in online shopping, and the 14p rise in the price of stamps in 2012.

What will this sell-off mean? It will not be the treasury that will see

that £324 million - which could be used to fund the building of much-needed social housing for one thing - but the shareholders alone.

As soon as we bring these people in to the equation, it means that everything revolves around them. Don't be surprised if mail takes longer to arrive, or if it costs more, because it will be them who matter, and not us.

My father was a postal worker for 40 years. He retired when the Travelling Post Office was closed down on the grounds of cost. If this privatisation is not stopped, we can expect to see many more cuts to our service in the near future.

Don't be surprised if mail takes longer to arrive, or if it costs more, because it will be them who matter, and not us.

In brief

Strike vote Scotland



Preparing for action photo Paul Mattsson

Unison members in Scotland are being balloted for strike action over pay. This is after a 1% pay offer was rejected. Unison has calculated that the value of staff pay has been cut by 10% over the last three years and basic living costs have dramatically risen. 75,000 workers in 32 councils are voting at the moment. The ballot closes on 13 August.

Hospital strike

Pathologists at hospitals in Leeds and Bradford were on strike on 16 July over staff shortages. Management is trying to impose new working patterns which the Unite members feel put staff and patient safety at risk. They also mean substantial pay cuts for some staff, in some cases as much as £20,000 a year.

Boris bike ballot



Workers voted decisively for action photo Alison Hill

Workers in the Serco Barclays cycle hire scheme in London have voted decisively for strike action and action short of a strike. This is because the company has imposed a 2% pay increase, new shift patterns and other detrimental changes to working conditions. At the moment the RMT members are operating an overtime ban in an attempt to bring the company to meaningful negotiations.

Portsmouth

Unite members at Portsmouth International Port have voted unanimously for industrial action over plans which could cut their pay by £1,300 a year. The Port is owned by Portsmouth city council. The management wants to reduce staff costs by 10% by cutting staffing levels. This will have a big impact on the efficiency of the Port, which provides important revenue for the city council as a whole.

Website

For more workplace and trade union news see: www.socialistparty.org.uk

Non-payment soars in Scotland Stop all bedroom tax evictions

Send us your bedroom tax stories to: editors@socialistparty.org.uk
Get in touch for campaign resources including leaflets and posters: info@socialistparty.org.uk
020 8988 8777

Matt Dobson
Socialist Party Scotland

The majority of Scottish councils have reported a significant increase in rent arrears since the bedroom tax - a housing benefit cut for under occupancy of 'spare bedrooms' - was introduced in April.

A CoSLA (the Scottish local authority umbrella body) survey shows widespread non-payment of the bedroom tax. Three quarters of councils reported rises in rent arrears. Four out of five local authorities report collecting 50% or less in rent due from tenants affected by the benefit cut, three in five report that they have collected as little as 40%.

CoSLA has stated that the bedroom tax will result in arrears of £25 million a year for local authorities. Non-payment of the bedroom tax in Dundee has already cost the council £250,000 since April, with arrears rising at £21,000 a week.

A June survey by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations showed similar increases in arrears. The Glasgow Evening Times reported that 101 out of 146 bedroom tax affected tenants at Blairtummock Housing Association (HA) in Easterhouse are in arrears.

The non-payment levels show that tenants cannot afford to pay, but also widespread defiance where there are strong local campaigns. The non-payment levels should also be seen in the context of local authorities and Housing Associations harassing tenants with letters threatening eviction.

In April and May, 22,000 local authority tenants in Scotland put in discretionary housing payment (DHP) applications (four times the number received in April/May 2012). But, according to the Public Finance website, CoSLA expects a maximum of 44% of applicants will get DHP, which is set at different levels depending on individual

circumstances and only lasts for six months. And with councils not having enough staff, DHP applications are taking weeks and months to be processed.

The CoSLA survey shows that £2 million of the £10 million DWP assistance fund has already been spent by councils in Scotland. Even when the £10 million is distributed it will only cover 15p in every £1 cut from the housing benefit of the 105,000 households affected in Scotland.

Pressure builds

Social landlords, SNP and Labour politicians are coming under huge pressure to take non-implementation measures and protect tenants.

The Scottish Anti-Bedroom Tax Federation has organised lively, well-attended lobbies and pickets. MSPs and councillors have found their surgeries and constituency offices becoming post boxes and burning sites for harassment letters.

The pressure has forced the SNP to refer the Govan Law Centre petition - calling on the Scottish government to amend the housing act to prevent evictions - to the Scottish Parliament Welfare Committee.

The Labour council in Renfrewshire has reclassified some of its stock as "one bedroom". Some HAs, including East Lothian, have decided to protect some of their tenants from the cost of the bedroom tax, although at the discretion of the management, a measure calculated to be a cheaper alternative to chasing rent arrears.

But these measures are not enough. Socialist Party Scotland calls on the SNP Scottish government to amend section 16 of the housing act to prevent evictions.

The SNP government should use the £179 million budget underspend and other reserves to protect tenants from the cost of the bedroom tax and fight for the money back from the Con-Dems in Westminster.

Councils and HAs should use



photo Jim Halfpenny

The bedroom tax has caused misery and sparked fury across Britain. Thousands have protested against people being forced out of their homes or robbed of 14% or 25% of their housing benefit by millionaire Con-Dem ministers, many of whom have spare houses, never mind spare bedrooms. But we can stop this attack! Twenty years ago a mass campaign defeated Thatcher's hated poll tax. Led by the Socialist Party's predecessor, Militant, a mass campaign of non-payment made the poll tax unviable. While the bedroom tax is different in many ways, one thing is clear - if we get organised we can defeat it.

- We demand:
- Scrap the bedroom tax and write off all the 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

their borrowing powers and reserves to protect tenants, increase funding for emergency payments and reclassify properties; they should campaign with tenants, trade unions and communities for

an end to cuts and increased funding for public services.

Socialist Party Scotland supports standing candidates that will refuse to make cuts. If Labour and SNP politicians won't fight the Con-

Dems, we need our own anti-cuts, trade union and socialist candidates that will.

Over the last few years we have worked with others to offer an electoral alternative by standing as part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, Scottish Anti-Cuts Coalition and Solidarity.

With the Miliband-led Labour Party pledging a Labour government will continue with the cuts, and the SNP doing the same in Scotland, it is clear we need to build a new mass workers' party. socialistpartyscotland.org.uk

Councils have a choice: Don't do the Con-Dems' dirty work!

On 27 June, the Camden New Journal published a letter from Labour councillor Theo Blackwell, the north London borough's cabinet member for finance, which claimed that demanding "no evictions" due to the bedroom was "irresponsible". John Reid, a Camden Socialist Party member, Camden RMT union activist, and a candidate for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, sent the following reply to the paper.

Theo Blackwell calls anti-bedroom tax campaigners "irresponsible" for our "no evictions" call. He accuses protesters of "being more interested in attacking Labour-led councils trying to help people rather than the government for measures that we, too, think are wrong".

The Tory-Lib Dem government is carrying out horrific austerity measures, on that we are agreed. The question here is, what do Labour councils do about it?

Policies such as Camden's are falling into the Con-Dems' trap to pursue "divide and rule" policies. The government is attempting to use the dire and worsening housing crisis as a means to play off one group against another.

In my view, Labour-led councils have a choice. They can pass on the government's attacks, no doubt feeling bad about it, and no doubt endeavouring to ameliorate the

cuts where they think they can. Or they can make a stand, and refuse to implement the cuts.

Blackwell says that it would be wrong to "protect people from one group over another". Of course the bedroom tax is only one of a whole range of attacks, albeit a particularly vicious one. However, the argument of the Socialist Party all along has been that councils should refuse to implement all the cuts, precisely so that they do not have to choose one group over another.

It is not good enough to assert that no one will be made homeless when Camden council is moving hundreds of families out of London. In a society in which the rich are getting richer while the poor are being penalised, in my view it is the job of Labour councillors to stand up against austerity. Refuse to make the cuts, use the council's reserves and borrowing powers to plug the gap, while you work with

the community and trade unions in our borough to build up a campaign to win the necessary funding from central government.

If Ed Miliband instructed his councillors to do this, and pledged that an incoming Labour government would underwrite council funding, the cuts would be finished in an instant. Unfortunately, I suspect Blackwell's reticence is in part because he knows the next Labour government intends to carry on the cuts.

If Labour councillors make a stand, we will back them all the way. But if they are not prepared to stand up for the people who elected them, they should step aside for others who are prepared to do the job. In 2014 trade unionists and campaigners across London will be standing as part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, to not just say 'no cuts', but to actually vote 'no cuts'.



The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is an electoral alliance that stands candidates against all cuts and privatisation. It involves the RMT transport workers' union, leading members of other trade unions including the PCS, NUT and POA, and socialist groups including the Socialist Party. (Also see page 8.) www.tusc.org.uk

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Extract from 'It doesn't have to be like this: women and the struggle for socialism' by Christine Thomas

Under capitalism the stereotypical representations of women which abound in the media, advertising and general culture have their roots in the rise of class society. The same is true of violence against women. Worldwide, women aged 15-44 are more likely to be maimed or die from violence at the hands of men than from cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or war combined. Even in the developed industrialised countries a quarter of women at some time in their lives will suffer from domestic violence.

Many reasons have been advanced in an effort to explain why this abuse still continues today at such a high level.

Some people blame economic problems such as unemployment and bad working conditions. But such a crude 'economic reductionist' explanation is completely inadequate. Domestic violence takes place across all social classes and is not just confined to the poor and the working class. Alcohol is also often cited as a cause.

However, while some perpetrators are abusive after drinking alcohol others are violent while completely sober. Alcohol, like unemployment, long working hours and the general pressures and strains of life in capitalist society can contribute to and trigger domestic abuse but they are not the underlying cause.

Women also suffer from stress. In fact, it could be argued that, as working class women usually have to juggle work and assume most of the responsibility of looking after children and the home, their lives are even more stressful than those of men. Sometimes women will themselves resort to violence within relationships but the overwhelming majority of domestic violence is perpetrated by men against women.

So why is it that men feel justified in using violence in situations where women normally do not? Male abusers often seek to justify their behaviour by blaming the women themselves; they provoked them by "nagging", by not getting a meal on the table in time, not keeping the house clean, or the children quiet.

As a consequence, many women who experience domestic violence, especially if the abuse continues over a period of years, come to believe incorrectly that the violence is their own fault. They may then try to modify their behaviour, to avoid anything which might 'provoke' the abuser, but the violence and abuse does not stop; in fact in many cases it escalates.

'In their place'

From the 'excuses' given by male perpetrators it is clear that traditional beliefs about the need for women to be loyal and obedient to their husbands, and men having the right to use fear and coercion to keep them 'in their place', still influence behaviour and attitudes today.

The hierarchical, patriarchal family based on male authority and control served the economic and social needs of the ruling slave-owning class in Roman times. And the family has continued as a social institution central to all class societies, although its form, of course, has not remained the same.

In the feudal societies of medi-



photo Paul Mattsson

eval Europe, for example, the family of the landowning aristocracy was organised differently to that of the peasant/serf household which was an economic unit at the centre of production of goods consumed by themselves and the Lord of the Manor. Feudal society was hierarchical with God at the top and the peasants/serfs at the bottom of the pile. Everyone knew their place in a rigid order based on obedience to authority and unequal rights and responsibilities.

Control

The patriarchal peasant family, with male authority sanctioned by the legal system and legitimised by God and King, both reflected and reinforced the hierarchy of society in general and functioned as a means of social control. The double oppression peasant women suffered was clearly reflected in the Lord's right to bed a bride on her wedding night.

For centuries men have been legally and morally obliged to control the behaviour of their wives. It was perfectly legitimate, in fact expected, that a husband would use physical coercion against a 'nagging' wife or one who failed to fulfil her 'wifely obligations'.

Laws that did exist were mainly concerned with setting limits on how far they could go. For example, the English saying "rule of thumb" is thought to stem from the fact that it used to be stipulated that the thickness of the stick used by a man to beat his wife could not be greater than his thumb.

In Britain in 1736, a dictum from Sir Matthew Hale, the head of the judiciary, stated that rape in marriage could not take place because "by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given herself in this kind to her husband which she cannot retract".

Such ideas became deeply embedded in society over centuries.



photo Suzanne Beishon

It was only in the early 1990s in Britain that the Law Commission declared marital rape illegal. Prior to that, the idea that women's bodies became the property of men on marriage still prevailed in law.

Although there has been a big shift in social attitudes in relation to domestic violence and rape over the last few decades, backward ideas still hold sway. There is still reluctance, for example, on the part of the criminal justice system to prosecute in cases of marital rape, and the courts often view it as less serious than rape by a stranger.

Capitalism itself is a hierarchical system, based on inequality and exploitation by a minority in society. The ruling capitalist class will resort to violence if necessary to maintain its rule - by the use of the police against striking workers and protesters, for example, or the armed forces in wars for profit and prestige.

The capitalist system of inequality, dominance and control, in which the family plays a crucial role, permeates the whole of society including personal relations, resting on and perpetuating backward ideas which originated in the early class societies thousands of years ago.

The Socialist Party's demands:

- An end to victim blaming! Decent education in schools, workplaces and trade unions about the myths and facts of rape

- Decent support - including legal, emotional and where necessary practical - for survivors of sexual assault, rape and domestic violence

- No to closure of domestic violence support services! Increase and improve the services to help those women affected by domestic violence

- A mass building programme of decent, affordable social housing to make sure women have somewhere to go should they choose to leave a violent relationship

- No cuts to legal aid. Increase threshold for legal aid so that all women can access it for divorce cases. No to enforced mediation

- The right for all women to have full control over when and whether they have children. Protect and improve abortion services

- A united mass campaign against all the cuts, including a 24-hour general strike

- A socialist alternative to class and sex inequality. Join the Socialist Party!

END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN!

A recent study by the World Health Organisation revealed that more than one in three women worldwide will experience physical or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime. 38% of women who are murdered are killed by their partner. Shocking figures like these, combined with a series of high profile cases and allegations of abuse, have meant that more people are questioning why violence against women exists and what can be done about it. Some of these issues are explored in the articles here.

Recommended reading from Socialist Books

It doesn't have to be like this: women and the struggle for socialism

Christine Thomas

What consequences will the economic crisis and its aftermath have for women? Will the important changes for women that have taken place unwind? Are inequality, discrimination and oppression inevitable in our lives?

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A brief history of the Campaign Against Domestic Violence



Marching in support of Sara Thornton photo Socialist Party

Heather Rawling

The Socialist Party and its predecessor, Militant, have a proud record of campaigning against domestic violence. It was Militant supporters who launched the Campaign Against Domestic Violence (CADV) in 1991.

Before this, very few victims knew about women's refuges or would speak up about abuse. We took what had been viewed as a personal, private matter, onto the political stage and into the trade unions. We followed in the footsteps of our grandmothers who had done the same with the campaign for free, safe and legal contraception.

CADV put domestic violence into the public domain. We raised it in our trade unions, organised conferences on it, wrote to newspapers, organised a national demonstration and then simultaneous protests outside prisons around the country to raise awareness on the need for legal change. The campaign received a lot of publicity and press attention.

Sara Thornton

CADV was begun in response to the plight of Sara Thornton. Sara was jailed for life in 1990. She had killed her violent, alcoholic husband. Eighteen months after beginning her jail sentence, Sara's appeal was turned down. On the same day, a man walked free, having killed his alcoholic wife. Sara began a hunger strike. Women were angry at the double standards meted out by the legal system. The CADV reflected their anger. The campaign's aims were:

- To increase awareness of domestic violence
- To improve facilities and services for women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence
- To campaign for legal change
- The recognition of domestic violence as a workplace issue

The campaign was largely successful. CADV forged links with Women's Aid and other women's groups. We did not want to cut across the sterling work done by

Women's Aid in providing a safe haven for women fleeing domestic violence. Rather we saw our role as political campaigners to win reforms.

In the course of the campaign we were able to discuss the role of capitalism in the oppression of women and explain the need to fight for socialism to transform the lives of women. We also linked this to immediate changes that were (and still are) necessary such as equal pay and a living wage.

In general, the police did not take domestic violence seriously. When a Civil and Public Services Association member (CPSA, now PCS) in Leicester phoned the police for help to protect her against her estranged partner, they did not even bother to attend. She was found murdered later that day. While there is still a huge mountain to climb, police response to domestic abuse cases in some areas has improved.

Legal change

We campaigned to change the law. Helena Kennedy QC in her book 'Eve was Framed' shows how UK laws have been framed by men over the centuries. The legal definitions of murder and manslaughter were written from a male perspective that does not recognise that men and women can respond to violence differently.

We worked with leading lawyers such as Helena Kennedy to change the law on provocation, which can be used to determine a verdict of murder or manslaughter. Murder convictions carry a statutory life sentence, and manslaughter does not. Prior to the campaign long-term abuse was not considered provocation.

Kiranjit Ahluwalia came to international attention after burning her husband to death in 1989 in response to ten years of the most appalling physical, sexual and emotional abuse, including having a hot iron held on her face. After initially being convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison, Kiranjit's conviction was later overturned on grounds of inadequate counsel and replaced with manslaughter.

Kate Keaveney stabbed and killed her husband after suffering seven

years of domestic violence and was sent to prison for life. The cases of Sara Thornton, Kiranjit Ahluwalia and Kate Keaveney, helped by the CADV and others, changed the definition of the word 'provocation' in cases of abused women.

Trade unions

We took the campaign into the trade union movement. A Militant supporter in Leicester spoke at the CPSA conference. She spoke of her personal experience of Militant supporters giving her practical support (a room in a house) and advice that enabled her to escape her violent partner. It was particularly poignant as a member of her trade union branch had been murdered by an estranged partner. The conference passed the resolution supporting the CADV.

With support from the CPSA and other unions the CADV was able to publish excellent material to take into the workplace and negotiate policies in relation to domestic violence that would look sympathetically on sick leave and requests for transfer, for example. Many employers and councils adopted these policies.

Reporting of domestic abuse went up. More women than ever were going out to work. Women in the workplace feel less isolated and have an independent income that makes them less dependent on a partner. Victims of abuse found strength from their workmates and became survivors of abuse.

Now, the reforms we won and the broad aims we achieved are under threat. Women's Aid has had its funding cut and more than 200 women seeking refuge are turned away each night. Women are bearing the brunt of job losses in the current recession, particularly because they make up the majority of public sector workers. The bedroom tax, changes in disability benefits and other cuts will hit women hard and increase the amount of unpaid care work they come under pressure to do.

As socialists we must campaign to reverse all the cuts and ensure domestic violence remains a political, trade union and workplace issue.

Bristol Pride: Opposing anti-LGBT bullying in schools

Sheila Caffrey
Bristol South Socialist Party

Bristol Pride was held on Saturday 13 July and had a very carnival feeling to it with music and drinking in the sunshine.

But that doesn't mean that people weren't up for serious political discussion. Socialist Party members set up a stall outside the entrance, campaigning against homophobic bullying in schools, and had an excellent response.

We raised questions such as: Why is 'gay' still one of the most popular insults in schools? Why is sexuality seen as an appropriate thing to comment on and bully about?

We then widened discussion onto other things in society, such as the horrendous and tragic death of a trans teacher this year who, although fully supported by children, parents and staff at her C of E school, was unmercifully bullied by national tabloids which led her to ending her life.

This led to discussing the recent stunting of Sex and Relationships education in schools and, although some local authorities provide good resources to support staff, many don't.



photo Bristol South Socialist Party

Moreover, with the recent academy and Free Schools agenda this has been withdrawn further, with many schools opting to just teach about marriage and heterosexual relationships.

Not only does this encourage homophobic ideas, it also leaves many pupils, at the most formative

years of their lives, isolated, vulnerable and without support.

The LGBT community must unite with other oppressed sections of society, as well as school staff trade unions, parents and anti-privatisation campaigners to fight for decent relationship education and adequate staffing in schools, as well as

wider in society to bring an end to homophobic prejudice.

A wide range of people were interested, from teachers and teenagers to those there to enjoy the music and celebrate!

Many provided contact details so we're hoping to follow up this campaign activity.

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Greens rejected in Brighton as TUSC vote increases

Jon Redford and Phil Clarke
Brighton Socialist Party

A week-long strike by GMB workers in the Cityclean depot was the background to a tightly fought Hanover and Elm Grove ward byelection. The bin workers are fighting pay cuts of up to £4,000 imposed by the Green council in Brighton.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) and Ukip were the only parties to increase their vote since the last election.

In a previously solid Green seat, the Labour Party narrowly won but both parties saw their support fall,

the Greens by over 1,000 votes.

Phil Clarke standing for TUSC gained 172 votes or 5%, an increase in both percentage and actual terms despite the reduced turnout. TUSC gained over three times the Liberal Democrat vote and came very close to the Tories and Ukip.

We waged a major campaign, passing out three leaflets to the entire ward and canvassing large areas. We were supported by the local RMT and FBU union branches, and Brighton, Hove and District trades council.

Time and again we encountered dissatisfaction with the Green Party, especially the Greens' failure to fight

cuts imposed by the government and the resulting bin strike.

We used the campaign to explain that a fighting strategy was needed to build a movement against the cuts, this message went down well. Many new supporters helped the TUSC campaign, and we had our best presence yet with window posters dotted across the ward.

Given the tightness of the Labour and Green results, trade unionists locally have already been commenting that it was a very creditable result and is a good base to continue to establish the idea of a new mass workers' party and a council with a real no-cuts policy.

Come to the 2013 Socialist Summer Camp!

At last a summer to remember! Well make this one even more memorable - come to the Socialist Party Summer Camp on Friday 23 to Monday 26 August. A new venue in Ware, Hertfordshire, awaits you with all the amenities of camp sites of old.

There will be discussions and debates every morning and evening, with plenty of time for relaxation and leisure/sporting activities in the afternoons. Activities available

include climbing wall, archery, zip line, paintball, golf and fishing.

Three meals a day will be cooked for you at very reasonable prices. There's the famous burger bar alongside the night time entertainment of the camp fire, the sing-song and the good company of comrades. There'll also be a quiz night and live music.

There'll be new marquees and new cooking equipment. As before there will be a crèche for young chil-

dren during discussions and a Red Flag Club for older children.

Just bring yourself, your family and friends; a tent, sleeping bag, plate, cup, bowl, knife, fork and spoon.

Costs (not including food): Waged adult £50; Unwaged £30; Family of 4: £100; Child over 4: £12.50; Deposit £20 per person.

For more information and a booking form ring 020 8988 8782 or email alisonhill@socialistparty.org.uk

Building the Socialist Party

Plymouth success

28 people attended Plymouth Socialist Party's public meeting on 9 July. Sarah Wrack from the Socialist editorial team spoke alongside local TUSC candidate Ryan Aldred and Sick Of Your Boss campaigner George Fidler. The fighting fund collection raised over £140.

Two donations of £20 each came from newer members - both struggling to make ends meet, but seeing the solution as backing the fight for socialism.

What a contrast to the debacle over Labour Party funding!

Alex Moore, Plymouth

Selling the Socialist

Nancy and Martin in Waltham Forest, east London, sold 14 copies of the Socialist one morning to people on their way to work. One person gave their contact details to find out more about joining the Socialist Party.

They also made sure they asked everyone if they could give the solidarity price of £2, to help raise fighting fund. Four people did so.

Funding the fightback

As well as asking for the solidarity price and organising campaign stalls during the summer, Socialist Party members and branches should think about taking advantage of the sunny weather to raise fighting fund. Can you plan a fundraising barbecue or summer social? Or how about a picnic, football tournament, sponsored run, cycle or swim?

Summer schedule

The current issue of the Socialist is the first of three fortnightly issues:

Issue 774, 18-31 July

Issue 775, 1-14 August

Issue 776, 15-28 August

The weekly schedule will be resumed from issue 777 (29 August-4 September).

The fortnightly schedule allows members of the editorial staff to attend the CWI Summer School and also take some holiday! In the meantime, with workers' struggles, anti-bedroom tax campaigns and other protests against austerity continuing, we recommend you keep a close eye on the Socialist Party website:

www.socialistparty.org.uk

You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@Socialist_Party and @Socialistpaper).

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SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

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South East	750	126		
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Northern	600	41		
Wales	2,300	157		
Eastern	1,200	71		
Southern	1,200	45		
Yorkshire	2,900	97		
West Midlands	2,100	61		
East Midlands	1,600	27		
London	6,100	98		
England & Wales	3,650	20		
TOTAL	25,000	1,119		

USA: Zimmerman, Trayvon and racism

It's the system that's guilty!

"The bottom line is that if Trayvon Martin had been white, he would still be alive today," said an angry demonstrator at one of the numerous nationwide protests in the USA against his killer's 'not guilty' trial verdict.

The trial of George Zimmerman, the self-proclaimed vigilante who killed 17 year-old African-American Trayvon Martin on 26 February 2012, was the most anticipated trial and verdict since the Rodney King police beating trial over 20 years ago. The not guilty verdict underlined the fact that racism and inequality in capitalist society is entrenched in the criminal justice system. The following is based on a leaflet and article by US supporters of the CWI and gives the background to the trial and its likely repercussions.

How many more Trayvons will be killed and how many more Zimmermans will walk free before something is done?

A black man is killed every 28 hours in the US by a cop or a vigilante. One thing is certain beyond a shadow of a doubt; the working class and poor can have no faith in the courts or the American justice system as a whole. Only we have the power to change anything.

Since its inception, American capitalism has bred racism. It's an important tool for big business to divide and conquer working people, fostering a cancerous inferiority complex within communities of colour and acceptance for the use of state-sponsored and extrajudicial violence against the so-called "other".

In fact, the only reason Zimmerman was even brought to trial was because of the mass outcry and protests last year when the news spread about Trayvon's killing. We must now turn the mass outrage over the verdict into mass action. The time has come to build a new social movement which challenges the entrenched racism and inequality of our society.

Trayvon was killed not once but twice, first by Zimmerman and then by his trial. This time it was character assassination, where reality was flipped on its head making Trayvon the aggressor and Zimmerman the victim. The trial tapped into the racial prejudice of African-American "criminality" perpetuated by the mass media since the time of slavery and Jim Crow [racial discriminatory laws].

Recent events further emphasise this. This May, in the Bronx, the judge in the Ramarley Graham case

dismissed the charges against NYPD cop Richard Haste. Yet 18-year-old Ramarley was shot by the NYPD cop in his grandmother's bathroom, and he was unarmed. It was alleged he was attempting to dump marijuana down the toilet, yet no drugs were found. The judge decided to toss out the indictment against Richard Haste due to an "accidental" mistake by the assistant district attorney on the case when presenting the charges against Haste to the grand jury.

Also, there is the more recent case of Marissa Alexander, an African-American mother in Florida who had given birth nine days earlier. Like Zimmerman she also used the "Stand Your Ground" plea after she was attacked by her husband, who she charged with physical abuse. Marissa fired a warning shot from a licensed and registered gun in her name, injuring no one. Unlike Zimmerman, who walked free, Marissa was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Divide and rule

The systematically cultivated image of black people in America, maintaining the fear and mistrust and the negative stereotypes, is necessary for this oppressive system to exist. It prevents ordinary people of all races from putting aside their differences and turning their fire towards Wall Street, corporate politicians and the ruling elite as a whole. They are the worst criminals of our society who run free, amassing unimaginable wealth by exploiting the rest of us and maintaining their power by dividing us.

This is why Malcolm X said, "you can't have capitalism without racism." It's a divide and rule strategy the elite must use so that we blame



An immediate protest against the Zimmerman trial verdict in Harlem, New York City

each other instead of them. Racism has been built into the very fabric of American capitalism. If we want to fight racism we have to take on the whole system!

Hanging over this verdict are the haunting shadows of the 1992 Los Angeles riots and the 2001 Cincinnati riots (after Timothy Thomas, a 19-year-old black male, was shot dead by Steven Roach, a white police officer).

But such explosive events only give big business and their police, prisons, and surveillance apparatus the license to go on the offensive against workers and youth, particularly youth of colour. What really strikes fear in the ruling elite is not a riot, but a strong movement of working people with bold demands, mass organisations, and a fighting leadership.

The question that stands before our communities is: will we see a replay of the events in LA or Cincinnati, or can we redirect this justifiable anger into a powerful movement for liberation? We must keep in mind the death of Emmett Till in 1955 that became the inspiration of

the civil rights movement.

This August marks the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where civil rights leader Martin Luther King made his famous speech demanding racial equality. Now is the time to construct independent community organisations that will fight back against racial and class oppression, organising block by block, school by school, city by city, uniting across the whole country.

We must make Trayvon our rallying cry today to rise up for justice and equality with the aim of dismantling the entire system of American capitalism and racism, and fighting for a socialist future based on freedom, equality and the general welfare of society as a whole.

A programme to end police violence, extrajudicial violence, and racism

- Repeal the racist "Stand Your Ground" laws.
- End the racist war on drugs. Release from prison all those convicted of minor drug offences.
- End police violence, racial profiling, and other racist practices

such as "Stop and Frisk."

- Create democratically elected community review boards with full power to oversee law enforcement and public safety, with the right to recall officials.
- Invest in youth recreational and community centres, job training, and living-wage jobs, not prisons or detention centres!
- End mass unemployment, poverty, and inequality, which are the basis of most crimes, by creating living-wage jobs for all through a massive public works programme and fully funding education, health care, and social services.
- No faith in the Democratic Party which has done little to nothing to challenge the status quo of inequality and racism in America. Working people need to build a political voice independent of big business and its two political parties.
- Build a movement to challenge capitalism, which relies on inequality and racism. Fight for a socialist future based on freedom, equality and the general welfare of society as a whole.

'Black July' - Sri Lanka 1983 and the beginning of civil war

This month marks the anniversary of the 1983 'Black July' anti-Tamil pogroms in Sri Lanka organised by the United National Party (UNP) government of president JR Jayewardene.

Up to 3,000 people were killed in a single day. Thousands of homes were damaged and destroyed as were many workplaces. Over 150,000 people lost their jobs and over 100,000 made refugees.

The pogroms followed the UNP's brutal suppression of the 1980 general strike - a key turning point in Sri Lanka's modern history. A deeply unpopular government unleashed Sinhala nationalism to undermine any resistance to its neoliberal policies.

The defeat of the strike, which weakened the trade union and workers' movements, meant

that the government now had no opposition.

The 1983 pogrom was not however an ethnic riot where Sinhala

The pogroms followed the UNP's brutal suppression of the 1980 general strike - a key turning point in Sri Lanka's modern history

masses spontaneously attacked Tamil minorities. It was an attack organised by the capitalist ruling class. The killings also ensured that the Tamil armed struggle got mas-

sive support from Tamils.

An ensuing civil war culminated in May 2009 when the Sinhala chauvinist regime of President Mahinda Rajapaksa brutally crushed the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) separatists. An estimated 40,000+ Tamils were massacred in the closing stages of the war and the Tamil-speaking areas of Sri Lanka are now under military occupation by government forces.

There have also been assassinations of government opponents and attacks on democratic rights aimed at stopping any resistance. None of this has deterred David Cameron who plans to attend the Commonwealth heads of government meeting there in the autumn, lending legitimacy to this murderous regime.

Nonetheless there is growing anger of working class and oppressed people at the regime's

policies, including a one-day general strike on 21 May 2013 organised by trade unions against a huge hike in electricity tariffs. In fact the 21 May strike, although not a complete success, was the

first national strike since 1980. It represents the beginning of a new era for the Sri Lankan working class.

● For further reading on 'Black July' and campaigns see www.tamilsolidarity.org

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

Theatre review

“We will be free!” - the story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs

Neil Gore of Townsend Productions theatre company both wrote and acts in “We Will Be Free! - the story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs.” Neil spoke to Steve Bell.

“**O**ur play, set in 1834, follows George and Betsy Loveless’ extraordinary story. He was a Methodist minister and leader of the six Dorset farm labourers tried, convicted and condemned to harsh transportation to Australia by an oppressive government.

Few ever returned, given the difficult journey and the slave conditions involved. All this was just for having the temerity to swear a secret oath and form a secret union to fight against a succession of wage cuts inflicted by the local landowner.

As this story that defined the emergence of trade unionism and Chartism is unravelled, we see how the arch tyrant-in-chief James Frampton, local squire and magistrate, springs the trap.

We see how Home Secretary Lord Melbourne delights in ordering dodgy legal proceedings; how labourer Edward Legg betrays the Martyrs; and how the judiciary revel in using his evidence to condemn the Martyrs to imprisonment and transportation to Australia.

We see their families’ anguish, the subsequent howl of protest and the battle for their reprieve. Betsy becomes politicised and joins the fight to bring back her husband and participates in the beginnings of the fledgling labour movement.

Turning this epic story into a successful play performed by two peo-

ple was immensely challenging and very rewarding. As in our first production of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, we use many different theatrical devices to keep the audience on their toes.

Being a two-hander has given us the flexibility to reach a huge audience cross-section by playing vastly different venues, from major regional main-house theatres to arts centres, village halls and community centres, labour and working men’s clubs.

Building on Townsend Productions’ entertaining theatrical style, packed with surprises, that was developed through our production of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, we tell this vital story using live music, powerful songs of the time with political cartoon, animation and puppetry.

The actors will play all the characters. They perform at breakneck pace to present this story that raises questions about present day political issues through the experiences of the past.

The play is a reminder of the key issues faced by the labour movement today: increased casualisation of the workforce, diminishing rights at work, individual contracts that ignore pensions and overtime, frozen or reduced wages, cuts to public services, wilful destruction of the welfare system and the hopelessness of poverty.

The union Unite is raising awareness of these issues using education and theatre as a means of stirring people into action and challenging the inequalities workers face, particularly agricultural workers now that the Agricultural Workers Board, that monitored and set wages and working conditions for farmworkers, has recently been abolished by the Con-Dem coalition.

The play is a reminder of times when people, joining together to argue their cause for equality and justice, had a tremendous impact despite not having the vote in a democratic election.

It reveals the beginnings of politicisation of the mass of working people, rights that were fought for, and that we should make sure we do not lose.

The Tolpuddle Martyrs’ story is important for the trade union movement and most unions have offered their support through small donations. We will perform the show at some union conferences, at this year’s TUC conference and the prestigious Tolpuddle Festival.

The play is aimed really at anybody interested in politics or social history, or anybody who loves theatre, as it is a very theatrical storytelling experience. We try to make the show as accessible as possible to all, so really there is something in it for everyone.”

Play previewed on Saturday 20 July, only available as part of the ticket for the Tolpuddle Festival. For other venues see: townsendproductions.org.uk



A recent commemorative Tolpuddle Martyrs march photo RE

Who are the real criminals?

Mike Whale

Desperate poverty drives some people to desperate acts. The Hull Daily Mail reports that 40% more people seem to be stealing food for personal consumption in Hull than last year.

The police believe this is directly linked to the fact that more and more people cannot afford to pay for life’s essentials. As the bedroom tax, council and benefit cuts bite, more and more will be pushed towards tough decisions – “Do I pay my rent and bills or feed my family?”

The article says austerity is the cause of increased food shoplifting but sees the main victims of crime as the small businesses being robbed. In a time of austerity most small shopkeepers are squeezed by the giant corporations who can afford to undercut them and by sections of the working class who cannot afford to use their shops.

Austerity hits sections of the middle class badly – see how many independent shops have gone broke. Local butchers, bakers and green-grocers went bust and were replaced on the high street by pawnshops and payday loan sharks.

A determined working class fight-back against austerity would draw in support from large layers of the middle class including small shopkeepers.

Tory media cry crocodile tears for



Bedroom tax, council and benefit cuts are increasing poverty photo Lash

the poor. The Hull Daily Mail’s scandalous ‘solution’ was to name and shame six local offenders caught stealing food. We do not support theft as an answer to poverty. But who are the real criminals here?

Is it the mother who has just had her benefit cut through bedroom tax who steals baked beans worth a

few pence to feed her children. Or fat cat businessmen who legally rob millions of pounds a year through exploiting tax loopholes?

The real criminals are the ruling class who run a capitalist system which robs the poor to give to the rich. Join the Socialist Party and fight for a socialist society.

Lincolnshire - save our libraries

Nick Parker

Legendary US broadcaster Walter Cronkite once said that “whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation”. Sadly, Lincolnshire county council doesn’t share Cronkite’s philosophy.

Since May’s elections, a new coalition of Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and ‘independents’ announced plans to either close or dramatically cut huge swathes of our public library services across Lincolnshire.

Libraries give society huge benefits - giving people from all walks of life the chance to educate themselves. They open doors to a world of culture that would otherwise be closed to many. They are a source of valuable information and give citizens access to knowledge to hold those in authority to account.

Some Lincolnshire public services such as DVLA and HMRC offices are being withdrawn under the pretext that people are accessing services online instead of face-to-face. Closure of their local library would cut access to free internet for many people.

Libraries are also one of the last venues with space for local community groups to meet together. Funding cuts caused many community centres to close in recent years.

The council say the current library service is “inefficient” and proposed closures would save the county council £2 million. But such savings are dwarfed by the billions of bonuses paid out yearly by City of London banks and financial companies.

Public spending only leapt considerably in 2008 when several major banks had to be bailed out after their insatiable hunger for ever-increasing profits caused a crash. Instead the government’s austerity programme wants to roll back the remaining social gains of working class people. The NHS, comprehensive education, a public library service, all won through working class people’s tireless campaigning, are under threat.

We need to fight these cuts with a mass campaign rooted in the communities working alongside our redundancy-threatened library staff to defend the services they deliver as professionals, and oppose their replacement with volunteers.

G4S tagging scandal: another failure of privatisation

Eric Segal

The 1842 book by Russian author Nikolai Gogol, 'Dead Souls,' tells the tale of a con man who sets out to trick increasingly impoverished Russian aristocratic landowners into selling him dead serfs, or 'souls' whose names still appeared on the census list. You'd be forgiven for thinking this sounds remarkably similar to the developing G4S and Serco scandal.

It has been revealed that successive governments were potentially charged for tagging criminals who were imprisoned, had finished their sentence or had died.

Sell-off

Successive governments have handed public services, including parts of local authority services, police and justice, health and welfare and defence, over to their mates in multinational companies such as Mitie, Capita, G4S, Circle, Atos and Serco in huge contracts worth billions of pounds, accounting for around 6% of gross domestic product and employing 1.2 million people.

This represents a huge shift from state-run public services for the community and has been ac-

companied by an increased use of zero-hour contracts, low pay and worsening terms and conditions for workers thus creating huge profits for the bosses in the private sector.

The privatisation of public services has been a major disaster for the victims of this lust for profits, young and old, the poor (working or otherwise), disabled, sick, and the vulnerable.

For example the Serco-run out of hours GP service in Cornwall left one in five of its calls abandoned, the G4S Olympics security debacle, the recent inquest decision that an Angolan asylum seeker had been unlawfully killed by G4S guards and the ongoing chaos of the Atos disability benefits assessments.

Overcharging

The latest scandal is over whether G4S and Serco have overcharged in contracts to run the electronic 'tagging' of criminals as far back as 1999, when tagging began in England and Wales. Since then the taxpayer has spent £1 billion on tagging and monitoring offenders.

In some cases it appears that incompetent and unaccountable private contractors charged the government years after tagging had stopped and some cases included



It appears the government was charged years after tagging had stopped in some cases

being charged for tagging dead people. Serco has agreed to allow an investigation of its tagging operation but G4S has refused to cooperate and so has been referred to the serious fraud office.

How can Labour offer no opposition other than a weak call from the shadow justice secretary, Sadiq Khan, calling for an inquiry? Calls

for further investigation must be linked to a call for an end to the privatisation of all public services through generalised action from the leaders of the trade unions who represent workers in outsourced public services.

The bosses of these companies must be charged with fraud. The forensic audits of Serco and G4S

contracts must be opened up to public scrutiny and their contracts returned to the public sector but under democratic working class control and management. This scandal must herald the end of the privatisation of our public services as did Gogol's book herald the beginning of the end of serfdom in pre-revolutionary Russia.

'Sick Of Your Boss?' week of action reports

8-14 July was a week of action for Youth Fight for Jobs' new Sick Of Your Boss initiative which aims to organise young workers to fight back against underemployment. Here is a sample of what took place around the country. See youthfightforjobs.com for more.

Wales

Young workers, students and unemployed people joined the week of action in Wales, and focused on zero-hour contracts, one of the worst examples of the bosses' bullying and exploitative practices.

We held a public meeting during the week where union activists and young workers interested in the campaign shared horror stories of their workplaces and strategies for getting organised and fighting back.

The meeting and the campaign raised many issues from workfare to proper tea and lunch breaks. Youth Fight for Jobs Wales has a major role to play in organising working class young people to fight against all attacks.

Campaigners heard shocking stories during the week including one worker on a zero-hour contract who had to survive on just £20 the previous week. A KFC worker complained about "a culture of sexism and sexual harassment from the bosses".

We point out that the bosses need us but we don't need them - there was big support for this idea. An organised workplace can win massive concessions from companies, and Youth Fight for Jobs will fight shoulder to shoulder with those who are sick of their boss.

Steffan Bateman

London

In London the week of action has been a great success and trade union branches from around the city have signed up to support the campaign. There were two meetings - one about American fast food workers and how they organised, and one about the garment factory disaster in Bangladesh which discussed the role local trade unionists can play in supporting strikes and workers' organisations in Bangladesh.

But the best thing about this week has been the number of campaigners who have joined the leafleting teams going around the city.

On a protest in Leytonstone, east London we met a young guy doing work experience at Primark who was keen to get involved, in Tottenham it was security guards and employees at Homebase who wanted to know what to do next, in Footlocker in Westfield the staff talked about holding a protest there.

Now to keep up the momentum campaigners are organising to go to every shopping centre in London over the summer to talk to staff about the campaign.

Helen Pattison

Lincoln

On 8 July, Lincoln Youth Fight for Jobs held a rally at Primark on Lincoln High Street as part of the Sick Of Your Boss week of action.

We spoke to passers-by and workers in Primark, with many of them sympathising with our demands and providing first hand evidence of the gross exploitation that Primark exercises on a day-to-day basis.

One worker said he feels too intimidated to ask for his legally entitled break - he works an eleven-hour shift nonstop. He fears that if he fights back, fights for decent, legal working conditions, he will be given no hours of work and risks not paying his rent. It is shocking to hear that in this country, the seventh richest



The week of action particularly targeted Primark, such as with this protest in Leytonstone photo Nancy Taaffe

in the world, young workers feel disempowered at the hands of large capitalist corporations like Primark.

While handing out flyers near the entrance, the Primark management sent security to ask us to move. But we refused, because we know that it is our democratic right to raise these issues. This also showed the degree to which management fears workers waking up to their harsh reality and getting active. And that is why Sick Of Your Boss is so important.

That brilliant moment, when a young worker realises what's happening, and commits to fight back, is what makes this campaign so important.

Luke Gregory-Jones

Coventry and Warwickshire

Coventry Youth Fight for Jobs gave out thousands of leaflets at the Godiva festival, attended by about 150,000 people. Three people came to their first public meeting about day-to-day issues

in the workplace and workers fighting back internationally. We also did some leafleting of staff in shops in Coventry, Nuneaton and Kenilworth.

Lenny Shail

Tottenham, north London

On the Friday of the week of action, another Youth Fight for Jobs activist and I went to Tottenham Hale retail park to give leaflets to all the staff working in the shops.

I hadn't done this type of leafleting before and was quite nervous as I didn't know the reactions we'd get. I was worried that all the workers in the retail park would love their boss.

I was dreadfully wrong in this assumption. Many people we gave the leaflets to wanted to stop work for a few minutes and talk about the campaign. We were asked what unions are and how they can help in the workplace, and many listed their complaints about their employers -

bullying, messed about with hours and even unfair dismissal were all on the list. We finished the whole retail park in an hour and had made some very good progress on getting people interested in the campaign.

Julian Moore-Cook

Day-Mer festival

Turkish music, political speeches and incandescent heat - Day-Mer's (Turkish and Kurdish community organisation with strong links to Youth Fight for Jobs) 24th Culture and Arts Festival on Sunday 7 July pulled no punches. The Sick Of Your Boss initiative had a great day out, with a campaign stall next to the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition and a stack of literature.

But for many young workers, this was no day off, as one angry young maths graduate explained. His job? Handing out pens and pamphlets for a local optician. And the kebabs were first-class!

James Ivens

NO FIRE CUTS

UNITED ACTION AGAINST AUSTERITY

Paula Mitchell
London Socialist Party

We don't want cuts - 94% of the public oppose fire cuts in London - and yet the majority of the cuts are to go ahead! These are being piled on to the rest of the Con-Dems' attacks on the working class - health, education, in fact every service which workers rely on, is under attack or being privatised. On top of that, wages, pensions and other benefits are being ruthlessly cut, as the Con-Dems try to make us pay for their crisis.

The FBU firefighters' union has won a reprieve for two of the 12 fire stations in London that Tory Mayor Boris Johnson wanted to close. This was the result of months of community campaigning and an overwhelming vote in the public consultation,

However, ten stations remain under threat of closure. Fourteen engines out of the 18 originally threatened are still to go. Job cuts have actually increased, from 520 to 560!

Outside London, massive cuts have been announced in Devon and

Somerset. The cuts involve a loss of 149 frontline posts and downgrading full-time cover at many stations.

These cuts are at the same time as the importance of proper fire cover has been underlined by a tower block fire in east London and the death of a firefighter in Manchester.

Paul Neale, London FBU southwest area organiser, told the Socialist: "It's just unbelievable that these savage cuts are still going ahead. All the evidence from meetings shows the public are opposed to them. We have to keep on with our campaign which, with public support, shows these cuts can be stopped."

The Socialist Party gives our full support to the FBU's campaign. The FBU in London has rightly striven to win public support with leafletting, local public meetings and local demos. They have raised the idea of occupying stations if the cuts go ahead.

We argue that the greatest strength

firefighters have, alongside communities, is their own strength as organised workers, and that their strategy to fight cuts and closures should include the threat of strike action.

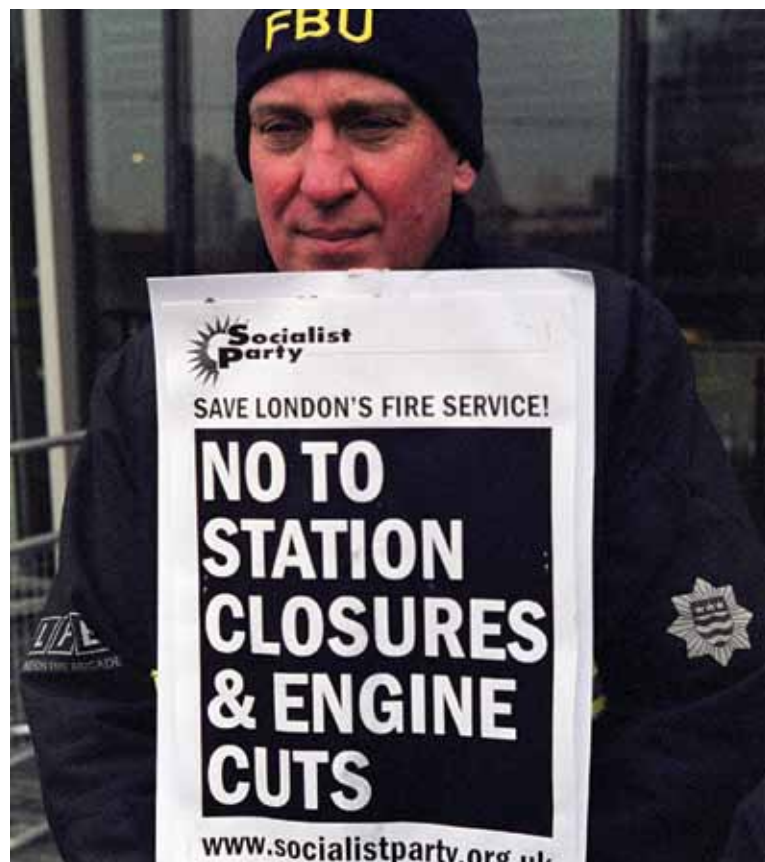
This would be very popular among workers sick of facing attack after attack.

Nationally the FBU have announced a ballot on strike action over an 'unworkable' pension scheme proposal that could lead to thousands facing the sack as they get older. Firefighters who retire or are forced out of work at age 55 will lose around 50% of their pensions.

As Paul Neale explained: "All unions should be coordinating, it's time for all of us to fight and have an all-out strike. We have to show our strength and that we will stand up and fight for all of us. We cannot allow those responsible to just keep on making vast sums of money whilst we suffer."

"Let's show our strength and together halt these attacks on us, we need a general strike now."

**Demonstrate:
Assemble: 11.30am,
Thursday 18 July 2013,
The Monument, Fish Street
Hill, London EC3R 6DB.
Near Monument tube
station, City of
London**



Action will probably be needed to fight cuts photo Paul Mattsson

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!