

35%
for socialist
candidate in
Seattle primaries
see page 9

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Ian Pattison
Youth Fight for Jobs

Zero-hour contracts have hit the headlines with a bang. One million workers – more than four times as many as previously thought – are on zero-hour contracts. For those unlucky enough to be counted in this statistic, there are no guaranteed hours, no guaranteed work, and no guaranteed pay.

You can be called up by your boss at a moment's notice and expected to be in work. Boots, one of the many high street chains using zero-hour contracts, had the cheek to tell staff with no guaranteed hours that they may be asked to work abroad!

Zero-hour contracts make it impossible for us to plan our lives. You don't know one week to the next how much work you will have, how much you will get paid, whether you'll have any work at all. 14% of people on zero-hour contracts say they do not earn enough to live.

Race to the bottom

Zero-hour contracts aren't just a nightmare for the workers suffering under them – they are part to the race to the bottom, driving down pay, terms and conditions of all workers. You can't get any lower than zero-hours!

We're returning to the dark days when dockers and other workers would face the humiliation and

uncertainty of lining up before a potential day's shift, hoping to be picked for work by the boss.

Almost three million workers are out of work in Britain (one million of them aged 16 to 24). But this latest scandal proves that the real unemployment figure is a lot higher.

In the 1980s, the Tories changed the way unemployment was measured 20 times to disguise the true cost of Thatcher's vicious policies. Today, companies' use of zero-hour contracts allows the government to claim many more people are employed than have the security that used to come with having a job.

Under pressure, big business politicians like Nick Clegg, Vince Cable, and various Labour Party figures have joined the chorus criticis-

ing zero-hour contracts. But what sets Youth Fight for Jobs apart is that we have a real strategy for action to make zero-hour contracts a thing of the past. If the trade unions organised zero-hour contract staff, including through strike action, we could have a united fight to win decent contracts, with guaranteed hours, on a living wage for all.

24-hour general strike

Youth Fight for Jobs is joining the National Shop Stewards Network lobby of the TUC on Sunday 8 September in Bournemouth to call on the trade unions to name the day for a 24-hour general strike to stop austerity.

A 24-hour general strike could

unite all workers against the Con-Dem cuts. It could inspire even currently non-unionised, zero-hour contract staff at Sports Direct and other companies to fight back too.

The demands of such general action should include a decent job with a proper contract for all those able to work. This would win overwhelming support from ordinary working-class people, who don't want to see another 'lost generation' thrown on the scrapheap.

See pages 6 and 7 for more on zero-hour contracts

For more details on the NSSN lobby of the TUC see shopstewards.net or email info@shopstewards.net



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A tale of two Britains

For a tiny few at the top Britain is really booming. When the Sunday Times first published its Rich List in 1989, the combined wealth of Britain's 200 richest people was £38 billion (£80 billion today). By 2013 it had increased to £318.2 billion.

For the rest of us life in Britain is very different. Real wages have fallen further than almost any other country in Europe - at least 6% since 2010. Only the devastated economies of Greece and Portugal, alongside the Netherlands, have suffered a greater fall.

But this only tells part of the story. Unemployment and underemployment have left millions unable to earn enough to make ends meet. 1.45 million people work part-time but want a full-time job. Many work just a few hours a week. In addition there are a million on zero-hour contracts who do not know - from one week to the next - how many hours work they will get.

As Larry Elliott pointed out in the Guardian (4 August), "this is a new incarnation of "the reserve army of labour" described by Marx 150 years ago". Just as Marx described, the bosses are attempting to increase their profits by driving down the share taken by the working class. The threat of unemployment, and the desperation of the unemployed and underemployed, is used to frighten workers

into putting up with low pay, little or no employment rights, and insecure jobs.

Larry Elliott correctly says that: "These were the sorts of labour market practices that gave rise to trade unions in the first place. Back then they had a name: exploitation." The name remains the same today. The general trade unions in Britain were forged at the end of the 19th century when - in mighty struggles - the predominantly young unskilled working class on the docks, in the gasworks and match factories, got organised and fought back.

Unity is strength

The ground is being prepared for a similar uprising today: it is urgently needed. Retail workers, caterers and cleaners will be central in the coming struggles, alongside traditionally organised industries.

The millions of workers that took part in the nineteenth century strikes - called 'new unionism' - understood that unity is strength. Bosses know that, as long as the working class remains divided, they can get away with intensifying exploitation.

In one of countless examples, Labour's Chris Bryant has highlighted how Tesco moved one of its giant distribution centres in Essex and told existing staff they could only

work at the new centre if they accepted a pay cut. Under pressure from Tesco Bryant seems to have retreated from this claim; but even the local Tory MP confirmed that Tesco workers at the centre faced a 'choice' between redundancy and a pay cut of up to £10,000 a year. Bryant has pointed out that some of the staff in the new distribution centre are from Eastern Europe; brought over by Tesco.

This is a deliberate strategy by Tesco - which made over £3.5 billion in profits last year - to drive down wages via 'divide and rule' - throwing existing workers on the scrapheap because they won't accept massive pay cuts.

This is a global phenomenon, big business are maximising their profits by driving down wages. Production is moved to countries with cheaper labour or workers are moved in the hope they will accept lower pay and conditions than the existing workforce. This is the 'race to the bottom' which can only be bad for the working class worldwide.

As long as we have capitalism, driven only by the need to maximise profits, the bosses will use every means possible to increase exploitation. The solution is a democratic socialist society, where the major companies are brought into democratic public ownership in order to plan the economy for the benefit of society as a whole.

But Bryant's Labour which, in power, kept

all the Tory anti-trade union laws, says not a word on the need for a fighting trade union movement to defend workers' rights. Labour's position differs little from that of 19th century Liberals who spoke platitudes about 'exploitation' while in reality backing big business. That is why a new mass party of the working class is needed.

A clear warning

Meanwhile workers can still fight back against exploitation under capitalism. There is an urgent need for the trade union movement in Britain, and indeed worldwide, to organise a huge campaign in defence of pay and conditions.

In 2009 workers at Lindsey oil refinery successfully stopped the bosses from using workers from Italy to undercut their pay and conditions, by winning the rate for the job for all workers, British and Italian.

The trade unions nationally need to urgently launch a serious campaign of action to demand a living wage and secure contract for every worker, whether they are young or old, black or white, or originate from Eastern Europe or Essex. This would sound a clear warning to the government and big business, that workers in Britain are no longer prepared to accept being trampled into the dirt.

SAVE OUR NHS!

Hunt attacks NHS staff and patients...

Jackie Grunsell

Patient groups and health workers' organisations are shocked by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt's recent statement that to set minimum staffing levels for hospitals would be 'artificial' and may jeopardise the need to 'protect NHS budgets'.

We are now seven months on from the Francis report, the independent review into high death rates at the Mid Staffordshire Foundation NHS trust. In it QC Robert Francis drew the conclusion that chronic staffing shortages had contributed to problems at the trust. So he called for the setting of minimum legal staffing levels, among other recommendations.

Increase staffing levels

Since then we've had two more reports on quality and safety in the NHS. Firstly the review by Bruce Keogh into practices at 14 more trusts where there were concerns. This review's findings showed that insufficient nursing staff levels or an inadequate 'skill mix' was a factor in causing poor quality of care in some of the trusts.

Now the Berwick report backs recommendations to improve staff numbers. Berwick suggests that

NICE (the National Institute for Clinical Excellence) develops a formula to calculate safe staff-to-patient ratios on a ward by ward basis.

Increases to staffing levels are supported by health workers. As the British Medical Journal reported, nurses say they feel forced to 'ration' care due to overwhelming pressures on their time. The Royal College of Nursing says: "Poor care needs to be prevented by making sure wards are well staffed. It must not be used as an early warning sign".

Bureaucracy?

It seems even the 'late warning signs' of high death rates, malnourished patients left in soiled beds and worsening pressure sores aren't enough for Jeremy Hunt. Of course to admit that staffing levels urgently need increasing would be to admit the Coalition government's attacks on the health service have been and still are wrong.

Since the Con-Dems came to power almost 5,000 nursing jobs have been lost in the NHS. There are plans for a further 4% cut between 2014 and 2016. Hunt would have to admit that his government's underfunding of the NHS means hospitals use lower paid and less well or untrained health care assistants to do the jobs of nurses or even doctors in



On the march to save Lewisham A&E photo Socialist Party

some cases.

Yet Hunt dismisses calls for registration of HCAs as 'bureaucratic'. If anything the ongoing privatisation of health services that this government heralds as the solution, diverts money away from front line care into the pockets of big health corporations.

To a dehydrated patient needing a drip there's nothing 'artificial' about

having a nurse available to do it now rather than in four hours. There's nothing 'bureaucratic' about a staff member with the time to talk to you after being told you've got cancer rather than having to rush off to the next job.

Hunt should try living in the real world where the majority agree patient care should come before profits. The NHS needs investment urgently

now, to recruit more well trained staff and stop any more Mid Staffordshire like tragedies in the future.

The Socialist Party calls for a democratically run NHS where patients and staff could come together to decide what level of staffing is needed not just as a minimum but to enable the dignity and quality of care we deserve.

...but mass action beats him

Roger Shives

In Lewisham in south London, triumphant health campaigners' posters announce: "We've won! Justice for Lewisham Hospital." Local people are celebrating a famous victory.

This January health secretary

Hunt tried to downgrade Lewisham hospital's accident and emergency departments and its high risk obstetric department. On 31 July a high court judge ruled that Hunt did not have such legal powers.

This was a victory for organised opposition to NHS cutbacks. Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign organised huge marches of 10,000+

last November and of 25,000 in January against this attack on a successful and popular hospital.

NHS campaigners know that this isn't the end of the fight. The government attacked Lewisham as part of a plan to savage spending at the South London Healthcare Trust (SLHT) even though Lewisham is not part of SLHT.

That's one reason why the judge ruled Hunt had acted illegally.

But hospitals within SLHT are still in danger from massive cuts. And as around Britain, the main culprits are government-imposed 'reforms'. SLHT is awash with Private Finance Initiative (PFI) debts. In 2011/2012 interest payments on the £65 million deficit amounted to

6.5% of total spending. PFI spending is growing - predicted to be up to £356 million in SLHT by the end of the year.

Who will pay for this? Vital services and workers' wages, if the government and top management have their way. We will need to build a community and trade union led campaign to stop their planned carnage.

Beware a recovery!

The media is lauding an economic recovery. Whether there is one and whether it has substance is discussed in the neighbouring article. But the Socialist has a warning: Beware a recovery! It's a weak recovery, and one that could make life even worse for millions of people. Whatever the economic developments, years of austerity face the British population.

When are 70% of people right?

When they believe the recent economic improvements have not benefited middle and lower income families.

The TUC point out that while between 2003 and 2008 gross

6%
fall in real wages
over the last 3 years

domestic product rose 11%, the 'median' workers' wage stagnated.

A conservative estimate of falling real wages is of 6% in the last 3 years as prices rocket ahead of wages. Estimates vary from a loss of £1,350 to £2,000 per annum in real terms for most of us.

- Morrisons say one third of customers are one pay cheque from bankruptcy
- L&G say 37% of the population have no savings at all
- The average family has only enough money to 'last' 34 days



Recovery for them, debt crisis continues for us

How can this be?

It's because of successive governments' plans to turn Britain into a low-wage economy. The culling of real wages has been so successful and lucrative for bosses, and disastrous for working people, that half of our households have to be subsidised - wages simply don't cover living, so the taxpayer covers what companies won't.

In other words more people can't make ends meet. In 2006, 35% of

52%
are struggling with
bills and debt

people struggled to keep up with bills and debt. That has reached 52% now. Their life is on a knife-edge.

And here's the rub. Most people get by on managing debt. That debt is only sustainable for many because of cheap interest rates. But the trouble with a 'recovering economy' is governments and finance markets will increase interest rates.

In the words of one commentator: "It's hard to see how a return to normal times [higher interest rates] can end in anything other than a disaster for a significant swathe of the population."

So a poor economy means more misery. And a recovering economy means... More misery! As Robin Clapp says across, system change is needed.

Is there a recovery?

To listen to the news recently you'd be forgiven for thinking that Britain was in a boom. "Britain has wow factor" screamed London's Evening Standard.

Manufacturing 'soared' 1.9% month-on-month in June. Car sales were the best since 2007 and house prices were rising again. Let's leave

aside that even more young people will be excluded from owning a home as a result.

It's a weak recovery, and as the International Monetary Fund recently revealed, austerity has not rescued Britain, whose recovery is slower than most rivals in 'the global race'.

In fact those who control the free market economy and who brought us the 2008 crash are, like an addict relapsing to their drug, trying to build a recovery on debt-laden consumer spending and a housing bubble.

Robin Clapp from Bristol wrote to us to point out:

Tucked away in the Economist (27 July) is a telling paragraph that might have been lifted from the pages of the Socialist, revealing the growing pessimism of the more far-sighted and sober capitalists when weighing up prospects for the much-lauded economic recovery.

"But the recovery remains skin-deep. The bones of Britain's economy are rotten. Shoppers are consuming not because they earn more but because they can borrow more. Established firms with cash in hand are hoarding rather than investing. New firms with ideas but no funding find it hard to borrow: the banks will lend only against property. Britain still buys more abroad than it sells, despite a weak currency. At some point, these deeper problems will surface."

We agree there is no golden age ahead for British capitalism and while the Economist will quickly revert to its more usual windy optimism, it's worth bearing these words in mind as a rare antidote to the current nonsense being spouted about recovery.

Behind Osborne's frothy claims that 'Britain's back again' is a cancerous combination of new speculative bubbles, the reappearance of potentially toxic sub-prime mortgages, more privatisation, savage cuts to the social wage and the driving down of wages through a rocket-propelled rise in zero-hour contracts.

The only long-term cure for this patient is a transplant - from the existing social system to a socialist one.

Met finally apologise for G20 death

Paul Callanan

The London Met police were recently forced to make a grovelling apology over the killing of Ian Tomlinson. Ian was killed by an officer on 1 April 2009 during the protests against the G20 summit in London.

During the summit campaigners held a week of protests as the world's leaders met. Over that week there was a heavy handed police presence across London and in particular the areas where demonstrations were taking place.

Tomlinson was not actually taking part in the protests but was a newspaper seller. He was trying to get home from his pitch in central London when he was obstructed by lines of police from the Territorial Support Group. This group is

a semi-paramilitary section of the London Met who specialise in harassing and bullying protests.

He was struck by an officer after he went up to the line and told them that he was trying to get home. He later suffered a heart attack as a result of the shock and was pronounced dead on arrival at hospital.

Not an isolated incident

It has taken the Met four years to apologise for the killing and pay the Tomlinson family compensation. The officer that struck the blow against Tomlinson, Simon Harwood, was known to have a history of violent conduct yet he was still allowed to carry out police duties. He has now been convicted of unlawful killing.

But the killing of Tomlinson was

not an isolated incident and follows a whole raft of revelations about the police and how they deal with threats to 'public order', real or perceived.

The recent exposure, of how the Met spied on members of the Lawrence family and anti-racist campaigners in the early 90's, is a prime example. Last year it was revealed that the police had similarly infiltrated environmental campaigns.

This shatters the lie that the police is a neutral organisation whose sole purpose is to protect the public from crime. These incidents all show that fundamentally the police look out for the interests of those at the top. They will stop at nothing to stamp out any sign of protest.

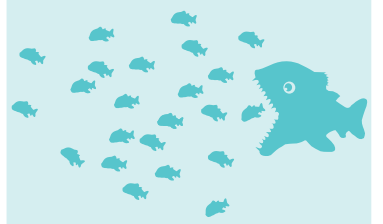
The Tomlinson murder won't be the last incident of its type. The only way to stop police repression of pro-



Ian Tomlinson walking past the protest

tests is to make them accountable to working class communities. A first step would be for an inquiry made up of trade unions and working class organisations into this murder and other acts of police repression.

Them...



Families in poverty

New research commissioned by the TUC shows:

- In two years, the majority of British children - 7.1 million of the nation's 13 million youngsters - will grow up in families which are struggling "below the breadline" because of welfare cuts, tax rises and wage freezes
- 460,000 children would be pushed below those levels by the increase in VAT and cuts to tax credits, 170,000 by sluggish wage growth and 80,000 by the curbs on public sector pay
- 90% of families will be worse off in 2015 than in 2010
- The boost they received from raising tax thresholds has been virtually wiped out by the increase in VAT to 20% in 2011

Academies cheat

There has been a significant increase in the number of teachers at academy schools contacting a confidential support line to report being pressured into artificially increasing their students' grades. The charity that runs the helpline points out that it is clearly mainly in academies because of the removal of local authority oversight in these schools.

That's capitalism!

A United Nations report last year estimated that 60 million jobs could be created globally if countries switched to a low carbon economy. However, a survey by the European Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change found, unsurprisingly, that companies won't invest in projects to tackle global warming because they are obliged to maximise profits.

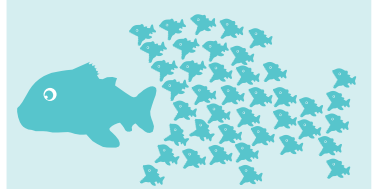
Since coming into office in 2010 the UK's coalition government investment in 'clean energy' projects has slumped from £2.73 billion to £1.1 billion in the most recent quarter.

Bums on red leather

After the government recently appointed 30 new peers, the 785 member House of Lords is now ranked the second largest legislative body in the world - surpassed only by China's National People's Congress!

Mega business mogul Sir Anthony Bamford (chairman of JCB, estimated wealth in excess of £3 billion) received a peerage. Any link between Sir Anthony donating £2.5 million to Tory party coffers and his peerage is, ahem, purely coincidental.

In 2008 despite Bamford's wealth, and notwithstanding JCB's £187 million yearly profit, the company gave its 2,500 workforce an ultimatum - take a £50 a week pay cut or lose hundreds of jobs.



...& Us

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Defend the Four

Tribunal compensation award to Unison activists

Glenn Kelly

Unison (personal capacity)

On 9 August, after six tortuous years, an employment tribunal dealing with the Unison leadership's illegal banning of the 'Socialist Party Four' from office issued its judgement as to what compensation Unison would have to pay.

The financial compensation follows a 2011 ruling that found the union leadership guilty of "unjustifiable" disciplinary action against the four activists for producing a leaflet complaining about branch

resolutions being excluded from the 2007 Unison conference.

Given that the average pay-out for a worker from a tribunal is about £4,000, the tribunal's decision to award £49,000 in total to the four shows how serious the union's actions were viewed.

Malicious

The court also awarded aggravated damages against Unison for its treatment of me, saying: "That we are satisfied that the conduct of the respondent (Unison) amounted to high-handed, malicious and oppressive conduct and we decided

Four Socialist Party members - Glenn Kelly, Suzanne Muna, Onay Kasab and Brian Debus - were subjected to a sustained witch-hunt by the union bureaucracy after leafleting Unison conference in 2007.

They were falsely accused of racism and banned from holding office in the union for between two and three years each.

An employment tribunal ruled that Unison acted illegally. The union appealed against the original decision and lost.

see stopthewitchhunt.org.uk



'The Unison Four' (from r to l) Onay Kasab, Glenn Kelly, Brian Debus, Suzanne Muna photo A Hill

in the case of Mr Kelly to award an additional award for aggravated damages."

Agreeing the damages the court found all four activists to be "committed and dedicated trade unionists, elected by the members and who had devoted either the whole or a large part of their working life to advising and representing their members and their interests at regional and national level".

Despite this, in an attempt to diminish its actions, the union bureaucracy had tried to argue in the court case that the damage done to

us was minimal as we were 'Marxists and Socialist Party members and were used to the rough and tumble of political life'.

The court responded by saying: "We do not accept that the claimants' political beliefs and or activities made them in some way impervious or immune to hurt caused by the action of the respondents".

Alongside the ban, we also had to face our branches being taken into regional administration. All along the union tried to say the two events weren't related. However, the court rejected this saying: "It is inconceivable

that there was no link between the claimants being banned and the branches being taken into regional administration."

In reference to the raids by union officials on the offices of the affected branches the tribunal said: "It was done in a way to cause the maximum humiliation to the claimants".

Given these findings, the question still remains: Who will be held to account inside Unison for spending six years attacking dedicated union activists and wasting literally hundreds of thousands of pounds of our members' money?

Postal workers ballot for action



photo Paul Mattsson

The Communications Workers Union (CWU) has decisively rejected government plans to privatise Royal Mail.

Following huge membership support in a consultative ballot for union policy on pay (99%) bullying and harassment (92%) to boycott competitors' mail (92%) and opposition to privatisation (96%), the 500 reps at a CWU conference decided to ballot their 115,000 postal members for industrial action to fight back.

It is expected the ballot will take place by September.

Royal Mail privatisation will mean a worse and more expensive service - with profits coming back not to the taxpayer but to private profiteers - more post office closures and even worse terms and conditions for postal workers.

Royal Mail has offered a pay deal over three years that includes no-strike clauses and ever more pension changes. They continue to harass and bully workers and the CWU.

The last time the postal workers took national action was in 2009 where there were mixed feelings about the results obtained.

One postal worker said: "To counter any resulting reluctance regarding what can be achieved by action, and with Royal Mail management going into propaganda overload, the CWU needs to continue to update workers and in my opinion have workplace meetings and mass rallies."

"Unlike the Tory privatisations of the 1980s and 1990s the public are waking up to the pitfalls of short term gains and long term destruction of public services".

Indeed, 67% of the general public oppose privatisation and even 48% (against 40% who support) of Tory voters do too, so defending a public service could win public support for posties.

Another postie told us: "If we take action again over these issues, there must be changes."

"The last time we were out for two days the management s**t themselves, but we returned to work while three months of secret negotiations took place. To be honest the deal wasn't good for us. Next time we should continue the strike while negotiations take place and be told what's going on in talks."

On your bike, Serco

Rob Williams

RMT members working for Serco, which operates the London bicycle hire scheme ('Boris Bikes') started 48-hour strike action on 12 August.

The action is against the imposition of a 2% pay increase, which is nearly 1% less than RPI inflation, meaning that it is, in reality, a pay cut. To rub salt into the workers' wounds, the salaries of Serco directors have increased by over 60% in the last seven years.

But this injustice isn't the only reason for the workers voting unanimously for the strike. On top of an imposed pay rise, management have also imposed changes to rosters and hours.

RMT pickets told the Socialist that they have also been the victims of constant bullying, harassment and general disrespect from management.

The bicycle workers feel that the strike is absolutely necessary to

stand up to Serco management.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow addressed the strikers along with John Reid, the London Transport regional secretary.

Bob praised the strikers for taking this action. This dispute is the first strike by workers after enduring three years of management attacks. "I want to tell you that you're not on your own. I'm bringing the full support of the whole 80,000 members of our union", said Bob Crow.

Protests

Socialist Party members and NSSN supporters were at the Serco picket line in Islington at 5am and then got to London Bridge for 8am to support the protest by the 'J33' workers who were 'released' ie sacked by London Underground (LU) when the agency Trainspeople lost its contract earlier this year.

Although 200 jobs were subsequently advertised by LU, 33 of

the former Trainspeople workers were denied further employment, despite some of them working on a variety of LU duties for up to five years. The RMT has backed their jobs campaign with continuous protests, which have been reported in the Socialist.

The sacked J33 workers marched from London Bridge to the Mayor's office down the middle of the road, without police permission. After a loud protest, they then moved on to visit their striking RMT comrades in Serco to show solidarity.

Both of these struggles are difficult disputes, facing vicious managements, by workers new to the trade union movement. But the RMT has shown that it is prepared to fully represent their members.

The recent victory by the RMT at an employment tribunal by Churchill cleaners on the Tyne and Wear Metro, after a protracted dispute, shows that workers can win victories, even when the odds seem stacked against them.

Swansea council pay attacks angers workers

Swansea's Labour-run council has angered workers represented by the Unison union after it decided to press ahead with imposed pay cuts. Dismissing workers' objections, deputy council leader, Christine Richards, said: "We've now reached the point where further negotiations will not result in agreement".

The council changes are being proposed under the cover of job evaluation - making cuts in the name of 'equality'. Over 2,000 council workers stand to lose summer retainers; amongst the

worst affected are nursery nurses who stand to lose weeks of pay. Some manual workers, such as those in refuse, have previously estimated that they could lose £4,000 or more in shift allowances, unsocial hours and bonuses.

Unison hopes to mitigate these cuts through further negotiations but it is only determined action in defence of terms and conditions that can force the council to back down.

The branch previously encouraged members to go out and cam-

paign to elect Labour councillors. Members were told that replacing a Liberal Democrat-led coalition with a Labour one would mean the council working with the union.

As well as organising for action and linking with service users to defend services, Unison needs to fight these attacks, politically.

It should support anti-cuts candidates in future council elections and warn that any Labour councillor voting for these attacks on our members will be challenged.

A Unison member

London Olympics legacy - one year on

Chris Newby
London Socialist Party

Who can forget the tremendous excitement of last year when Usain Bolt, Mo Farah, David Weir and Jessica Ennis scorched around the track, of Michael Phelps and Ellie Simmonds in the pool and Bradley Wiggins winning gold in the cycling time trial?

These are just a few of the amazing achievements at the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

The atmosphere around the various stadia was electric. Other things that stood out for me were that volunteers helped make the games, Danny Boyle's opening ceremony and I think a moment of the games was the Venezuelan fencer Ruben Limardo showing off his gold medal to fellow travellers on London public transport.

Another enduring memory is the tremendous London-wide strike of bus workers who won their Olympic bonus. These are some of the memories that I will hang onto.

However, what is the real legacy that has been left behind after the Olympics have moved on? On the promise of leaving a lasting legacy and of transforming the area around Stratford, east London, these Olympics were brought in at a tremendous cost, £6.71 billion of public money, at the same time as massive attacks on jobs, public services and benefits.

Sporting facilities?

Yes, it's true that we have new sporting facilities in east London, such as the main stadium, the swimming pools and the velodrome, as well as the parks.

But the main stadium has been sold off to West Ham United at a loss. The Qatari Royal family's property firm bought the Olympic village at a loss to the UK taxpayer of £275 million.

The swimming pools are now owned by Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL), a private company that owns many former council run gyms and

pools across London. And the much touted new school on the site will be an academy, outside of local authority control.

It's the same old message from capitalism: while public money is used to build these tremendous resources, they are sold off to private bodies to make a profit.

Participation?

What of the legacy for greater sports participation? Government austerity means deep cuts into all aspects of life and sport is no different. The school sport partnership was scrapped by the Con-Dems, meaning £162 million cuts from schools sport, though since partly restored under pressure.

But let's not forget, the previous Labour government also made cuts to schools sports facilities. Is it any wonder then that only 8% of secondary school teachers reported an increase in student participation in sport since the 2012 games?

In Merton, south London, councillors sold off a public sports hall to a private school. This has left Olympic medallist Ray Stevens without a home for his popular judo club which regularly attracts disabled or disadvantaged kids.

More widely, the government has cut funding to grassroots sport by 5%. While participation in sport has increased by 1.4 million since the London bid won in 2005, from April 2012 to April 2013 it declined. Is this any wonder when the majority of the population had their living standards attacked and most sports facilities are in private hands?

Incredibly, a private company - Will to Win - has been handed the contract to charge park users for "informal sports" in parks like Hyde Park and Regents Park. So if you just wanted a kick around with a football, you're likely to be charged! What does that do for developing more participation in sport?

Even some elite sports are under threat. The Don Valley stadium, where Olympic gold medallist Jessica Ennis trained, is to close because of funding cuts.

Elite swimming has faced funding



The Olympic velodrome photo A Hill

cuts by UK Sport, which has led to the closure of one of the five Intensive Training Centres (ITCs). The facilities at the now defunct ITC in Stockport were described by Olympic medallist Steve Parry as "the best in the world".

Jobs and homes?

A lot was also made of the legacy for jobs and homes in East London. In Newham, one of London's most deprived boroughs, the promise of new homes now appears to be hollow. In the first batch of the 8,000 homes that will be provided, 675 will be "socially rented" of which 350 will be made available to people on Newham's housing list, with 32,000 waiting on it.

According to Shelter, it will take Newham almost 40 years to clear

its waiting list at the current rate of construction. 40% of new housing at the Olympic site is described as affordable. But according to some housing experts, "affordable" housing

Government austerity means deep cuts into all aspects of life and sport is no different

ing now requires a household to earn at least £30,000 a year, beyond most people in the borough.

Promises of long term jobs also seem to be flights of fancy. Newham says 5,000 residents were helped

into Games-time jobs, but most were temporary.

Of the £20 million promised through the Olympic legacy for training and support for the long-term unemployed, just £8 million has been spent, while fewer than half of the 6,500 long-term unemployed have got the jobs that London mayor Boris Johnson pledged for them. The 2012 Employment Legacy Project was cancelled at the start of 2013.

A proper sporting legacy will only be fully achieved once the dead hand of profit is removed from the scene. This means sports facilities publicly owned and controlled, and free at the point of use, alongside all other public facilities such as health and education, and that people have the time to actively participate in sport.

Football and big business: time to reclaim the game

John Reid

At the start of the new football season, the same old robbers are wrecking the game. Since the outset of the Premier League, over 50 clubs have gone into receivership.

The latest club in trouble is Coventry City. Docked ten points, and without a ground due to the antics of the money men in charge, fans have to travel to Northampton to see their team play!

Mismanagement has already ruined Portsmouth, Luton Town and also Glasgow Rangers, which was expelled from the Scottish Premier following off-field dodgy dealing.

Football is a game at the top owned by billionaires and played by multi-millionaires.

Premier League revenue has risen to over £3 billion - half of which comes from TV deals. However, wage costs eat up 83% of the revenue growth as players' wages continue to soar.

The race to get into the Premier League has pushed the debts of Championship clubs to £0.9 billion. These clubs have a wage to revenue ratio of 90%. They spend 30% more

than they receive. The aggregate losses of Championship clubs in 2011/12 were £147 million.

Fighting to stay in the Premier League or qualify for Europe has rocketed debts to £2.4 billion, including £1.4 billion of 'soft' debts. Chelsea are £895 million in debt, Newcastle £262 million and QPR £93 million. QPR were the third highest spending club and still got relegated!

The cost of football in the Premier League is phenomenal, £40 to £60 per ticket, cutting young people and low wage earners off from their clubs, many of which, like Coventry, were formed by workers.

We need to reclaim the game, the clubs need to be brought under the democratic control and ownership of the fans with the ground being safeguarded for the use of the football clubs.

The new edition of Reclaim the Game by John Reid will be out soon - £3.50 including p&p. Place your orders with Socialist Books: 020 8988 8789 or bookshop@socialistparty.org.uk Cheques, payable to Socialist Books, can be sent to Socialist Books, PO Box 24697, London E11 1HH

They've taken our jobs, factories and hospitals - now it's our football club! Thousands march to demand 'Keep Cov in Cov'

On Sunday 12 August, at least 7,000 fans attended a Coventry City ex-players' charity march at the Ricoh Arena, while the Sky Blues' first home game in Northampton was only attended by 2,200 fans from both teams!

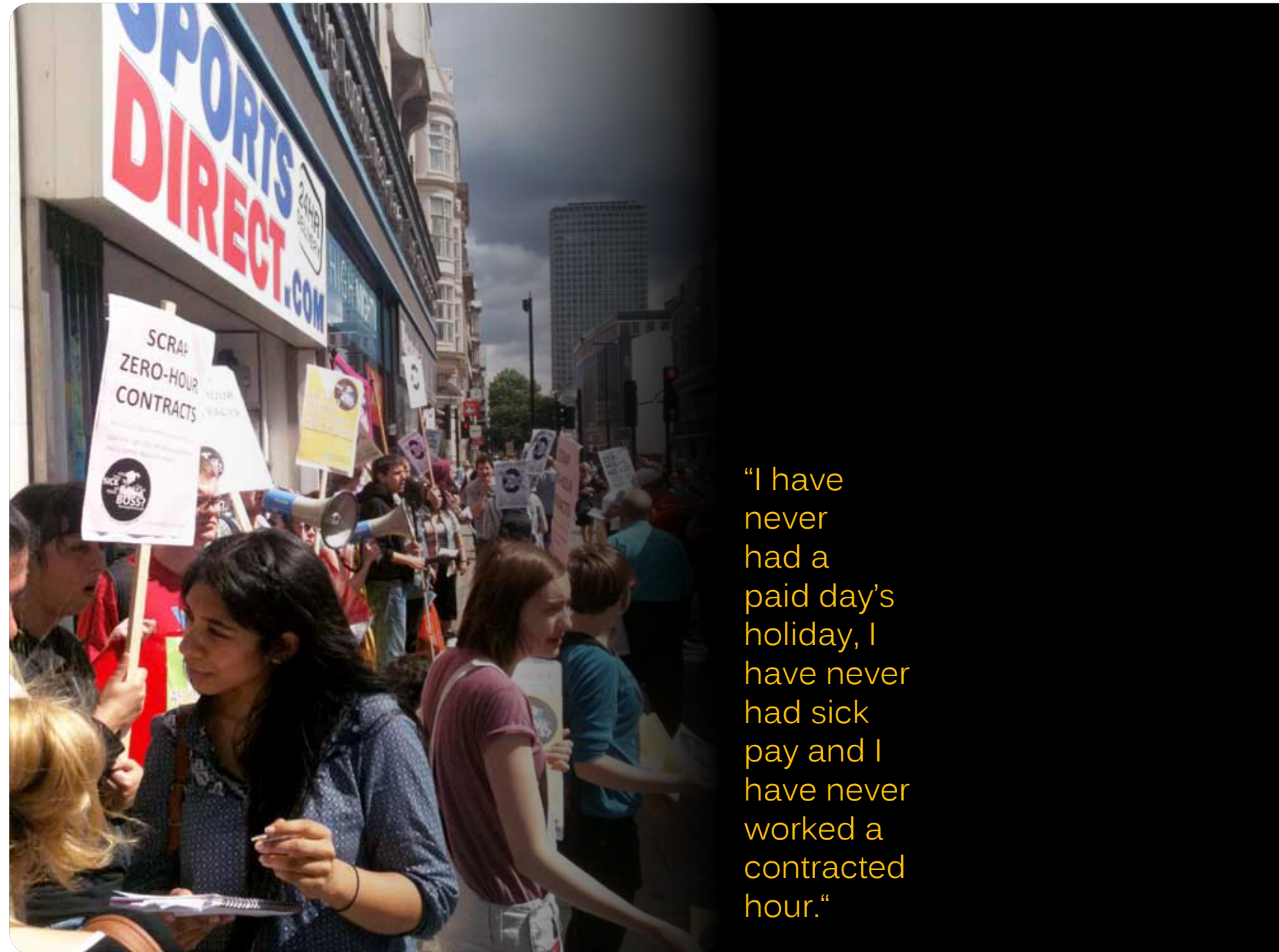
This followed a 7,000-fan protest on 20 July against the decision to move Coventry City home games to Northampton. At the rally, former Socialist Party councillor Dave Nellist pointed out, to rapturous applause, that while in other countries clubs are owned by the fans, we have here a situation where owner SISU, an off-shore hedge fund, is only interested in maximising profits from the people of Coventry.

The tragedy of Coventry City is a perfect example of how profit hungry parasites like SISU attack working class communities and culture. They must be stopped, with discussions needed on how we can get fan and community ownership and control of clubs, football and sport in general.



Part of the Coventry demo on 20 July photo Coventry Socialists

Football and big business: time to reclaim the game
Public meeting with John Reid hosted by Coventry Socialist Party
Monday 19 August, 7.30pm
Coventry SQ Club, Whitefriars Lane, Coventry city centre, CV1 2DT



"I have never had a paid day's holiday, I have never had sick pay and I have never worked a contracted hour."

END ZERO-HOUR CONTRACTS NOW!

Enough is enough!

Youth Fight for Jobs demands:

- **Decent tea and lunch breaks** and no being 'clocked off' when we take one. It's not possible to work long shifts without some time to breathe. We shouldn't be penalised for it
- **Give us proper contracts**, guaranteed hours and full employment rights. No to zero-hour contracts and insecure employment. No more uncertainty and insecurity dressed up as 'flexibility'!
- **Pay us enough to live** - Companies which make the bosses millions are paying us (who make them all that money) pennies. We want a living wage which is enough to afford the basics in life. Right now, many of us have to top up our wages with tax credits and benefits. We shouldn't have to. A living wage of £10 an hour is not too much to ask.
- **Stop the bosses' 'fire at will' attitude**, backed up by the government. Making it easier to sack us will increase unemployment - not reduce it!
- **We won't be used as cheap or free labour** on apprenticeships, internships and work-for benefits schemes. A day's work is a day's work and it deserves a decent day's pay.
- **We have the right to get organised at work** - Trade unions are there to help give workers protection and fight to improve our conditions. In this country there is a legal right to join a trade union. Despite this, workers who try to get organised are sometimes penalised by their bosses. We say the right to organise is fundamental - full trade union rights now!
- **Scrap the anti-trade union laws** - We have a right to try and improve our conditions and stop the bosses that 'make us sick!' It's up to us to democratically decide how we do this. If we want to go on strike or take action then that's up to us, the courts should not stop us.

- **Build democratic campaigning trade unions** - We want trade unions that will fight our corner. That means representing us in the workplace, defending us if we're under attack and, crucially, helping us use our collective strength as workers to fight back. All workers, young and old, deserve democratic trade unions with fighting leaders!

- **No to benefit cuts** - Attacks like this affect all of us, not just the unemployed. For a start thousands of low paid workers rely on benefits. If unemployment benefits are lowered it means the bosses have even less incentive to pay a decent wage. Don't let their lies divide us!

Helen Pattison
London Socialist Party

At Sports Direct, Boots, Buckingham Palace, Wetherspoons, even for the government, zero-hour contracts are becoming widely used. The extent of the use of zero-hour contracts has been exposed over the last few weeks following the revelation that 90% of Sports Direct workers are employed on this basis. Nationally over one million people suffer on these contracts - mainly people aged over-55 and under-25.

The flexibility and benefits they offer for the employer are numerous but it's a very different story when it comes to the employees, who can go weeks without work and are bullied into and out of hours at the whim of the bosses. Employers often call just before shifts start and demand staff come in. If that member of staff can't work they often have little chance of getting work again.

The big flexibility con

It's true that despite the 3.3 million who want more hours at work, there are also a layer of workers, such as students and parents, who don't want to work full time all the time. Students are usually looking for more work during the busier time of year and parents often want part time hours which they can fit around childcare.

But even in these cases workers don't benefit from the lack of hours or unreliability of a zero-hour contract. Zero-hour contracts don't mean low hours, they mean that you could be asked to work no hours for a whole week and illegally high numbers of hours the next. What is certain is turning down hours means being deemed inflexible by the

employer and leads to less hours if not no hours at all.

Lib Dem minister Vince Cable thinks we need to keep some zero-hour contracts because some people want to work a number of jobs. But people only work more than one job because they need more hours and pay.

The contracts were not created to help workers but to make a flexible and fireable workforce which could easily be disposed of if they sought better conditions - all part of a race to the bottom and to unfair working practices. The economic crisis, created by the bankers and big corporations and facilitated by their friends in Westminster, has cut off many traditional avenues for capitalists to make profit.

We won't pay!

The bosses are attempting to protect their profits by making us pay instead - whether through cutting jobs, attacking services or trying to spend less on their workforce in any way possible, including zero-hour contracts. If it isn't a zero-hour contract then its workfare schemes, where unemployed people are used to undercut the minimum wage and offer free labour to big companies.

A 'flexible' labour market with high unemployment doesn't only allow employers to squeeze out more profit by sending staff home early but is used to oust trade unions and organising in workplaces.

As public services are sold off and outsourcing increases, working conditions in the public and private sector will continue to drop. When Serco took over running community services in Suffolk, the company made huge staff cuts to ensure they made more profit.

Not only does this mean worse services but also a huge loss in pay for the staff and being pushed onto zero-hour con-

tracts with no guarantee of work. And it isn't even just outsourced sectors which have started to use these contracts. Councils, the NHS and social care are using them widely too.

2.5 million people are unemployed and there are five jobseekers chasing every job. But these jobs could easily be zero-hours or commission-only jobs meaning again the employee still has no guaranteed income.

Fight for jobs

What we need is a programme of public works to create decent, secure and socially useful jobs for all those able to work. We need an end to the cuts to hospitals and other services which just cause higher unemployment. Instead services and jobs should be available to match the needs of working class communities.

The working rights that zero-hour contracts undercut were won through workers organising and fighting for better conditions through the trade unions in the past. Job creation, a living wage and decent contracts, will only be won if the trade unions step up and organise these workers.

Illegal practices are rife in pubs, restaurants, hospitality and call centres where trade union membership is lower. It will take concerted effort, education, and proving themselves to young workers from existing trade union organisers to unionise these sectors. But this is what is necessary to bring a new generation into trade union struggle and to fight for a world where a decent job is a right not a privilege.

If you want to find out more about the trade union in your workplace and Youth Fight for Jobs' Sick Of Your Boss campaign get in touch:
youthfightforjobs.com
youthfightforjobs@gmail.com

Youth Fight for Jobs Sports Direct protest reports

Central London

Fifty protesters gathered outside the Oxford Street branch of Sports Direct in central London on Saturday 3 August to demand an end to the company's use of zero-hour contracts, following the revelation that 90% of its workers are employed on this basis.

Young people who worked on similar contracts took to the megaphone to relay their experiences of the contracts which offer no guarantee of work or pay. Many employers also get away with not paying holiday or sick pay to zero-hour staff.

We heard how the contracts were used to oust staff trying to legally organise in trade unions and those who stood up to demand decent conditions at work. The protest occupied the shop for a brief time.

Ultimately now it is the role of the trade unions to organise these staff and carry on the fight for decent contracts.

London Youth Fight for Jobs

Glasgow

We got a fantastic response from shoppers and staff who came out to sign our petition against zero-hour contracts. Many young workers passing by from other shops also took our leaflets to hand out to their workmates. Sports Direct managers put plenty of security on the store entrance and refused to let us speak to staff after they heard Youth

Fight for Jobs in London had entered the store. Retail workers of all ages were interested in joining a trade union and we gave out Usdaw and Unite trade union material. We will be following this up with actions in Dundee, Paisley and Edinburgh later in the month.

Matt Dobson, Scotland Youth Fight for Jobs

Leeds

We were inundated by people passing by wanting to support us, sign our petition and take leaflets. I spent almost the entire protest doing interviews with the local press, both newspapers and radio stations.

Many people passing by had seen Youth Fight for Jobs activist Helen Pattison on Sky News (debating zero-hour contract enthusiast and former Apprentice contestant Katie Hopkins) earlier that day and were keen to talk about how we could secure decent jobs with a living wage. Several people wanted to get involved with the campaign. The previous day we had taken the same petition to Leeds Pride and had a similarly warm response.

Iain Dalton, Yorkshire Youth Fight for Jobs

See socialistparty.org.uk for regular reports on campaigning against zero-hour contracts and stories from those affected

Life on zero-hour contracts

"They treat us like slaves, we have no chance to plan anything."
Sports Direct worker

"I am a 20 year-old who has worked for both the NHS and for the social care department of the local authority. In this time, I have never had a paid day's holiday, I have never had sick pay and I have never worked a contracted hour."

I work pay cheque to pay cheque, I do not have any sort of job security or regular pay. One week I could work four or five shifts, the next one or none at all, and going six weeks without work is not uncommon. I have no control over when I work, and can be called into work up to an hour before the start of a shift. Because I have no idea when the call will come, it is almost impossible to claim benefits.

Originally I started work to gain experience and to pay my way through education. At the time I was supporting a partner - this was difficult and the choice between gas and electric was ever present and my education suffered. I now live with my parents and am earning money to pay rent. It is almost impossible to save or plan for anything, because the money that I earn could have to last me for months.

Recently the spotlight has been shone on zero-hour contracts and underemployment. The bosses call for a "flexible" workforce, but this is simply a euphemism for a more controlled and oppressed working class. Zero-hour contracts are a way to further control and exploit workers, especially young workers,

who are often not unionised and have no other way to make a living."
Young worker

"My working life started off at Sports Direct around 2004 as a 15 year-old school boy. Of course it was minimum wage and yes it was a zero-hour contract."

After school, I trained as a joiner and endured an apprenticeship, again with master and servant conditions. Upon leaving that I was subject to some more harsh conditions working on various sites for horrible, blacklisting firms and other agencies.

The conditions of zero-hour contracts really do leave you at the mercy of your employer and aren't really much different to agency work.

With both you have no guaranteed hours, no sick pay, no holidays, and no redundancy pay. Dare to ask for a day off or can't work a shift that you are offered and you soon find what ever little work you had reduced or nothing at all the next week.

It all just reminds me of a Ken Loach film, the Navigators, where the railways are privatised, terms and conditions are eroded and the workers have to get jobs with agencies under similar conditions to those mentioned above. Just like the Navigators all around we see terms, conditions and workers' rights being slashed.

This has the makings of an epic struggle but one that must be taken if we are to discontinue the descent towards master and servant conditions."
Kieran Grogan

New issue of the **Spark out now** Special Sick Of Your Boss edition of the Youth Fight for Jobs newsletter. Order from Youth Fight for Jobs (see left)

Organising the lost generation
A record of the Jarrow to London March for Jobs 2011
Now only £6
Available from leftbooks.co.uk or from Youth Fight for Jobs (see left)

Winning a reprieve from the bedroom tax

Lynne Sample
Newcastle Socialist Party

After a long and stressful process, I have finally received a letter from North Tyneside Council giving me a short "reprieve" from paying the bedroom tax for the remaining year of my student daughter's course. I appealed in March.

I also received a reply to my application for discretionary payment, which stated: "Discretionary Housing Payment is only awarded for a short term period," and that I: "should use this period of time to try to improve my household financial circumstances or find somewhere cheaper to live!"

I have recently given an interview on BBC Radio Newcastle and quoted this letter, giving my views on it.

I have already tried to get "somewhere cheaper to live" to no avail. I have been told that there are not enough one-bedroomed council or housing association flats and houses. Private renting is more expensive even if I agreed with it, which I don't.

Perhaps I should buy a cheap tent and erect it outside the offices of Your Homes Newcastle - or 'No Homes Newcastle' as I now prefer to call them?

As to improving my "financial

circumstances", what kind of a joke is this? The small annual rise in my occupational pension gets eaten up by increased fuel prices, food prices and bus fares.

As my pension is not large enough to sustain a flea, I have to (reluctantly) claim ESA. I am not fit to work and, at 60, I have also been robbed of my state pension until 64. In any case, who would employ me?

I have photocopied the aforementioned letter, along with other offensive missives from this council, and cut them into squares to hang from a nail in my toilet because I can't afford toilet roll anymore!

I tried to set up a local anti-bedroom tax group. I booked a local council-run community centre for this purpose known as John Willie Sams. With others I spent time leafleting and getting names on petitions.

The day before the meeting, I received a text from the manager to say that: "The council is not allowed to allow its resources to be used for public meetings for political purposes."

We decided to hold the meeting outside anyway and, while remonstrating with the manager, I got him

to write this quote on a piece of paper, which also now hangs in my toilet.

Labour councillors must be "running scared" at the level of opposition to the bedroom tax and their refusal to oppose it.

I am now planning my next move and will keep you posted, but, in the meantime, I have a plentiful supply of toilet paper! There is always a plus side.

The Socialist carries regular articles on the fight against the bedroom tax. Subscribe at socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe

Get in touch for campaign resources including leaflets and posters, or to send your campaign reports: info@socialistparty.org.uk 020 8988 8777

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
- We can beat the bedroom tax!**
Know your rights sheet: www.socialistparty.org.uk/issue/770/16928



Protesting against the Bedroom Tax in Glasgow photo Jim Halfpenny

Socialist Party subs appeal Stepping up the fight against austerity

Naomi Byron
Socialist Party finance department

The Socialist Party is asking every member if they can increase their subs (membership dues) to help improve our resources to fight for an end to the cuts, a new workers' party and a socialist solution to the economic crisis.

Whether you can give a substantial increase or only scrape together another one or two pounds each month, every penny will be used in our campaigns to spread socialist ideas and step up the fight against austerity.

Despite big pressure on wages, benefit cuts and inflation which eats into incomes, our members so far have responded magnificently to the appeal. Over £2,000 has been pledged in increases so far.

One third of these have been increases of £5 per month or less, which are just as valuable to us as bigger increases.

Hugh Caffrey, North West Socialist Party secretary, told the Socialist: "Over the last 12 months we have significantly raised the subs income

in the north-west region of the Socialist Party.

"Making sure we discuss with all members, including new members when they join, has delivered £100s more in monthly income."

New organisers

"Dedicated branch treasurers play an important role. They don't just work on finance by themselves, but maintain a wider awareness.

"Electing a new branch treasurer, or freeing up a member currently doing a welter of other tasks to focus

on finance, brings good results."

One newly-elected branch treasurer, Liam Curless in Manchester and Trafford branch, said: "Recently I increased my subs and became branch treasurer.

"Having been in the party for a couple of years I have witnessed firsthand the important work the party does and the positive effect this has had in the unions and local communities.

"The constant battle we face against the main parties and the media not only requires members to dig deep in terms of action and time but also financially. Our subs help produce the literature, support the paper and the fantastic work done by our full-timers.

"I have been talking to comrades to collect their subs and whether they are able to increase their subs. If giving a little bit more a month helps get our message across, then one or two pints less a week is fine by me!"

Members who cannot increase their subs at the moment can still help raise more money for the Socialist Party by attracting new members and raising Fighting Fund.



Building TUSC in Caerphilly

Jaime Davies
Caerphilly TUSC byelection candidate

bour in second and Plaid Cymru who won the seat.

Our focus on the doorstep and at our public meeting was the local fight for a 24-hour doctor-led A&E at Ystrad Mynach hospital.

We also opposed council executives' illegal pay rises of around 20%, and pledged to fight the killer bedroom tax.

The Tories are never really much opposition in the South Wales valleys but trying to privatise the NHS in England, imposing the Bedroom Tax and cutting left right and center couldn't have helped matters for them!

We are looking forward to 2016 where we aim to catch Labour and become the main opposition to Plaid Cymru. The next council elections may be three years away but the building starts now!

When a byelection came up in the Penyrheol ward of Caerphilly we knew we had to stand and give local people a working class alternative to Tory austerity policies and the failure of Labour and Plaid Cymru to mount any sort of resistance to Westminster's cuts agenda.

When the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) stood in the ward for the first time in the full council elections last year, we received 175 votes or 5.9%.

Despite a much smaller turnout we still won 173 votes, meaning our share rose to 9.7%

This result placed us third, ahead of the Tories in fourth, behind La-



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. www.tusc.org.uk

SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	July-September 2013	Deadline 27 September
South West	1,400	834	██████████	██████████
South East	750	376	██████████	██████████
North West	1,200	537	██████████	██████████
Northern	600	220	██████████	██████████
West Midlands	2,100	686	██████████	██████████
Wales	2,300	725	██████████	██████████
Southern	1,200	295	██████████	██████████
East Midlands	1,600	284	██████████	██████████
Yorkshire	2,900	359	██████████	██████████
Eastern	1,200	127	██████████	██████████
London	6,100	632	██████████	██████████
England & Wales	3,650	134	██████████	██████████
TOTAL	25,000	5,212	██████████	██████████

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Tunisia: Mobilise to bring down the government

Cedric Jerome
Committee for a Workers' International (CWI)

Since the murder of the left-leaning leader Mohamed Brahmi on 25 July a cascade of mass protests, including a general strike on 26 July, has shaken every corner of Tunisia. A sit-in has been taking place in front of the Constituent Assembly building in Tunis, joined subsequently by many protesters coming from the interior regions.

On 6 August, an estimated 450,000-strong anti-government demo took place. In the poverty-stricken areas of the interior, mobilisations have been accompanied with the development of various local revolutionary power structures. In some areas, protesters have occupied town halls and set up self-governing committees.

The "Tamarrod" (Rebellion) movement now claims to have collected more than 1.7 million signatures for the ousting of the Islamist Ennahda-led government.

Contrary to the claims of many commentators, the main contenders of the present battle are not 'Islamists' versus 'anti-Islamists'.

Of course, it would be wrong to deny the anger connected to the religious bigotry of those in power and the growing reactionary attacks and threats being perpetrated under the name of Islam.

But the core of the present struggle goes back to the initial aspirations of the 2010-2011 revolution

which have simply not been met. For a big part of the population it is the growing difficulties of daily life - the constant rise of food prices, the dire absence of jobs for the youth, the devastating state of public infrastructure, the low wages and horrendous working conditions in the factories - which is fuelling the present rage against the government.

In the Northern town of Menzel Bourguiba, 4,000 shoe factory workers were recently sacked overnight, without notice. This is the type of issue that those in power are absolutely incapable of resolving.

Warning

Rank-and-file supporters of the left coalition, the 'Popular Front', had enthusiastically welcomed the Front's initial objectives of bringing together all those supporting the need for a strong, independent revolutionary pole of attraction, distinctive from both Ennahda's rule and from the various neoliberal and old regime forces in the opposition.

However, the political alliance recently set up by the Popular Front's leadership with the right-wing coalition 'Union for Tunisia', creating the 'National Salvation Front', has poured cold water on the revolutionary desires of many.

This alliance is a dangerous mistake: it subordinates the interests of the working class and the poor - the majority of the militant forces of the Popular Front - to forces motivated by a resolutely pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist agenda.

The backbone of the 'Union for



The widespread 27 July general strike has been followed by other mass anti-government protests

Tunisia' coalition is the party 'Nidaa Tounes', led by Caied Essebsi. This party is essentially a political shelter for the dictatorship's old guard.

This insipid agreement has been met with increasing turmoil and criticism by the ranks of virtually every Tunisian left party. Arguments that a deal with such right-wing forces is "necessary" for the movement to be "sufficiently strong" to bring down the present government, as some argue, do not hold water.

On the contrary, the two historic anti-government general strikes this

year, as well as the intensity of the present mobilisations, shows that there is an undisputable determination to bring down the government among the working class, the youth and the poor, given a proper lead.

A call should be made for an all-out general strike, coupled with the setting up of democratically elected revolutionary committees throughout the country. Such committees could provide the basis for challenging and overthrowing the existing regime, and to replace it with a socialist government of the workers,

the youth and the poor.

It is only around the demands of the working class and the oppressed that a viable alternative can be built. That is why CWI supporters in Tunisia argue for a left opposition platform to be built that can organise activists, workers and young people around a programme in line with the initial aspirations of the Popular Front supporters; to reject any deal with alien class forces, and reclaim the Front on the basis of a class struggle perspective and of genuine revolutionary socialism.

South Africa: Limpopo WASP launch



Meschak Komani
DSM, South Africa

On Wednesday 3 August the Sefateng Stadium in Atok was filled with revolutionary workers' songs. More than 700 people had come to the stadium to launch the Workers and Socialist Party (WASP) in Limpopo. Mineworkers from Bukoni and Steelport, community activists from different towns and youth sang: "Limpopo when we are united, we can do miracles".

The mineworkers of the Xstrata Steelport mine were the first to arrive in Atok. They have been on strike against racism for months.

Experienced in mobilising for their struggle, they toy-toyed through the town around the stadium carrying WASP banners and posters with their demands. Delegations from Carletonville mine and other places were also present.

Weizmann Hamilton, DSM general secretary (Democratic Social-

ist Movement - CWI South Africa) and member of the WASP interim committee, was the first to speak: "WASP was established to unify the struggles of the working class".

His ferocious attacks on the ANC government's pro-capitalist policies and his outline of WASP's socialist principles and programme were frequently interrupted with applause from the workers.

Weizmann explained how the mine bosses are preparing for mass retrenchments and there is already a low intensity civil war going on in the mines. "WASP is the answer to these attacks" Weizmann told the audience.

The launch was closed by DSM spokesperson Liv Shange, who said the establishment of WASP is not only for the elections but to unite the working class for the struggles to come and fight for a socialist society.

After she spoke the voices of singing workers - "The capitalists are shaking..." echoed around the Sefateng stadium.

Seattle: Socialist challenge to corporate Democrats

On 6 August, Socialist Alternative candidate Kshama Sawant won 35% (42,908 votes) of the vote in the primary election to contest a seat on the city council in Seattle, north west USA.

US primary elections narrow the field of candidates before an election for office. Kshama will now contest the city council election in November (the first socialist candidate to do so in 22 years!) against the right wing Democrat incumbent, Richard Conlin.

Last year, Kshama - who was an activist in the Occupy Seattle anti-capitalist movement - stood as a Socialist Alternative candidate against Democratic House Speaker Frank Chopp, and won 29% of the vote. Over 20,000 people voted for a socialist because, as Kshama said, "they're fed up with inequality and relentless cuts to social services".

Seattle voters in the recent election have sent a clear message to an out-of-touch political establishment that they are fed up with 'business as usual', and are looking for an alternative to corporate-pandering politicians like Richard Conlin.

Kshama, who was recently written off by The Seattle Times as "too hard left for Seattle", has pledged, if elected, to "take only the average worker's salary" - around \$40,000 - not the \$120,000 of a council member's annual pay. "It's a scandal that city councillors are paid that much", she said.

A majority of primary voters voted against 16-year Seattle City Council



Kshama Sawant

incumbent, Democrat Richard Conlin, who despite a massive fundraising advantage and media publicity, received only 49%. Kshama and a second challenger to Conlin, Brian Carver, won the majority of the vote in the city council Position 2 race.

"Working people in Seattle have a clear political choice for a change. If you want to fight for an alternative to the status quo, join us in the struggle for a citywide \$15 an hour minimum wage, a major expansion of public transit by taxing Seattle's millionaires, increased investment in affordable housing, and implementing rent control," said Kshama. She has earned the endorsements of The Stranger newspaper, four labour unions, and prominent community activists such as Real Change founder Tim Harris.

Unlike Conlin, Kshama refuses to accept corporate donations. Her grassroots campaign has raised

\$25,000, predominantly in the form of small donations of \$25 or less, and has mobilised over 125 volunteers.

"We will make history by raising a grassroots army of over 300 volunteers, and run one of the biggest door knocking campaigns this city has seen to defeat Richard Conlin," she declared.

"Conlin has made clear where he stands, with corporations and the elite. By not representing the majority of struggling working people in this city, he has made himself obsolete."

Socialist Alternative, USA, reporters

The Committee for a Workers' International

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.

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the Socialist postbag

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

Dept for Work and Pimping

Iain Duncan Smith has been called many things. However he can now add "pimp" to his CV. The government has gone out of its way to humiliate the unemployed. It is ever harder to claim Jobseeker's Allowance and one of the requirements is that the unemployed have to use their website to look for work.

And among the work available? Lap dancing in a club which offers "topless to fully nude dances" according to the I newspaper's investigation. If you turn down a job you lose your benefit.

I will not be applying myself. I wonder if IDS would be happy for his wife to work in a lap-dancing club. Or perhaps he fancies his own chances.

And do you think you have heard this story before? Last time it happened in 2010 all politicians promised on their mothers' graves (even the ones whose mothers are still alive!) that it would never happen again. A fat lot of use they are!

IDS attracted attention for his insistence that he should get a hand-out from the state to pay for his rather expensive £39 breakfasts. A scrounger and a pimp it would seem.

When Labour was elected in 1945 one of its first acts was to insist that the unemployed be treated with respect. The present canaille of politicians could not care less. We deserve better.

Derek McMillan, Sussex

'Seismic' cuts

The level of cuts being implemented by Welsh Labour councils is now so great that only geological terms will suffice to indicate their size. Carmarthenshire Council's Labour leader has described the potential £18 million savings as a "tsunami of cuts". Now Newport's Labour leader is trying to get support from other parties to identify cuts of up to £14 million, which he describes as "seismic change".

It is clear that Welsh Labour councils have no intention of standing up to the



photo Cardiff SP

Con-Dems and that they will pass on all cuts, albeit with "glum faces" as in Blaenau Gwent.

We don't need sad makers of cuts; we need representatives that will vote to protect our jobs and services. It is clear that we need an earthquake in political representation to match the scale of the task ahead. Trade Unionist & Socialist Coalition (TUSC) Wales is pledged to fight against all cuts and for the needs of working class people and their communities.

Ronnie Job

Shock: Labour MP tells truth

George Mudie is my Mum's MP in East Leeds, Denis Healey's old seat. I heard him on BBC's 'World at One' the other day talking about being a Labour MP

nowadays. He sounded worn out and cynical.

Parliament? 'It's a dreadful place if you come here with idealism, if you come from a constituency where you can see what's happening to ordinary people, and down here we go through this farce.'



photo Llanelli SP

Labour's alternative? 'I have difficulty knowing what we stand for... we have got to demonstrate that we are relevant to their lives... why would you vote Labour if we're not offering something different?'

Mudie was a trade union official (NUPE) and leader of Leeds city council before entering parliament in 1992. If people like him are so utterly demoralised how are Unite ever going to get people to join the Labour Party?

We need to start again and build a new party for working people.

Paul Gerrard, Salford

Aiding who?

Missing from headline grabbing articles about UKIP MEP Godfrey Bloom's 'bongo bongo land' rant, is how aid is used as a blunt tool to benefit private companies at the expense of farmers and workers in the recipient countries. Capitalist institutions like the World Bank, IMF and western governments, including the UK, typically impose neoliberal economic conditions on aid recipient countries. This includes privatisation of industries and natural resources and deregulating labour markets. These measures boost the market share and profits of multinational companies while leaving the ex-colonial recipients of 'aid' mired in poverty.

At the recent G8 Summit held in Northern Ireland, Prime Minister Cameron announced a new western alliance of countries which would offer financial aid if African states agree economic deals. These deals, in effect, are land grabs whereby small farmers are evicted to make way for multinational corporations to exploit resources. One agreement, for example, stipulates ending the Mozambique government's distribution of free agricultural seeds to its farmers.

These land grabs mean tens of thousands of smallholders becoming unemployed. Moreover, in aid countries under such agreements, land that produced food is used to satisfy western biofuel targets.

Another African country receiving aid for reconstruction is war-torn Mali. The World Bank has made aid dependent upon Mali privatising its cotton industry. This industry has already been wrecked by western governments - along with China and Russia - subsidising their own rich cotton producers. The net effect is to make dirt-poor Malians even poorer and more dependent upon 'aid' and aid donors.

Simon Carter, East London

Reflections and sycophancy: Kinnock versus the socialist Liverpool council

Tony Mulhearn

Former Liverpool 47 councillor

Present day Labour councillors who are carrying out Tory government cuts are still haunted by calls to emulate the example of the Liverpool 47 councillors who refused to carry out Margaret Thatcher's cuts in the 1980s.

This was further evidenced in a recent BBC Today programme when Baron Jenkin, Minister of the Environment during the Liverpool 47's tenure, was asked to comment on the content of cabinet papers which had been made public.

He said the biggest problem he had ever faced was the Militant Tendency's control of Liverpool. He was urged to send commissioners in to take control of the city.

His response was: "How do you get commissioners past half a million people, and how do you get them out again?" Recognising the potency of a mass campaign, his trepidation persuaded him to reject the idea.

This was followed by the first of a series of 'Reflections' in which Baron Hennessy of Nympsfield, FBA and an English historian of government, asks senior politicians to reflect on their life and times.

His first interview was with 'ex-socialist firebrand', ex-Labour leader Lord Kinnock. The interview was a model of sycophancy, leavened with dollops of cloying flattery.

Naturally Hennessy's big question was practically preceded by a blast of trumpets and a roll of drums.

It went something like: 'Now Neil, we come to what some people consider was the best conference speech in the history of the world - your attack on the Liverpool Militants, what gave you such courage and fortitude to make such a brilliant demolition of Liverpool?'

Bloated toad

Although it was a radio show, you could sense his Lordship swelling up like a bloated toad as he entered into a fantasy world in which he carried out his historic role of saving the Labour Party from destruction and delivering a knock-out blow to brave councillors he described as 'clowns'.

Pete Watson

Nottingham

Channel 4's *The Mill* makes a change from the usual TV. Here we have a glimpse into the lives of working class teenagers forced to work in the cotton mills of the north west.

It is set in the 1830s, a time of protest and change in Britain. The "ten hours movement" is active to reduce the working day. For the children and young people who work at the Mill, this is a dream. They are "contracted" to work 12 hours a day and more in return for food and shelter. This drama is based on the Greg family who were mill owners at the time. Many of the events in the series took place, based on the historical records of the area.

Life is hard for the young workers with the Mill bell sounding for the start of work at 6am. But the young



The Liverpool council fought Thatcher's cuts to fund jobs, homes and services photo Dave Sinclair

He conveniently ignored the fact that the result of his carrying out the edicts of Rupert Murdoch and then Daily Mirror owner, pension thief Robert Maxwell, was the two worst Labour defeats since 1931 while, by contrast, Liverpool's Labour votes were the highest in the history of the city.

Hennessy of course did not ask

why, since Kinnock's speech, Labour has been reduced to a hollowed-out scarecrow whose idea of opposition is to ape the policies of the ruling party.

One was reminded of socialist writer Upton Sinclair's quote: "It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it."

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The Mill: A change from the usual TV

Mill women don't take things lying down.

In episode one, a worker decides to reduce the working day using her own methods. She climbs the bell tower and takes out the clanger so they all get a sleep in! The overseer at the Mill routinely abuses the young women who work at the Mill. The clanger is put to good use when he seeks to abuse her.

Hannah Greg, of the mill owning family, is active in the anti-slavery movement. She takes a workinger with her to a meeting where an ex-slave tells of her life in slavery.

The well-to-do audience gasp when she tells of children having to work from dawn to dusk without pay. But Tommy, the young worker, nods at this. What real difference is there between him and a slave?

The ten hours movement had some success in passing laws to reduce the working week and child la-

We have a glimpse into the lives of 1830s working class teenagers working in north west cotton mills

bour. But what is a zero-hours contract but a return to the day when young people were forced to work for nothing? To sit waiting for a call to tell you whether you can work is unpaid labour. Past gains often have to be won again by struggle.

The next episode is on Channel 4 at 8pm, Sunday 18 August, or you can view all episodes so far on 4OD: channel4.com/programmes/the-mill/4od

Successes, failures and stalemates

A week in the life of a trade union rep

Glynn Doherty represents one of the large trade unions working mostly in the public sector. He recently gave the Socialist an insight into a week in his working life.

Monday

Not looking forward to today. Three redundancy appeals in a small enterprise - an increasing issue for me lately. In larger employers, there's more opportunity to galvanise opposition across the workforce. This workforce is small and disparate; only these three face dismissal.

I've explained beforehand the odds are stacked against them. Unless we find a procedural or discriminatory failing, it's unlikely the decision will be overturned.

Three separate appeals, almost six hours. When one woman breaks down as the realisation hits that she is losing her job of almost two decades, I call a respite. In all honesty, I'm close to tears as well.

After each hearing, I'm embarrassed to be thanked by the members for my assistance. They know their hopes are forlorn.

I go home exhausted... But I still have a job tomorrow.

these workers could go home feeling ignored.

Wednesday

I've been running drop-in sessions in town centres, allowing workers to turn up when it suits them.

The sessions are casual - members can discuss work problems or just chat in general about what the union does. Non-members can attend. Obviously I can't help them with individual problems until they join but with low trade union membership, these are great opportunities to spread the word about collectiveness.

I plan to take 30 minutes setting up the room with posters, newsletters and a projector. But there's two workers waiting for me.

They've got issues to discuss, they don't want leaflets. They're home carers facing split shifts or being refused working patterns which allow them to take their kids to school. I advise them of their rights and emphasise they will have more success if everyone on the team takes the same stance.

Despite the rush at the beginning, turnout is small and slow. But I'm not frustrated.

I speak to around a dozen workers but that's more than if I'd been stuck in an office. Face-to-face contact is so important.

It also gives me the opportunity to get workers to try and organise their workmates themselves. The best 'recruiters' are not full-time or branch officers but local stewards and workers.

I'm pleased one of those who turned up agrees to become a contact for her area, taking away a batch of application forms.

Thursday

I travel to help a dismissed worker present her grievance. She's been sacked on the spot without any



photo Elaine Brunskill

warnings, letters or hint of a disciplinary process; in anything but the legal sense, unfairly.

But she doesn't have the two years' service needed to take it to an employment tribunal. This is a bosses' charter for hire and fire and why socialists support employment rights from day one of every job.

Within hearings, it's sometimes difficult to prevent members falling into traps laid by the employer. They want to get everything off their chests but this can cause problems.

The only hope for this member is if the employer has a change of mind - which is highly unlikely - or I try and rescue some form of financial settlement.

The member just wants to slag off her manager and the company - a quite understandable reaction but one that's not going to get her anything more than 20 minutes satisfaction!

I manage to wheedle some previously unknown information out of them and turn it round to our advantage. It's still not an easy hearing. Later she was offered a £2,500 settlement.

Clearly the employer, under no legal obligation, was minded to make an offer to protect their reputation both in the community and with the union. A valuable lesson.

Once again my evening turned to redundancy. Austerity measures in local education authorities means often hidden cuts. School budget shortfalls means cuts in jobs or, more often, hours.

Underemployment is as much a problem as unemployment... except that government statistics record only those out of work completely.

Tonight's meeting is at a small rural primary school proposing cuts in teaching assistants' hours.

For one worker it looks like her hours will be cut to a level below the threshold where she's able to claim Working Tax Credit. If the cuts go through she would be worse off in work than out - this is the reality of so-called benefit scroungers.

Occasions like this are why I support the call for an initial one-day general strike against austerity. These schoolworkers also recognised the futility of tackling every-

thing on an individual rather than collective basis.

Friday

The negotiations following Tuesday's mass meeting. Senior management are surprised at the level of opposition to their plans and they're already prepared to make concessions.

We manage to negotiate at least the introduction of a four-day working week as recompense for a move to more seasonal working.

A couple of hours answering queries on a helpline, then a welcome few pints with a local convenor.

A busy week but not unusually so - successes, failures and stalemates. One thing is absolutely clear in my mind though - without the knowledge and confidence I've obtained through being a Marxist and having the support of the Socialist Party around me, I would have ended all such weeks like this feeling demoralised and unable to provide workers with any alternative to the assaults they face.

Occasions like this are why I support the call for an initial one-day general strike against austerity

Tuesday

A chance to catch up with paperwork: a compromise agreement I've negotiated; challenging a local authority over a massively underquoted redundancy pay-out; a few emails to members seeking advice.

After lunch, I meet members in a local depot to get feedback on proposals to introduce annualised hours. The full time officer of the other union involved doesn't materialise so I run a joint meeting myself.

There's overwhelming rejection without me having to nudge or direct! The workers provide information I can use in negotiations to show the plans won't deliver promised 'savings'.

I stop around at the end of such meetings. Some workers need to chat in private; some are not confident of speaking up in front of dozens of others but have views and ideas. If I run off straightaway,



photos Paul Mattsson



Come to the Socialist Party Summer Camp

5pm, Friday 23 to 1pm, Monday 26 August
New venue in Ware, Hertfordshire

Discussions programme announced:

Friday evening: Politics and Music - David Gorton

Saturday morning: Save our NHS - Jon Dale

Saturday evening: World in turmoil, report from CWI school - SP general secretary Peter Taaffe

Sunday morning: 100 years since the Dublin Lockout - Cillian Gillespie

Sunday evening: The fight for a new workers' party: Labour, the unions and TUSC - speakers include Dave Nellist

Monday morning: Battling the bedroom tax

Activities include climbing wall, archery, zip line, paintball, golf and fishing • Meals available at reasonable prices • Evening burger bar • Camp fire • Quiz night • Live music • Crèche for younger children during discussions • Red Flag Club for older children

Bring along a tent, sleeping bag, plate, cup, bowl, knife, fork and spoon.

Costs (not including food or activities): 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

SAVE OUR HOSPITAL Shut down the town!



All out to save the NHS! photo Paul Mattsson

Andy Bentley
Staffordshire Socialist Party

Self-appointed administrators have announced plans to reduce services at Stafford District General Hospital (DGH) and facilities in surrounding towns. It leaves people to travel 20 miles to hospitals in Wolverhampton or Stoke.

This is what they effectively decided months ago - it fits in nicely with government plans to run down DGHs and dismantle and privatise the NHS. No one in Staffordshire accepts their verdict!

The administrators' so-called consultation is a sham - they know it and we know it! Over 1,500 angry people turned up to Stafford's first 'consultation' meeting. Only half could fit

in the room, others went to another room, 250 listened in a car park.

Despite calls for calm, people vented fury against health bosses who had cut their services. They cried "turn it off" as bosses played their promo video. Staff who challenged the bosses were cheered to the rafters. If that's the start, then future consultation meetings don't augur well for administrators!

We don't need to be 'consulted' again - 50,000 of us marched on 20 April against any plans to dismantle Stafford/Cannock hospital! Originally the administrators raised the spectre of closure but the pressure we have all put on means they are not confident enough to go that far at this stage.

But they're clearly still not listening enough! The powers that be still want to get rid of Maternity, Paediatrics,

Intensive care and downgrade A&E. We need to step up the fight to defend Stafford and Cannock! Decisive action is necessary.

If we are to make them listen to us and keep our services then we must close down the town for a huge protest! Every business should close, with every worker stopping work for a day or half a day to build a giant weekday rally that can make crystal clear we will not accept the loss of any of our services.

The 50,000 who marched on 20 April showed clearly there is massive support. Now is the time to mobilise this support again.

If the 'Support Stafford Hospital' campaign called for a shutdown and named the date, this would receive massive support locally and nationally. We should turn the 'consultation' meetings into mass rallies to

build support for a shutdown. Trade unions should join in by organising workplace meetings. Community groups and residents associations could organise local public meetings to mobilise support.

Neither is Stafford an isolated case. It's part of the government's plan to cut local hospitals and pri-

vatise as much as they can of our NHS. Support Stafford Hospital should appeal to organisers of other campaigns like Lewisham and elsewhere to support such action in Stafford. Save our NHS campaigners in other areas threatened with cuts might also consider taking similar action!

Protest at the Tory Conference in Manchester

- **SAVE OUR NHS**
- **Defend Jobs and Services**
- **No to Austerity**

March and Rally - Sunday 29 September

Assemble at Liverpool Road, M3 4FP, 11am
Marching to a rally in Whitworth Park

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!