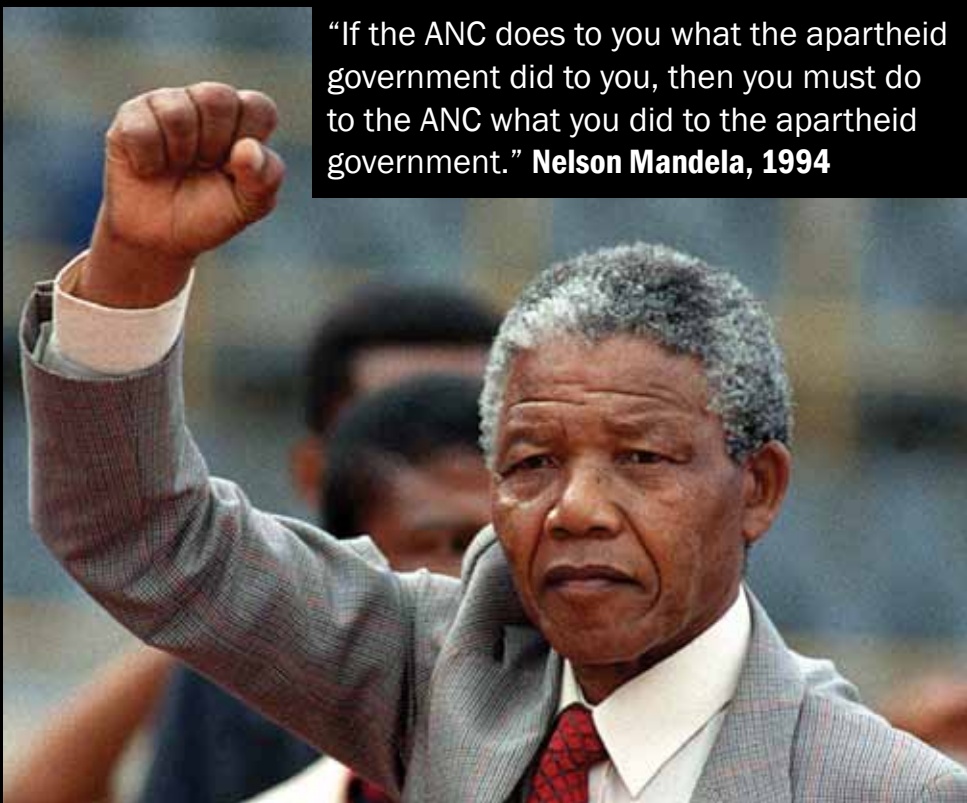




AFTER MANDELA: The struggle must continue



"If the ANC does to you what the apartheid government did to you, then you must do to the ANC what you did to the apartheid government." **Nelson Mandela, 1994**



Marikana 2012

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge

The worldwide tsunami of responses to Mandela's death reflects the almost universal disgust at the system of apartheid and at racism. It also shows the degree to which the mass movement in South Africa, of which Mandela is the most famous activist, continues to be an inspiration to millions of people.

In 1994 queues at the polling booths in the first election under conditions of full suffrage were the proof that brutal systems can be overthrown. The singing, dancing crowds at the football stadium for Mandela's memorial service celebrate that victory.

But their determined booing of current corrupt South African President Jacob Zuma shows that

long speeches in praise of Mandela will not cut across the deep-seated unpopularity that besets Zuma and the other 'dignitaries' that turned up. Tory axe-man Osborne had to endure similar jeering at the London Paralympics.

Like Zuma, these world leaders hope that some of Mandela's status will rub off on them because, like Zuma, their anti-working class, pro-capitalist policies inspire nothing but opposition from the masses. Twenty years after apartheid South Africa is the most unequal country in the world.

In 1994 Mandela warned that no leadership can be given a blank cheque: "If the ANC does to you what the apartheid government did to you, then you must do to the ANC what you did to the apartheid government."

In August 2012 the Zuma ANC

government sent the police to shoot down striking miners at the Marikana mine in Rustenburg. This massacre was a watershed. It clearly showed that the ANC and its Tripartite Alliance partners govern in the interest of the mine bosses and the capitalist class.

Following Marikana the strike committee, with other sections of the working class at the forefront of the struggle against job cuts, repression and privatisation, formed the Workers And Socialist Party (WASP). This was a vital step needed to begin to give the heroic South African working class its own political voice alongside its industrial strength.

The Democratic Socialist Movement, the Socialist Party's sister party in South Africa, has been to the fore, working with leading trade union activists. WASP's programme includes democratic nationalisa-

tion of the mines and big business. It has adopted the miners' demand for a living wage of R12,500 a month. It opposes all privatisation.

Since its foundation WASP is growing rapidly. This week the 50,000-strong National Transport Movement has officially confirmed it has affiliated to WASP. The South African National Civic Association Transkei region (Eastern Cape) will be holding a rally on 16 December, the day after Mandela's funeral to announce its affiliation to WASP. Sanco has 6,000 members just in Umtata near Qunu where Mandela will be buried.

And the National Union of Metalworkers, with over 300,000 members is holding a conference later in December in response to the clamour among its rank and file for a break with the ANC.

The South African working class

has had a speedy school in betrayal in the 20 years of ANC rule. But the booing of Zuma highlights that the masses, after burying Mandela will be ready to bury Zuma and the ANC! WASP is attracting workers because of its clear programme of struggle and socialism.

It is WASP and those fighting oppression, austerity and capitalism around the world who stand in the real tradition of the mass struggle to overthrow apartheid.

■ **Build the Workers And Socialist Party**

■ **Fight for a socialist alternative**

See pages 5, 6 and 7 for more on Mandela's legacy and how your trade union can donate to WASP (workerssocialistparty.co.za)

Cops Off Campus

NUS must call a national demonstration now!

Claire Laker-Mansfield
Socialist Students national
organiser

The shocking brutality meted out against peaceful protesters at the University of London (UoL), witnessed by millions via the internet, has sent shockwaves through the student movement. This was a deliberate and concerted attempt to crush protest through brute force. It is clear that police and university management worked together in order to first remove protesting students from their own campus, and then attack demonstrations taking place outside.

Within the closed towers of a marketised higher education institution, dissent, debate and protest are dangerous and threatening. As far as UoL's management is concerned, student representation and democracy are easily disposed of luxuries. This is most clearly demonstrated by their attempt to close down the University of London Union (ULU) – one of the attacks that sparked the protests.

It's not just at UoL where there has been a crackdown. At Sussex University, where students have been fighting the privatisation of campus services, five students were suspended for their role in the campaign. This follows a series of occupations and a violent eviction by the police carried out last year. They were later reinstated under huge pressure from the campaign but as we go to press disciplinary action is still being pursued against them.

Sending a message

Elsewhere, at Birmingham, individual students have been targeted by the university's management with legal costs for obtaining an injunction against an occupation. Injunctions seem to have become the 'go to' response to occupations. On 4 December UoL's management obtained an injunction banning all 'occupational style protest' on any of their campuses. Across the country, university managers are uniting with a clear message: protest will not be tolerated.

Students must respond to this repression with a mass campaign to defend democratic rights. It's important that there is an escalation of protests at both UoL and Sussex. The student union at Sussex responded quickly and called an emergency members meeting and then a student strike in protest at the

Sussex

On 3 December an occupation of the conference centre at the University of Sussex left to join picket lines, in solidarity with the strike in defence of fair pay in higher education. We had been occupying since 26 November, despite best attempts by university management to starve us out by refusing to allow supplies up to where we were staying. The occupation was in solidarity with the strike, and in protest against the privatisation of university services.

On 4 December five of us received an email from the university notifying us that we have been suspended indefinitely from our studies, and that we were banned from campus.

We fully condemn this draconian move to suspend students for exercising their right to protest. We have been singled out as "key organisers" and "instigators" of the movement which has been ongoing since May 2012 and has involved hundreds if not thousands of students.

Adriano Mérola

suspensions.

Crucially, we need to organise solidarity demonstrations on campuses across the country. Socialist Students was key in calling the second national 'Cops Off Campus' day of action on 11 December.

Socialist Students is also demanding that the National Union of Students (NUS) lives up to its name and immediately calls a national demonstration as a first step in building a mass campaign for democratic rights as well as against fees, cuts and privatisation. Since the campaign to save ULU started, the right-wing leadership of NUS has given it zero worthwhile support. As cuts and privatisation have rained down on our campuses, NUS has remained inactive. It's time for those who lead this union to stand up and fight or stand aside.

Defence campaign

We also have to take measures to defend protesters against the police, and to support those who have been arrested and victimised for their role in campaigning. Our movement should be bold in its demand for the police to drop all charges against protesters.

We must also fight for a student and trade union-led inquiry into the brutality. NUS has called on Boris Johnson to organise an inquiry! This is the man who has said he would like to see even tougher anti-union laws brought in to effectively ban strike action for underground workers. No inquiry led by him and his cronies would have any legitimacy in the eyes of students and workers.

The trade union and anti-cuts movements needs to take preparation and well-organised stewarding of demonstrations very seriously, including youth and student demonstrations. Stewards need to help protect participants from potentially brutal or punitive actions by the police, guard against the role played by provocateurs and ensure the maximum degree of unity and collectivism, where our greatest strength lies.

This brutality, just like that which took place during the 2010 student movement, gives lie to the notion of the state as a neutral force within society. Under the blows of police violence ordinary people learn the true role of the police within a capitalist society: to protect the interests



Brutal policing on student protests in 2010 photos Senan

of the rich and powerful. For those who want to see a society run in the interests of the 99% it's necessary to understand the role of the state.

Democratic and civil liberties have been won by working people over generations of struggle and must be vigorously defended. But it will only be when capitalism is completely removed and a socialist society built, that our rights and freedoms can be fully protected and developed to a higher level.

Socialist Students says:

- NUS: call and mobilise a mass national demonstration to defend democratic rights on campus
- Drop all charges against arrested protesters
- Drop all charges against the Sussex Five
- For the right to demonstrate on and off campus
- For a student and trade union-led inquiry into police violence at the University of London
- Workers and students unite - For trade union organised stewarding and 'legal observers' to help defend demonstrators
- Build a mass, national campaign against cuts, fees and privatisation – we will not be cowed!



London

On 6 December the third consecutive day of protest outside ULU was met by heavy handed police who tried to kettle the demonstration as soon as it moved off. The protests moved quickly to avoid this. There were no more arrests and the demonstration ended with a sit down protest outside SOAS, which had agreed to keep the building open during the activities but closed its doors. The police charged at the protest a number of times, as they had done on previous protests.

It is clear the police are trying to scare students with violence and repression to stop the movement from growing. They have also arrested student organisers and student and trade union reps. This protest showed that these actions are having the opposite effect. A huge number of students who had not been involved in the previous protests came out in opposition to the violence.

Helen Pattison

See
socialiststudents.org.uk for reports from
the 11 December day
of action and further
protests

Coleraine

On the evening of 2 December, students at the University of Ulster's Coleraine (UUC) campus began an occupation of the senior common room in opposition to plans to close the space. The Socialist newspaper in Ireland spoke to Chloe Gault, a member of UUC Socialist Society and an organiser of the occupation.

"The Senior Common Room is one of the only public spaces at UUC where students and staff can relax and socialise. It's an essential space for clubs and societies on campus. It also has historical importance for the student movement and as a space where students from across the sectarian divide come together to mix and discuss. When we heard of management's plans to close it and turn it into a 'corporate dining room' for the great and the good, we felt we had to act.

"At the same time as management is holding down staff pay, student services are being cut to the bone. As far as I'm concerned, students and staff are in the same fight. Attacks on

staff pay hit morale and impact on our education. We need to stand together. We've developed a very close relationship with the staff. We've been visiting their picket lines and they've been coming up to support the occupation.

"Most students here understand the importance of what we're doing and have been really positive. We've already got great support from activists from further afield, through Twitter and so on, but also some have come to visit us – even driving up from Belfast and bringing us bags of food! NUS-USI [the official student organisation in Northern Ireland] has also been very supportive.

"So far, management has simply ignored us because we have the right to be in our common room 24/7. Perhaps they hope we'll just go away – they're wrong! We're in this for the long-haul, until the future of the SCR is guaranteed."

Tweet @occupycoleraine and email occupycoleraine@outlook.com with your messages of support!

Exeter

On 3 December student support was organised at both the university and the college in Exeter for the higher and further education strike. A short occupation was organised at Exeter University in the Queens building senior common room from 5pm until 11.30am the following day.

At the college, the picket line was strong. Students at the college stood with their teachers and brought a (much appreciated) large flask of coffee which was supplied by a local café. Students from the college also took coffee up to pickets on the main university campus. There was a lot of discussion among students about the strike and how we can unite to beat back the vicious Con-Dem government.

Jesse Dodkins
Exeter College Socialist Students

MPs' pay rise scandal

Struggling workers say 'fight poverty pay'!

MPs are set to receive a bumper pay rise of 11% in 2015, bringing a backbencher's annual salary up to £74,000. This pay hike - in contrast to years of austerity driven pay freezes meted out by the very same MPs to low-paid public sector workers - is supplemented by expense claims that would make a fraudster blush!

Workers angered by this blatant inequity spoke to the Socialist:

"Unison members will be mad and disgusted that MPs' pay has shot up while we are still enduring a three-year pay freeze!

In January we will be stunned by high gas and electricity bills as well as being hit by massively hiked transport costs. What do these MPs do anyway? They don't represent us! Are we not worth decent pay? Come the new year, members will be more determined to fight the pay freeze which is crushing us and our families."

April Ashley assistant branch secretary, Southwark Unison (personal capacity)

"At a time when UCU members are in dispute following years of real-terms pay freezes, the MPs' pay rises will be a slap in the face for our members. We work hard to provide a high-quality education to all students, while neoliberal governments have systematically underfunded us and pushed towards the sell-off of post-16 education. We need to kick them out and get political representatives who will defend education!"

Thomas House UCU union (personal capacity)

"PCS workers in the frontline in jobcentres and call centres in Lincolnshire have had to put up with a pay freeze for several years. We also have to deal with claimants who are in an even worse financial situation than us. It sticks in the throat seeing MPs line their pockets. It shows the utter contempt of the establishment for working and poor people in Britain."

Nick Parker PCS branch secretary, DWP Lincolnshire

Several cabinet ministers have attempted to deflect public criticism by saying they won't accept the pay rise, conveniently ignoring the fact that

they already receive a higher salary than backbenchers - £134,565 - and enjoying other perks, such as a gold-plated final salary pension scheme.

Indeed, this worker-bashing cabinet of 29 ministers includes 23 millionaires. Labour's shadow cabinet also has at least seven millionaires.



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Austerity and the new working poor

The privileged position of these establishment politicians is even more galling in that news of their forecast pay rise coincided with a report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) charity which shows a big increase in the numbers of working poor in Britain (see below).

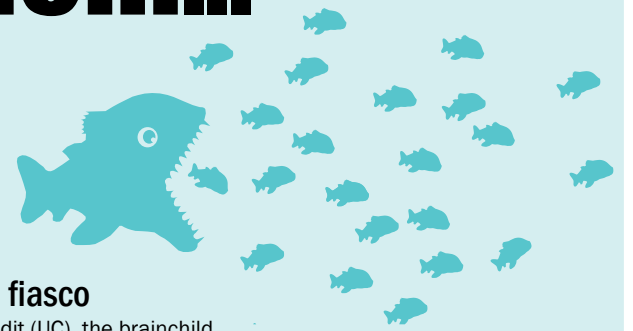
At the same time, the New Economics Foundation think tank says: "Workers on low and middle incomes are experiencing the biggest decline in their living standards since reliable records began in the mid-19th century."

Some of the JRF report's main findings:

- The number of workers paid below the living wage (currently £7.65, £8.80 in London) rose from 4.6 million to five million in 2012.
- 50% of working families in poverty have an adult paid below the living wage
- The fall in median income over the last two years has wiped out all the gains of the previous decade, the JRF said.
- Median incomes in the UK in 2011-12, in real terms, were just below what they were in 2001-02 - £367 a week compared with £368
- Incomes of the poorest 10% have been falling since 2004-05.
- Average incomes have fallen by 8% since their peak in 2008. As a result, around two million people have an income that while above today's poverty line, would have been below the poverty line in 2008
- 6.7 million working families are living below the poverty line - a rise of 500,000 from 2012
- Julia Unwin, chief executive of the JRF, said: "Hard work is not working. We have a labour market that lacks pay and protection, with jobs offering precious little security and paltry wages that are insufficient to make ends meet."
- The government can claim that the number of pensioners in poverty is at a 30-year low... But, 6.3 million retired and unemployed families are living in poverty
- 400,000 families have been hit by a double whammy of benefit cuts from the 'bedroom tax' and council tax benefit. Two-thirds of these families were already in poverty

(Source: Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion report 2013)

Them...



Universal fiasco

Universal Credit (UC), the brainchild of work and pensions secretary Iain Duncan Smith, is in meltdown even before its launch. The £2 billion project, with its 'simplified monthly payments' to replace five existing benefit schemes and 'save millions of pounds', is so behind schedule and full of IT glitches that it won't be paid to an estimated 700,000 claimants after a planned 2017 deadline. Make no mistake, UC isn't designed to "simplify" an archaic benefits system, it is designed by the Con-Dems with tougher eligibility criteria to cut further social welfare at the expense of the poorest and most vulnerable in society.

Already, under the government's pilot scheme, benefit claimants are having to borrow money from family and payday loan sharks in order to survive through the month.

the frugal aristo. "It's the only direct route to Biarritz". And yet, some people continue to knock the royalty...

Struggling to survive

Food on the table or heat the home? Increasingly for many low-income households it's less food to eat. A Real Life Reform survey found that such households in October were spending a miniscule £2.10 a day, per person, (down from £3.27 in July) on groceries as many had run out of cash after paying essential items such as rocketing energy bills. Increasing numbers of people are also relying on food banks to feed themselves each week. And, as this column pointed out in the last issue, personal debt has soared as people are forced to use rip-off credit cards and payday loans to buy essentials.

Austere times

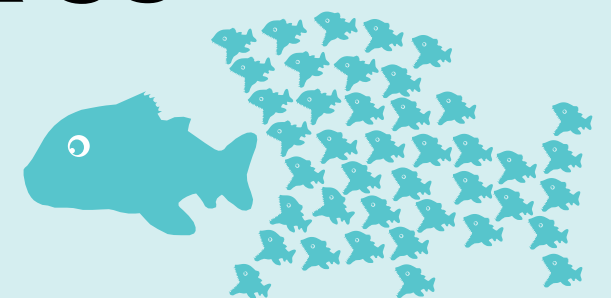
Remember 'Big Dave' Cameron's "we'll all in it together" rallying cry as his government pushed through the biggest austerity programme in living memory? Yes, we're all still laughing, cynically!

But, apparently, some people have taken the message to heart, including Princess Michael of Kent. The "Pushy Princess" has cut back by not eating out in restaurants. "That's too extravagant". Instead, "we invite people here [Kensington Palace]. I cook. Well, if I'm giving a dinner party I get help". Luckily, her bijou palace pad only costs her £70 a month in rent, so that should cut down the housing benefit claim. And forget about taking the luxury limo for a spin, it's public transport for now on. "I love easyJet", says

Housing lockout

According to the National Housing Federation the number of working people claiming housing benefit has soared by 109% since the 2009 recession. The Federation also points out that half of people's disposable income is paid out in rent and that this figure will rise to a staggering 57% in ten years' time. Moreover, by 2020 house prices will have risen by an unaffordable 35% 'locking out home ownership forever', it added. So who's benefitting? The NHF says that the government's £24 billion expenditure on housing benefit is simply going to line the pockets of private landlords rather than into building new houses. It also points out that in England alone 240,000 new homes are needed each year but that between 2009 and 2013 house building fell by 10% to 107,000.

...& Us



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

What we saw



2013 Scrooge award?

One of the most famous Christmas stories is 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens, in which Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly banker who pays poverty wages, is shown the true spirit of Christmas by the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. Poor Bob Cratchit, his bookkeeper, has to beg Scrooge to be allowed Christmas Day off work.

But even Dickens didn't foresee the real ghost of Christmas future. This advert can be seen on the underground for the Dickens museum in London:

"A Very Dickensian Christmas Join us in 2013 for the most Dickensian Christmas London can offer! Open Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day"

Paula Mitchell

the **Socialist**

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what we think

Osborne's budget statement – work 'til you drop or fight back!

The Tories brayed and shouted, they stamped their feet, they cheered as multi-millionaire George Osborne, the self-styled 'Iron Chancellor', rained hammer blow after hammer blow on the living standards of all but the super-rich.

Osborne pledged to claw public spending back to its 1948 level. The Con-Dems are forging ahead with their attempt to roll back the welfare state and with it all the hard-won gains made by the working class in the 20th century.

The Autumn Budget Statement contained a further £3 billion in cuts over the next three years, a below inflation increase of only 1% for out-of-work benefits, and the introduction of a cap on welfare spending.

But Osborne boasted that Plan A for austerity was working. The weak economic recovery, however, is fuelled by increased consumer spending, which is based on rising household debt and spending savings, and a housing bubble. In fact, Osborne has reverted to the policy of economic growth through financial speculation and debt that triggered the crisis in the first place.

No investment increase

All the post-election talk of the "march of the makers" and boosting manufacturing has been shelved – there has been no increase in investment.

Meanwhile it is business as usual for the rich, who seem to live in another world – even RBS chairman Philip Hampton said he felt like he was having an out-of-body experience when one banker complained to him that his bonus was only £4 million.

The changes to the retirement age are particularly pernicious. They represent an offensive against the successes won by public sector workers in 2005 against the Blair government's threats to pensions. Plans to extend the retirement age to 68 and 69 will be brought forward to the mid-2030s and 2040s.

With the prospect of a pensions commission that would periodically review the date people got their pension on the basis of life expectancy, Osborne posed the threat of an open-ended retirement.

The outlook for young people is bleak. Youth unemployment has been rising since 2010 – and now consultants PwC have calculated that today's youngest teenagers could have a state pension age of 75 and those born today could work until 77. Or not as the case may be.

Osborne justifies the changes on the basis of rising life expectancy but according to the Office for National Statistics this has actually fallen since 2009. One third of men and one quarter of women will not live long enough to claim their pensions in the mid-2030s. Lower life-expectancy is concentrated among the poorest.

Many workers will fear that the new age for the state pension will be used as the yardstick in occupational pension schemes in the public and private sector. This will invalidate one of the main planks in the 'deal' that was agreed to by the right-wing union leaders to scupper the N30 pensions strike.

Union members should call for an emergency meeting of the TUC General Council to organise a 24-hour general strike against this latest vicious instalment of the cuts and the

austerity offensive in general.

The Con-Dems can only get away with these blatant class attacks because of the absence of a political opposition to austerity in parliament and the failure of most of the trade union leadership to harness the growing anger against austerity and mount a real fight.

Frances O'Grady, the leader of the TUC, acknowledged that the statement "was a major blow to the hard-working people who get so regularly name-checked by this government" but she offered no way forward.

The huge demo and public sector strikes that took place in 2011 showed the potential for a determined fightback until it was sold out by the right-wing trade union leaders. In the last months firefighters, teachers, university lecturers and probation officers have been on strike, proving that where a lead is given workers take the opportunity to express the boiling anger against cuts and austerity. Firefighters are continuing their battle to defend pensions in a strike on 13 and 14 December.

Labour government

But still the TUC leadership cower in the trenches, waiting for a Labour government which has pledged to carry on with the austerity policies demanded by the bosses and the super-rich.

The few crumbs that Osborne dropped, such as the £50 reduction in fuel bills and scrapping the fuel duty increase, were partly a reaction to Labour's pledge to freeze energy prices. But mainly it was an acknowledgement of the popular anger beneath the surface over falling living standards while big

business and the banks pile up profits.

But anyone who thinks that a Labour government will do more than dole out the same few crumbs is mistaken.

Ed Balls, in a pathetic performance, pledged that Labour would stick to the Tory spending limits outlined in the autumn statement.

In fact, a struggle now, including setting the date and preparing for a 24-hour general strike, is the best way to inform a future government that austerity will be resisted.

Meanwhile Labour leaders such as Rachel Reeves mount campaigns to save one of the cruellest cuts – the ill-fated Universal Credit – instead of signing its death warrant by pledging to undo it in government.

Yet when even a hint of opposition is given, such as when Labour said it would abolish the bedroom tax or freeze energy prices it gets overwhelming public support.

In fact the public is normally far to the left, such as the mass support there is for re-nationalisation of the energy companies. But it gives a glimpse of what can be achieved by a fight.

Who can doubt that if a 24-hour general strike had been built for in 2013 it would have ignited a mass movement against austerity which could have driven the Con-Dem government of millionaires back?

A new mass workers' party is urgently needed to put forward that political alternative to austerity, linked to struggle.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, whose leadership includes the RMT transport union, will be standing hundreds of candidates in the local elections in 2014 as a step towards building such a party.

Reactions to the Autumn Statement

“Making us work longer for less”

Janice Godrich

President of the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS)

Osborne's autumn statement delivered nothing for millions of ordinary people across the UK. The Tories' policy of making us work longer for less continues.

Raising the pension age even more is disguised by mealy-mouthed comments about how good it is that people are living longer.

It ignores the reality of the shorter healthy life expectancy of the poorest people by simply reflecting the increasing life spans of the healthy and wealthy. Two thirds of Britons will fail to reach the state retirement age of 68 free from disability.

The additional £2.1 billion worth of cuts in civil service spending will lead to further job losses and privatisation.

Government departments, already struggling under budget cuts and the loss of tens of thousands of civil servants, will simply not be able to cope, leading to a deterioration in services to some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

PCS will continue to campaign against austerity using all tools at our disposal. Our members' living standards are falling. Those in work are joining those out of work living



Campaigning against the cuts
photo Paul Mattsson

in poverty.

We will continue to do all we can to organise action against these attacks, as well as working with those campaigning against the attacks on unemployed and disabled people.

The creation of 'slave learners'

A UCU member

Those of us working in further education (FE) are facing attacks on our pay, conditions and pensions – just like everyone in the public sector.

FE lecturers have seen the value of our pay fall by 15% over the last four years and have begun a campaign of strike action over a 'final' pay offer of 0.7%, which the employers want to tie to an end to national agreements on working conditions.

We're also facing an increased workload and the additional stress that it causes.

FE colleges are part of what's still referred to as 'the post compulsory sector'.

While that's never been entirely true – some school-leavers have always

had to go to college out of economic necessity – the fact that the overwhelming majority of students are there because they want to be, not because they've been forced, has been important to anyone working or studying in our colleges.

The Chancellor's plans will turn a whole layer of young people – who'll already feel let down by the education system and society as a whole – into educational conscripts: 'slave learners' alongside the slave workers on workfare schemes.

The Chancellor's message seems to be 'the economy is improving, so working class people need to suffer more'.

The result will be even more pressure on the already overstretched FE system.

The scheme doesn't even begin to tackle the real problems that young people are facing – unemployment or a life of low pay, lousy working conditions and zero-hour contracts. It won't create a single new job for those young people. It's yet another stick to beat them with, and part of a cynical ploy to reduce the youth unemployment figures – on paper at least – by making it harder to claim benefits.

**Shake up the establishment parties**

TUSC Chair and ex-Labour MP Dave Nellist said "Osborne thinks that austerity is working, but the queues at foodbanks and pay day lenders tell a different story.

"It's time to make a stand. In the 2014 council elections the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition is planning on standing a record number of working class candidates against cuts.

"There is a small but growing number of anti-cuts councillors, prepared to stand up for ordinary people, including TUSC supporters and Southampton Councillors Keith Morrell and Don Thomas. In 2014 socialists, trade unionists and many ordinary working class people want to shake up the establishment parties in Britain."

Away with the fairies

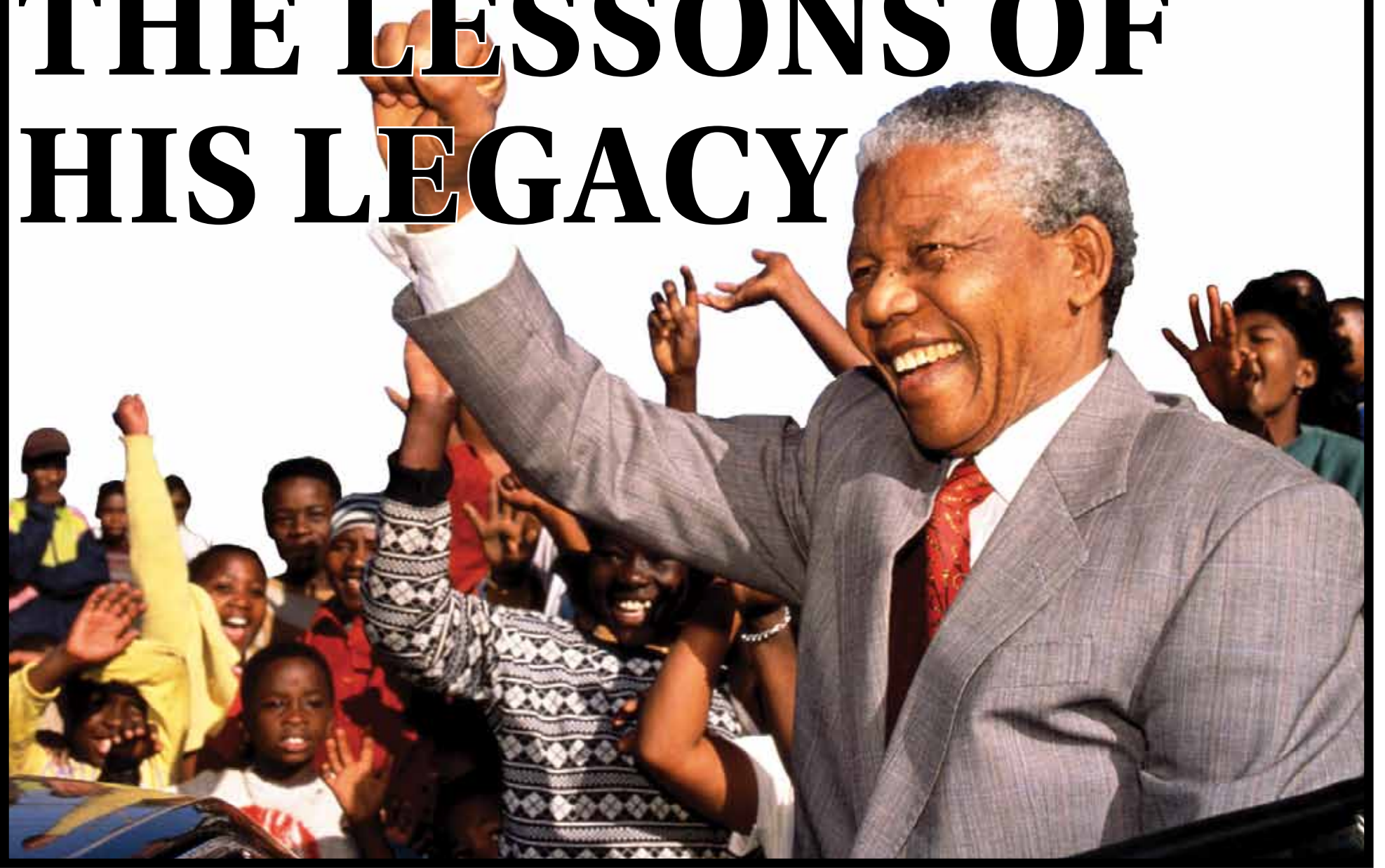
The Mansion House speech and now this statement is the ruling class emboldened.

Imagine how different it would be if there had been the 24-hour general strike we are fighting for. There is NO recovery for the majority of us. Osborne is away with the fairies if he thinks we believe that.

Nancy Taaffe, Waltham Forest

For the full statements from Dave Nellist and Nancy Taaffe see www.socialistparty.org.uk

NELSON MANDELA: THE LESSONS OF HIS LEGACY



**Weizmann Hamilton and
Thamsanga Dumezweni**
Democratic Socialist Movement
(CWI South Africa)

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is rightly revered worldwide as a statesman ranking alongside great figures of history like Martin Luther King. He is recognised for his role in the defeat of one of the most reviled regimes on the planet and one of the most odious systems of oppression and exploitation in history – apartheid.

Mandela has acquired the status of universal hero because of his commitment to self-sacrifice for a noble cause – the national liberation of the black majority. This is captured by his declaration, during the 1956 Treason Trial, that non-racialism was a principle that he was prepared to die for.

His willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for the cause is borne out by the fact that he personally undertook the task of establishing the African National Congress's (ANC) armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Mandela secretly paid visits to countries such as Algeria to seek support for the armed struggle, leading him to be installed as MK's first commander-in-chief.

His steadfast refusal to accept any kind of compromise from the apartheid regime in exchange for his freedom, choosing instead to endure 27 years of incarceration, reinforced his stature as a man of principle and integrity committed to the service of his people. This is in sharp contrast to today's unprincipled, corrupt political elite that is seen by many as

trampling on the legacy Mandela entrusted to them.

As part of a new generation of young leaders in the 1940s and inspired by the colonial revolution, that shook imperialism at the end of World War Two, Mandela and his comrades, principally Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo, shook up the ANC leadership. Until then its character was determined by the road along which the leaders had sought salvation for the oppressed. They begged the Queen of England to release the black oppressed from bondage while pledging, as subjects, their undying loyalty to her and the British empire.

Mandela and his comrades, by taking control of the ANC Youth League and adopting the 1949 Programme of Action, converted the ANC for the first time into an organisation committed to achieving its objectives by mass action.

The Freedom Charter

From this followed the adoption of the Freedom Charter, whose radical demands reflected the extent to which the working class masses had come to influence the outlook of the ANC. From that point until liberation in 1994, it was possible for the working masses and those of the middle class (the aspirant black capitalist class), held in common subjugation by the white minority regime, to co-exist in the same organisation under the same programme in mutual commitment to overthrow white minority rule. It would not matter... until it mattered. Until, that is, the time came to implement the Freedom Charter.

The historic 1994 elections sym-



Supporters of the CWI in South Africa, 1992 photo Mark Yate

bolised the triumph of the national liberation struggle – the lifting of the yoke of racial oppression and the opening of the doors to a society in which black people, now a head taller, could stand side-by-side with their white counterparts as equals.

Assured by the promises of a better life for all and the strength of their numbers, the black majority embraced the generosity Mandela championed towards the white minority. Mandela's leadership, it was believed, had averted a racial civil war.

With a leadership that demon-

strated an apparently single-minded determination to lead its people to freedom, there was no reason to doubt the promise of a better life for all. Through Mandela's leadership, a new democracy, based on what has been described as the most progressive constitution in the world, had been ushered in.

On its foundations there would arise a new, 'rainbow nation', from which racial oppression and its companions – poverty, illiteracy, disease and homelessness – would be banished. In this new South Africa there would be equality of op-

portunity for all in a nation "united in its diversity".

Next year's elections will mark 20 years since the end of apartheid and reality looks rather different from the promises of the early 1990s. Although the racist FW De Klerk government duly vacated the seat of political power and the ANC has been regularly re-elected with large majorities, for the overwhelming majority little has changed.

The 'nation' that Mandela has bequeathed is as unreconstructed

Continued on pages 6 and 7

South African working class must continue the struggle

Continued from page 5

today as it was before the end of apartheid, disaggregated into its two main social forces – the working class on the one side and the capitalist class on the other. South Africa is reputed to be the most unequal society on Earth. As many as eight million are unemployed, 12 million go to bed hungry, millions are excluded from decent education, health and housing.

The ruling ANC elite is exhibiting the same characteristics as the one which it replaced – corrupt, inept and with an insatiable appetite for self-enrichment and power. Even worse, while condemning apartheid as a crime against humanity, the representatives of the new elite are displaying a growing infatuation with similar methods of rule as their predecessors. They take shelter behind repressive legislation to secure their grip on power, and to keep the nation in the same sort of dark secrecy and repression as the apartheid regime.

Instead of the fulfilment of the dreams of equality and prosperity the masses had been led to believe lay in store for them under democracy, it has only benefited a tiny minority. Far from the promised 'rainbow nation' of equals, South

South Africa is reputed to be the most unequal society on Earth

Africa today resembles, as ANC secretary general Gwede Mantashe has himself admitted, "an Irish Coffee" – black at the bottom, on top a thin layer of white cream sprinkled with chocolate.

Capitalist commentators would have us believe that South Africa would have been, if not the country of our dreams then at least a better place, had Mandela's successors continued to walk in his footsteps. The truth, however, is that this is precisely what they did.

Privatisation

Mandela played the decisive role in the abandonment of the Freedom Charter and everything the ANC was believed to have held sacred. The decisive break was the adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (Gear) programme in 1996. Gear, and the mass privatisation it rolled out, was to bring the ANC government incrementally into open collision with the working class in the workplaces, townships, squatter camps and universities.

Somewhat unfairly Thabo Mbeki (President of South Africa 1999 to 2008), who proudly proclaimed himself a Thatcherite, has come to be personally associated with Gear. Yet Gear was adopted under Mandela's presidency.

Mandela's position swung from an unswerving commitment to the Freedom Charter and its nationalisation clauses,



Nelson Mandela Freedom March, Birmingham, 1988 photo John Harris

to a declaration, well before the ANC entered parliament, that privatisation was now the ANC's fundamental policy. It was Mandela that led the ANC to power with the promise of jobs for all, and the same Mandela who declared in parliament after Gear had been adopted that the ANC government was "not a job-creating agency".

Whereas the adoption of the Freedom Charter was the culmination of the most democratic process in the ANC's history, the adoption of Gear was profoundly undemocratic. The Freedom Charter was the summation of the inputs of thousands of workers and of people of all walks of life across the country whose proposals were written on pieces of paper to be incorporated.

Secret discussions

Gear on the other hand was developed behind the backs not just of the membership, but even of the majority of the ANC cabinet. It was adopted and implemented in 1996, and presented to the membership at the ANC's Mafikeng conference in 1997 as an accomplished fact after it had already been approved by big business.

As former MK leader Ronnie Kasrils said: "...by late 1993 big business strategies were crystallising in secret late-night discussions at the Development Bank of South Africa. Present were South Africa's mineral and energy leaders, the bosses of US and British companies with a presence in South Africa..." What transpired out of these discussions? Kasrils reveals: "Nationalisation of the mines and [the commanding] heights of the economy as envisaged by the Freedom Charter was abandoned."

He continues: "The ANC accepted responsibility for a vast apartheid-era debt... a wealth tax on the super-rich to fund developmental projects was set aside, and domestic and international corporations, enriched by apartheid, were excused from any financial reparations. Extremely tight budgetary obligations were instituted that would tie the hands of any future governments; obligations to implement a free trade policy and abolish all forms of tariff protection in keeping with neoliberal free trade fundamentals were accepted. Big corporations were allowed to shift their main listings abroad."

Contrary to the propaganda of the old regime, the ANC leadership, despite its embrace of the South African Communist Party, was never infected by the 'disease' of communism. Mbeki, whose ideological outlook has falsely been portrayed as fundamentally at variance with that of Mandela's, in stating such was merely echoing within earshot of the working class what Mandela had made crystal clear back in 1956.

Nationalisation

Mandela did not want the Freedom Charter to be confused with socialism. The Freedom Charter, he explained "... is by no means a blueprint for a socialist state. It calls for the redistribution, but not nationalisation, of land; it provides for nationalisation of mines, banks, and monopoly industry, because big monopolies are owned by one race only, and without such nationalisation racial domination would be perpetuated de-

Far from the promised 'rainbow nation' of equals, South Africa today resembles, as ANC secretary general Gwede Mantashe has himself admitted, "an Irish Coffee" – black at the bottom, on top a thin layer of white cream sprinkled with chocolate

spite the spread of political power."

The ANC's support for nationalisation has never been as a step towards the abolition of capitalism, but to use the state to accelerate the development of a black capitalist class.

The ANC finds itself at this point in history, not because it has been derailed from the historical path it plotted for itself, but because this is where, given its history, social character and historical purpose, it has always been headed. This was signalled in Mandela's Treason Trial speech. He made clear the leadership's preparedness to compromise – even on the fundamental principle of majority rule based on one-person-one-vote by offering to negotiate for a limited number of seats for blacks for a fixed period to be followed by a gradual increase after a fixed period.

The Nobel Peace prize was conferred jointly on Mandela and De Klerk in 1993

As even Mandela felt obliged to point out, the country was liberated not by him or the ANC leadership but by the working masses

to perpetuate the myth that the negotiated settlement was the fortuitous confluence of the conversion on the road to Damascus of an Afrikaner-led capitalist establishment and a Mandela-led ANC leadership. But as even Mandela felt obliged to point out, the country was liberated not by him or the ANC leadership but the working masses themselves.

If imperialism and the capitalist establishment in South Africa exerted pressure on the apartheid regime to negotiate with the ANC it was because they understood that the struggles of the masses – the 1973 strikes in Natal, the 1976 uprising of the youth, the insurrectionary movement of the 1980s and in particular the socialist consciousness of the workers of Cosatu – posed a mortal

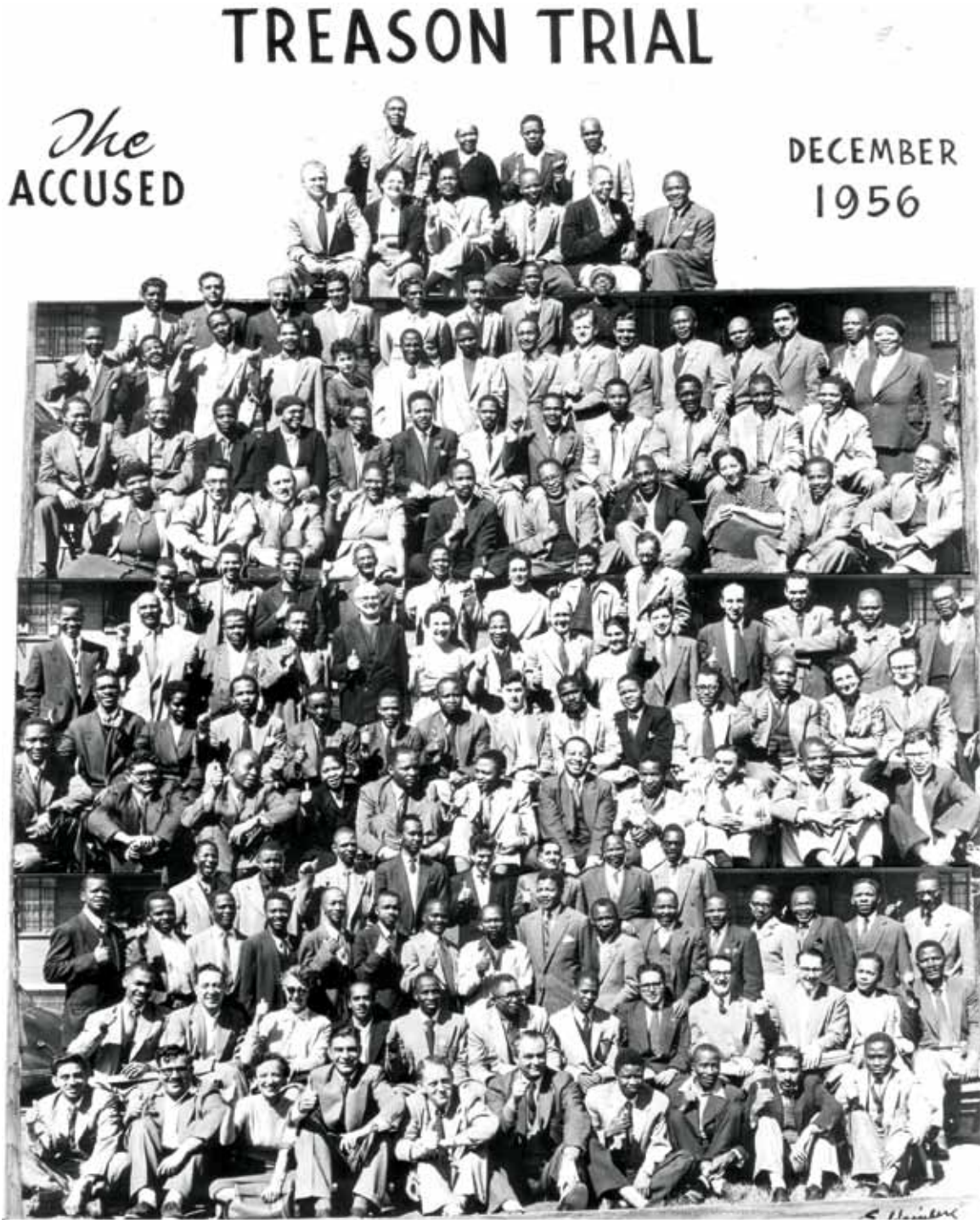


photo International Defence and Aid Fund

threat to their system.

Had white minority rule been overturned by an insurrection of the masses, the future of capitalism itself would have been threatened. The behind-the-scenes negotiations with Mandela had convinced the more far-sighted strategists of capitalism that Mandela was a man they could do business with. He had never contemplated the abolition of capitalism. His problem was not capitalism per se, but a capitalism that favoured one race against the other. For this the ruling class is forever grateful to Mandela.

With capitalism now in the throes of its worst crisis since the 1930s, the incapacity of this capitalist government to fulfil the expectations of the people has become more and more acute. The crisis of capitalism is reflected now in the ANC itself. Almost as if conspiring to affect a symmetry in the life cycle of the party he led so heroically and that of Mandela himself, history appears to have determined that Mandela's demise should coincide with the implosion of the ANC.

There is little doubt that the ANC's fast eroding cohesion will accelerate after Mandela's passing. With him will be buried the last rays of its halo as a liberation organisation.

Thus while the capitalist class mourns the imminent collapse of its salvation, the working class has awoken to the sounds of the guns of Marikana – the party they believed for so long to be their own is in fact the party of the bosses. What happened in reality was an exchange of political captains of capitalism.

The establishment of the Workers And Socialist Party in South Africa represents an historic step forward – the reclama-

tion by the working class of its political independence, its liberation from the ideological and political prison camp of the ANC in which it was incarcerated for nearly two decades.

Today

The march towards a socialist South Africa, from which the working class had been diverted since 1994, has now resumed. The capitalists and their spokespersons are justified to be worried about the death of Mandela. Even if some of them are shedding crocodile tears, the point is that he gave South African capitalism a new lease of life.

It is almost 20 years now since Mandela's ANC came to power. These 20 years have consistently revealed the brutality of capitalism – poverty, unemployment and inequality, to which the ANC leaders refer as 'triple challenges'. Under capitalism they cannot do away with them. Only under socialism will the workers rid society of these capitalist evils.

It remains for the workers and youth of today to follow what is the best example set by Mandela – selfless and determined struggle. But in the struggle we are fighting a compromise with a class enemy is impermissible, because they inevitably lead to betrayals of the masses as capitalism cannot meet their aspirations.

More importantly, they must learn that the working class should only rely on its independent political leadership, organisations and programme to transform society in its own interests and those of the poor, for a socialist South Africa and a socialist world.

Support the Workers And Socialist Party



photo Sean Figg

The Workers And Socialist Party (WASP) offers condolences to all those in South Africa and internationally who are mourning Mandela's passing. WASP was launched one year ago by committees representing striking miners following the 16 August 2012 Marikana massacre.

Then 34 striking miners at the Lonmin mine were killed by police armed with automatic weapons deployed by the ANC-led government. They were demanding nothing more than a higher minimum wage to lift themselves and their families out of crushing poverty.

The ANC-led government not only turned a blind eye to the miners' suffering but was prepared to drown their demands in blood. Many miners were forced to leave the National Union of Mineworkers, which refused to support the struggle, and set up their own independent, shaft-based, worker-controlled strike committees. It is these committees that took the decision to launch WASP, to give workers the political voice that the ANC's betrayal has denied them.

Even before the Marikana massacre, the ANC was rapidly losing support - 12.4 million did not vote in the last election such as the disillusion

In the wake of Mandela's death, WASP said: "As we mourn let us remember that Mandela himself called upon us to act against the ANC government if it does not fulfil the expectations of the masses, in the same way as we did against the apartheid regime."

"Under the Zuma administration we have experienced what would have been previously considered unthinkable – that a democratically elected government would train its guns on workers striking for the very things Mandela championed, a better life for all, slaughtering them in an act of premeditated murder. More than any other event the Marikana atrocity – which revealed once and for all that this is a government of the mining bosses and the capitalist class as a whole and not the government of the people that elected it into office – should inspire the working class to act on Mandela's advice.

"Mandela's ANC – the ANC that defeated apartheid – is dead and cannot be resurrected. We must not allow the grief that millions feel – and WASP shares – at Mandela's passing to distract us from the urgent tasks facing the working class today. The greatest way to honour what Mandela represented

to the working class is to continue the struggle for a society where all can live free from the scourges of deprivation, unemployment, inequality and poor services: a socialist society. This is what WASP, born in the furnace of Marikana, stands for."

Even before the Marikana massacre, the ANC was rapidly losing support - 12.4 million did not vote in the last elections such as the disillusion. Workers take strike action to improve their poverty wages, entire communities protest at the lack of water, sanitation, roads and housing, and young people protest at the cost of education and the lack of jobs that has left youth unemployment at 50%. WASP has been established to unite the struggles of workers, communities and youth. WASP stands for:

- 1) the nationalisation of the mines
- 2) a massive programme of job creation with a living wage
- 3) investment in infrastructure of road, water, sanitation, decent housing and social services
- 4) free education
- 5) free healthcare

WASP is organising workplaces, communities and young people to nominate their own representatives to stand as WASP candidates: the best people to represent the interests of workers are workers themselves. Even a small group of WASP MPs in the next parliament – which is entirely possible – would be a major step forward for the working class of South Africa.

In October the metal workers' union Numsa confirmed it was debating whether to leave Cosatu, which would in effect mean leaving Cosatu's tripartite alliance with the ANC and the SACP. Numsa is South Africa's biggest union with 360,000 members and this step has the potential to have an enormous impact on the development of a new party for the working class.

International appeal

WASP is appealing for international labour movement support to help make this potential a reality. Messages of support and the publicising of the campaign will be vital. But what is most crucial is the funding necessary to wage an effective election campaign.

The money for the election deposits alone is R605,000 (£38,000). This is the money that must be raised before a single poster or leaflet is even printed. In total we need to raise R2 million (£125,000). A step forward for the working class of South Africa is a step forward for workers around the world.

You can find details of how to donate online at: workersocialistparty.co.za/donate



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Cameron 'kowtows' to Chinese dictatorship

Western capitalist leaders put business before lofty 'principles'

Vincent Kolo
chinaworker.info

David Cameron, like many other Western leaders visiting China, abandoned any pretence of defending 'democracy' or 'human rights' in order to secure new profitable deals for British capitalism.

Even before his visit, the Prime Minister's office stated he had no plans to meet the Dalai Lama, as he did in May 2012, and recognised this had 'saddened China'.

In response to Cameron's meeting with the Tibetan Buddhist leader the Chinese dictatorship scuppered a planned visit to China in April 2013, and demanded that the British government "recognise its mistake".

British capitalism - with its own bloody history in Tibet - made sure Cameron performed the required 'self-criticism' so as not to jeopardise financial and business links with the world's number two economy. During the Beijing meeting with new Chinese President Xi Jinping, Cameron declared: "We do not support Tibetan independence".

To rub salt in the wound, Beijing's state-controlled media dismissed Britain as "just an old European country," claiming it was only of interest "for travel and studies". Such

comments reflect the increasingly nationalistic tone of regime propaganda.

US imperialism is irked by Cameron, whose Beijing visit preceded that of Vice President Joe Biden.

Through Biden, Washington attempted to pressure Beijing over a potentially dangerous conflict with Japan over air space and disputed uninhabited islands in the East China Sea. The British government's fawning will have encouraged Xi to stand firm on the Japan issue.

Staunch allies

In the business magazine Caixin, Cameron portrayed the British government as the staunchest allies of Beijing in multinational forums such as the G20 and EU, and the most open to Chinese investment.

The British delegation landed a number of billion dollar deals ranging from British big business investment in Chinese hospitals to Chinese investment in Britain's high-speed railways and nuclear sector.

British capitalism, the former 'workshop of the world' - a mantle that has shifted to China - is becoming even more parasitic and finance-based.

The unrepentant finance sharks of the City of London want to posi-

tion themselves as the major global centre for the booming offshore trade in the Chinese currency, the renminbi.

The government has already opened the way for major Chinese investment in nuclear power - with Chancellor George Osborne offering up to 100% control to Chinese firms.

Chinese investment is also on the cards in the £50 billion HS2 high-speed rail project. The Socialist Party's sister organisation in China, organised around chinaworker.info, warn that both nuclear and high-speed rail development in China are clouded by serious safety issues.

The Wenzhou high-speed rail disaster in 2011, which killed 40 people, highlighted major deficiencies with the Chinese authorities' approach to copying, merging and 'improving' foreign technologies from several different, incompatible national systems.

The same approach has been taken for nuclear power, with blind expansion and unsafe construction practices adding to safety fears.

China's industrial safety problems are rooted in unbelievable levels of corruption, almost non-existent controls, and the lack of even minimal public scrutiny or democratic checks. Above all they are rooted in the total ban on trade unions in China.

Swansea councillors: which side are you on?

Ronnie Job
Swansea Socialist Party

Which side are you on? That question should be asked of every Labour councillor in Swansea as they prepare to vote on butchering £45 million of jobs and services.

As I sat in my Union stewards' meeting, listening to a long list of cuts proposals, discussed by the Labour cabinet and outlined to union officers, I felt myself first getting down, then angry and finally determined that this must be where we draw a line in the sand and say: "no more cuts!"

These proposals will take the number of Swansea council job losses to around 1,200 since Con-Dem austerity began, with nearly another 700 to go on top of around 500 already cut. Councillors say that they want to minimise compulsory redundancies, but accept many likely volunteers have already gone in previous rounds.

They also propose axing, selling or reducing a whole range of services, including:

- Outsourcing large parts of social services, slashing spending on transport and scrapping the community meals service
- Handing over remaining council-run leisure services to other providers, as well as parks. Bowls clubs have to maintain and upkeep greens
- Transfer community centres and upkeep costs "to communities". A trust for culture will

be set up, preparing the way for outsourcing of cultural resources. Pennard Library is to close

- Shutting, selling or offloading Plantasia that showcases plants from different climate zones. There's no word in the council's plans for the various exotic animals housed there
 - Scrapping school crossing patrols for lights-controlled crossings, regardless of how dangerous the roads are
 - Increasing school meal charges
 - Closing public toilets or handing them to another provider
 - Stopping the cleaning and upkeep of bus shelters
 - Selling the Civic Centre
- Some union members think the council should increase council tax to reduce attacks on jobs. But an increase in council tax is a cut in the living standards of ordinary people. And even a big hike in council tax will only put a small dent in the cull of jobs and services proposed.

Stewards passed a resolution opposing the cuts and committing to balloting for strike action to resist compulsory redundancies. This is a vital part of preparing the fightback, which will need to unite council workers with service users in opposition to all cuts.

We need to be prepared to put up our own anti-cuts candidates in future elections against Labour councillors who carry out Con-Dem cuts.



Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition conference

Councillors can make a difference... but only if they are prepared to fight
Come to the conference to discuss TUSC's campaign in the May 2014 local elections
London - Saturday 1 February - 11am-4.30pm

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

Building TUSC in byelections

Liverpool

In spite of a media blackout, with the Liverpool Echo only publicising the TUSC Riverside ward candidate on election day, John Marston received 49 votes, a respectable 3.6% of the vote. Labour, if not the candidate, received wall to wall coverage in the Echo for their 'brave' management of the cuts. The abysmal 11% turnout, reflecting the 'no vote' mood which has permeated British politics, was reinforced by the appalling storms on election day. Labour's candidate took 1,055 votes. The Greens took 144 votes. Ukip came third with 119 votes. It was a virtual wipe-out for the two other mainstream parties. The Con-Dems managed only 103 votes. TUSC conducted a lively campaign with Socialist Party members and allies distributing quality leaflets and the only Party organising a public meeting. The campaign firms up the basis for TUSC to build on. The 89% who didn't vote are a key target for future activity.

Tony Mulhearn

Glasgow

Jamie Cocozza, standing as a Scottish Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (STUSC) candidate in the Glasgow Shettleston ward byelection, ran a dynamic campaign that has laid a base to challenge Labour and the SNP in the future. Under the single transferable vote system, Jamie came fifth out of 12 candidates with 68 first preference votes, 1.8%. The turnout was 17%. Labour, campaigning on the record of their

popular recently deceased councillor, comfortably beat the SNP. STUSC came behind the Tories and Ukip, but ahead of the Lib Dems and Greens that both have the advantage of a national profile.

The Labour candidate's first preferences took him over the quota so second preferences were not counted. If they had been it is likely Jamie's vote would have increased.

SNP activists said they told voters it was a "two horse race" between Labour and the SNP, as Jamie and STUSC were widely mentioned on doorsteps. Our campaign was an enthusiastic mobilisation of working class fighters in the community, as Socialist Party Scotland activists were joined by local anti-bedroom tax and anti-cuts campaigners.

Matt Dobson

Cardiff

The results of the votes for Katrine Williams in Splott ward, and myself in Riverside ward, were 4.5% and 3.1%, respectively. Both results are an improvement on the last election and each vote shows support for an alternative and a new mass workers' party. Labour won both polls, but in Riverside we beat the Lib Dems. The campaigns in Cardiff were run simultaneously, with limited resources, yet we still contested against all the establishment parties who have national recognition, high funding and constant media coverage. We must also show to each person who came across us in the election that we



are not just here to pay lip-service during elections, but as candidates and as the Socialist Party that will stand up for their interests and defend every job, every public service, against austerity and against the current government and future governments who continue to value money ahead of people.

Joel Beer, TUSC candidate

Why don't you stand?

If there is a byelection in your area and you're prepared to stand as a TUSC candidate, get in touch. One thing you will need to do is to get a Certificate of Authorisation from the TUSC National Nominating Officer to hand in with the nomination papers to the local council returning officer. An application form is available on the TUSC website at www.tusc.org.uk/candidates.php

The TUSC national steering committee is also appealing for candidates to come forward for next May's local council elections. To get what the BBC calls 'balanced media coverage', parties need to contest 15% of the seats up for election - that means 625 TUSC candidates in the 2014 local elections. Could you be one of those? Check out the TUSC website for details.

Remember - if there is no trade unionist or socialist candidate standing as an alternative to the austerity parties, a cuts candidate will win unchallenged.

the Socialist postbag

Do you have something to say?

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

Courageous fighters

I heard Dennis Goldberg, one of Nelson Mandela's co-defendants in the trial where they were threatened by the death penalty, on the BBC Today programme. The trial was where Mandela said he was prepared to die for freedom.

When Dennis Goldberg began to criticise the media idea that the end of legal apartheid was peaceful, and spoke of the vicious repression of miners and other workers fighting for their rights in South Africa today, suddenly they ran out of time for the item!

The courage Mandela and his co-defendants showed that day is being shown now by many thousands of workers in the mines, municipal workers, the housing activists assassinated earlier this year, and countless other struggles for the right to the absolute basics of life.

One word not mentioned in any of the coverage I've heard has been Mari-kana, where the ANC government used the old apartheid regime's methods to massacre miners striking for a living wage. Words cannot express the pride we have in those who are continuing the struggle, especially those in the Democratic Socialist Movement who have socialism as their aim, which can finally free the population of South Africa from the economic apartheid and brutal repression they still suffer.

South Africa will be free, but only when the working masses have taken control of the economy and can run it in the interests of the population, not the unending greed of the elite including the current government:

Naomi Byron

Tears and anger

Nelson Mandela is probably the only capitalist politician for whom I have any feeling. At his death I wept with tears. Yet as a Marxist, I had him down as the man who saved South Africa for capitalism.

I realised the news had brought memories flooding back of my political awakening in the 1980s and news footage of those magnificent men, women and children in the townships fighting the oppressor and shaking the apartheid state with their militancy. It was also bound up with Mandela's courage, his moral superiority over the oppressor and his nobility.

But today, almost 24 years after he walked out of that prison, large swathes of South Africa are without water or electricity. Millions of South Africans live in tin shacks. The country is run by kleptomaniacs, traitors and sell-outs acting as frontmen and women for the same capitalist business people who ran the apartheid state.

The South African revolution has barely begun. As the struggle intensifies, new figures will emerge who history will look back on as being more important than Mandela.

Rob Rooney
Plymouth Socialist Party

Labour's tracks

My union is not affiliated to New Labour but Aslef, the train drivers' union is. In the Aslef Journal they dedicate many column inches to desperately trying to justify their continued affiliation to the party of anti-trade union laws, murderous foreign adventures, tuition fees and PFI.

New Labour front bench MPs will sometimes grant them an exclusive interview. In the latest issue Labour's new

shadow transport secretary Mary Creagh is billed as having a 'blueprint for Britain's railways'. The closest this career politician non-worker gets to letting Aslef members know what this radical and progressive policy might be is:

"People are being asked to pay more [but] there is a lack of transparency on rail franchises. [Train Operating Companies] say when you ask that information is commercially confidential so it's difficult to come up with an alternative. Privatisation has made it harder to implement an integrated transport policy." Why not just renationalise them then?! Aslef's writer seemed satisfied with this vacuous spiel though, signing off with 'It's good to know that Labour's policy is still on the right tracks' (sic). I'm glad RMT wastes none of its members' money on this shower.

RMT member, Birmingham

Who's spying on workers?

David Semple's article in Socialist 790 says that "the signatories to the UK/USA secret treaty of 1946 were spying on each other's citizens and sharing the results". Seumas Milne's 1994 book, *The Enemy Within*, bears out David's assertions.



Milne writes that in 1984 Margaret Thatcher "bent her government's own rules and ordered an unprecedented mobilisation of British and American electronic surveillance networks to underpin the anti-NUM operations". He says the US National Security Agency funded 'large scale misuse' of GCHQ, 'to track the activities of NUM officials and the movement of miners funds'. John Pilger, in 2004, said this is just one part of the demonisation of Scargill and the NUM, describing Arthur Scargill as a "charismatic and ferociously principled" leader of the "only cohesive political force that had stood in the way of Thatcher's revolution". The Tory government is extending these powers. An incoming Labour government is unlikely to limit them.

Then as now, a fight to defend our future is critical. The NUM union made huge sacrifices to show us the way. Today's trade unions must strike together to end the siege imposed upon us by our political 'representatives', and be, as John Pilger says, the "conscience of the labour movement".

Sharon Mitchell

Doctor Why?

Recently Swansea council announced that the Tardis has been spotted in our town! Has the Doctor come to tell us that Labour councillors aren't really going to make £45 million cuts? Have Labour councillors been abducted and replaced by evil clones manufactured by the Master on behalf of Cameron? Because the alternative is that Labour councillors are going to make Con-Dem cuts on behalf of the Con-Dem government of the millionaires and surely that's not possible?

John Roberts

December floods

"Daddy, there's water on the floor"

Health workers and Socialist Party members Liz and Keith had their homes flooded out on 5 December in Rhyl, north Wales. Liz spoke to Roger Shrivs about what happened:



Hundreds of people had to be rescued

I had a text at work from Keith saying we've got a flood. I rang him thinking it was a pipe burst. He said "there's water coming in the house". We've got a three-year old son who said "Daddy, there's water on the floor". We thought he'd spilt a drink but water was coming up through the floorboards.

When Keith opened the door, water came rushing in. He turned the electricity off but within 20 minutes water was up to his knees. He tried to grab a few belongings but our little boy and our dog were on the bed and he couldn't get out the front door because the fuse box was on fire, so he tried to put that out.

By then the water was waist-deep. Keith was met by the fire brigade who took our son off him.

Our neighbours were all in the same state and our friends couldn't come and help us because the area was closed by flooding.

When I parked my car, Keith, our son and the dog, shivering and wet, were with the fire brigade who were ready to take them off to a leisure centre.

We stayed with friends that night but then contacted the insurance company who put us in a hotel – we found half our street's in there! There were many vulnerable old people, some of them worried about their insurance. Many don't have it as the premiums are quite high.

There are some 'independent brokers' ie scammers going round

the streets but charging people 25% commission!

We could be out of our home for months. Nearly all our furniture is wrecked along with the floorboards. So it's a question of drying out what's left and rebuilding the rest.

Despite years of cuts, the public services were very good. Within half an hour, the fire station down the road was ferrying people around. So were the police and the RNLI had dinghies.

Without them, people would have suffered even more.

The Citizens Advice service was also there. Housing people could tell us that our council tax bills were suspended as our homes were ruined. We wouldn't have known that.

After about an hour at the leisure centre, people who went there say, clothing and food started arriving. The area had had experience last year with floods at nearby St Asaph. When we went back to our home, the electricity people were giving out advice leaflets.

The council are putting out skips and running normal bin services. The fire brigade are pumping out gardens.

The insurance companies are telling us to get accommodation

which would be paid for. Local estate agents are not replying to calls, but a housing association with no properties available is trying to sort things out for us.

We are registered for flood alerts. We occasionally get amber alerts where they say no action is required. But this time there

was nothing. The size of the crisis was a bit of a freak of nature – some walls came down, the moon was causing high tides. The warm weather and high winds added to the problems.

Public services and public spirit saved the day. The firefighters were saying to everyone "are you all right?" and inviting my little boy to "come and sit in the fire engine."

People in the hotel are letting people use their laptops to sort out problems.

You sometimes hear the idea that people are "too greedy for socialism" but, except for the insurance scammers, events like this show people's public-spirited nature.

We need to fight to keep our invaluable public services and build on that good nature to create a socialist society based on cooperation not competition.

You sometimes hear the idea that people are "too greedy for socialism" but, except for the insurance scammers, events like this show people's public-spirited nature

Message to our readers and contributors

To all our readers and contributors,

The Socialist thanks our readers and subscribers for your support during 2013. Without your continued financial support it would be difficult to maintain the weekly paper.

We are very grateful for the marvellous material that has been sent in by our 'citizen journalists' from their experience of life in 'Austerity Britain'.

Over the year we have been moved by depictions of the reality

for working class people, angered by the exposés of the lies, greed and hypocrisy of those who defend crisis-ridden capitalism, heard otherwise forgotten working class history – and been proud to report the news of the struggle to resist the cuts and capitalism.

Trade unionists, anti-cuts activists, and young people involved in struggle have all contributed. Socialist Party members and those we work with in campaigns have made their voices heard in the pages of the Socialist.

We look forward to continuing to fight against austerity together in 2014 – standing no-cuts candidates in the 2014 May council elections with the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, campaigning for a 24-hour general strike with the National Shop Stewards Network and others in the trade unions to unite our struggles and show the strength of the working class in action, and standing firmly for internationalism and socialism.

In solidarity,
The Socialist editors

The Socialist presents its 2013 quiz covering the big and not so big news stories over the last year. The questions are drawn from articles that appeared in the Socialist so we hope readers were paying attention! As an extra, the editors have included some picture and sports questions. This year there is also a prize cryptic crossword competition. Entries should be sent to the editors and arrive by 3 January 2014 (please include an address and phone number).

Questions

- The home front**
- 1) Who claimed that they could live on £53 a week Jobseeker’s Allowance?
- 2) Where did 1,700 people apply for three full-time and five part-time jobs?
- 3) Who is standing up for minorities including, “the very, very rich”?
- 4) Who said: “Total revolution of consciousness and our entire



social, political and economic system is what interests me, but that’s not on the ballot”?

5) Which government minister arrived too late for a breakfast TV debate with Youth Fight for Jobs representative, Ian Pattison?

6) Whose five days of consecutive strike action against ‘downbanding’ was partially successful?

7) Whose Commons defeat made history on 29 August?

8) Where did 25,000 and 50,000 people march to stop hospital cuts?

9) What cuts for the wealthiest did



The departed. Name the political leaders (above) who shuffled off this mortal coil last year

- George Osborne make in his spring budget?
- 10) Who blamed families’ financial mismanagement for having to resort to food banks to eat?
- 11) Which trade unionists won justice after a six-year long campaign?
- 12) Who told his aides to “get rid of all that green crap” from energy bills?
- 13) What was the government’s share price for the Royal Mail sell-off?
- 14) Who secured a victory against industrial blacklisting?
- 15) Who ranted about foreign aid money going to “bongo bongo land” and referred to a female audience as “sluts”?
- 16) Which group of workers won a strike over zero-hour contracts?
- 17) Who quit the EDL citing “dangers of far-right extremism”?
- 18) Who said: “We will inherit the current spending plans that the Chancellor sets out and we will work within them”
- 19) Who revealed that he had worked undercover in the anti-racist movement, and sought information to smear relatives of murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence.
- 20) Who told an unemployed disabled drug addict to stop begging and “get a job”?

World events

- 1) Name the socialist candidate who was elected in Seattle, USA, with over 90,000 votes?
- 2) Who became China’s new premier in March?
- 3) Where were bank depositors forced to take a ‘haircut’?
- 4) Where did an urban park



development spark a mass anti-government protest?

5) What happened at the Rana Plaza in April?

6) Who was ousted in a military coup following mass demonstrations?

7) What did Malta’s prime minister describe as becoming “a cemetery”?

8) In August, who was granted political asylum in Russia?

9) What took place between the USA and Iran after more than 30 years?

10) Name the new South African working class party launched in March 2013?

11) What ingredient unexpectedly turned up in supermarket products across Europe?

12) Whose Tsunami tour swept Italy?

13) Who declared a “state of war” in April?

14) Name the Greek left-wing rapper murdered by neo-Nazis?

15) According to Forbes magazine

how many \$ billionaires are there in the world? a) 5,235 b) 1,426 c) 987?

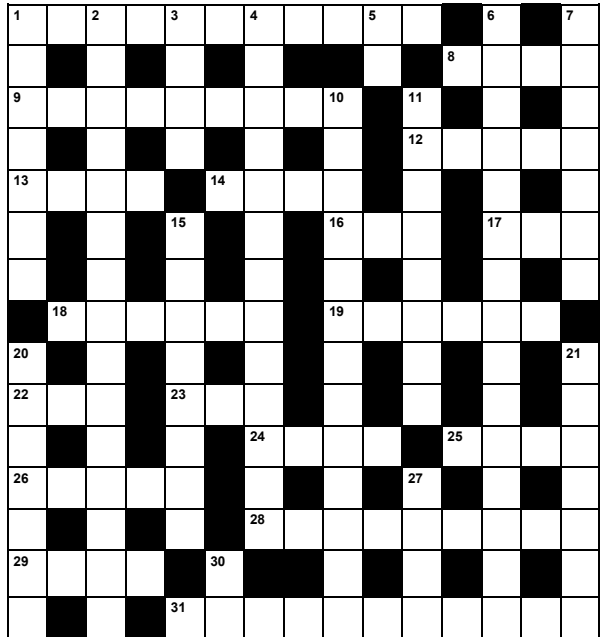
A sporting life

- 1) What record did cyclist Chris Horner break when he won the Vuelta a Espana (tour of Spain)?
- 2) Which team took the rugby union Six Nations championship title?
- 3) Name the horse that won the Grand National?
- 4) Which nation won the women’s beach volleyball world championships in July?
- 5) How many premier league managers have been sacked, so far, in the 2013-14 season? (extra point for naming them)
- 6) Name the Olympian facing murder charges?
- 7) Whose ‘unfathomable’ punch allegedly resulted in a £70,000 reward?
- 8) Who was disqualified from winning a bronze medal at the athletics world championship in Moscow?



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

set by Puzzled Monkey



ACROSS

- 1 and 4 down Shocking! “The Hades Story” now told with Kath in book form (3,4,4,5,3,5)
- 8 See 25 across
- 9 Unimportant covering underneath (9)
- 12 A small party, one with an excuse or a reason (5)
- 13 and 3 down Sometimes rhapsodic, heartless and confused (8)
- 14 State alright, for example (4)
- 16 Line ended in York initially (1,1,1)
- 17 See 21 down
- 18 Santa heard the Labour Party scrapped a crucial part of one of theirs! (6)
- 19 Voted with elected leader, tackled and blocked. (6)
- 22 We first meet him in Chapter I - An Introduction (3)
- 23 He rose through, against, back to front (1,1,1)
- 24 First - now last - Hindi queen from Persia (4)
- 25 and 8 across Ring in standard operating procedures for shellfish (8)
- 26 Swoops on Judi Dench in cages (5)
- 28 Noddy goes to Margate? (9)
- 29 A cat is a minuscule object! (4)
- 31 Revolutionary wants traditional Christmas back; with the runs and what sounds like a holy kidney! (4,7)

DOWN

- 1 See 2 down
- 2 and 1 down Protection for keyboard users? (8,5,2,7)
- 3 See 13 across
- 4 See 1 across
- 5 and 30 down 1, 10, 58 - first in the centre (4)
- 6 Political parties with jazzed up Red aims - cool cats! (6,9)
- 7 Helps animal first and second (7)
- 10 Giant over the men, though lacking the finest quality, led after the revolution (3, 10)
- 11 Tells a tale about the overthrow of an island institute (8)
- 15 Colourful feature at St Andrew’s? (8)
- 20 Where to eat Italian food with aubergine al fresco? (7)
- 21 and 17 across If you mess up a hotel daily, you’ll get a short stay! (7,3)
- 27 Around in William Morris’ time (4)
- 30 See 5 down

The winning entry receives the Communist Manifesto and Wage, Labour and Capital as audio books (2 sets of 2 CDs)

Answers

- The home front**
- 1) Millionaire work and pensions minister Iain Duncan Smith,
- 2) A Costa coffee shop in Nottingham
- 3) Reactionary self-styled buffoon and Tory London Mayor, Boris Johnson
- 4) Comedian Russell Brand, as guest editor of New Statesman
- 5) Tory MP Matthew Hancock, who overslept. Dock his pay!
- 6) Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust health workers, who walked out on 28 February
- 7) David Cameron on military intervention in Syria, the first time a British PM was defeated on a war resolution since 1782
- 8) Lewisham, south London, on 28 January and Stafford on 20 April.
- 9) He cut the top rate of income tax from 50% to 45% and cut corporation tax to 20% - the lowest in the G20
- 10) The Tories’ public education destroyer, Michael Gove MP
- 11) The Union Four Socialist Party members who successfully fought the union bureaucracy’s political witch-hunt
- 12) David ‘vote blue, go green’ Cameron
- 13) 330p. Investment bank Goldman Sachs, who ‘advised’ the government on its privatisation, now reckons the share price could reach 610p
- 14) Trade unionist Frank Morris, who was reinstated to his job on Crossrail after being dismissed in September 2012
- 15) UKIP MEP, Godfrey Bloom
- 16) Members of the bakers’ union at Hovis in Wigan
- 17) Far-right leader Tommy Robinson
- 18) Labour’s shadow chancellor, Ed Balls
- 19) Police spy Peter Francis, aka Pete Daley
- 20) ‘Tough love’ Tory MP Daniel Kawczynski
- World events**
- 1) Kshama Sawant, a co-thinker of the Socialist Party
- 2) Xi Jinping, by 2,956 delegates votes to one against
- 3) Cyprus, as part of a €13 billion EU bailout which sparked mass protests
- 4) Gezi Park, Istanbul, Turkey. Thousands of protesters demanded prime minister Recep Erdogan’s resignation
- 5 The worst workplace disaster in history when an unsafe factory building collapsed in Bangladesh, killing 1,129 low-paid garment workers
- 6) Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood president Mohammed Morsi
- 7) The Mediterranean Sea after 360 migrants drowned off the Italian island of Lampedusa, near Sicily
- 8) US ex-NSA operative Edward Snowden, who had leaked information about his government’s secret mass surveillance programme
- 9) The first direct contact between the countries’ two presidents since the 1979 revolution
- 10) The Workers and Socialist Party (WASP), which will challenge the ruling ANC
- 11) Horsemeat
- 12) Anti-establishment comedian Beppe Grillo’s Five Star Movement. It was the name of his general election campaign.
- Five Star became the largest party in the Italian parliament
- 13) North Korea’s Kim Jong-un following a US-South Korean military exercise
- 14) Pavlos Pyssas
- 15) b) 200 more than in 2012, and with a collective wealth of \$5.4 trillion
- A sporting life**
- 1) The oldest grand tour winner at 41 years.
- 2) Wales (its 26th title)
- 3) Auroras Encore, a 66/1 outsider in the final
- 4) China, who beat Germany 2-1 in the final
- 5) Three. Paola Di Canio – Sunderland, Ian Holloway – Crystal Palace, Martin Jol – Fulham
- 6) Disabled South African athlete Oscar Pistorius, aka the Blade Runner
- 7) Ex-Portsmouth FC player Sam Sodje, who is accused of match-fixing last February
- 8) The British men’s 4x100 metres relay team after Canada objected to an illegal baton changeover.
- Picture quiz**
- 1) Nelson Mandela, ANC leader and first black majority president in post-apartheid South Africa. Died 5 December
- 2) Hugo Chavez. Populist Venezuelan president, famous for his anti-US imperialism and his left-nationalist Bolivarian Revolution. Died 5 March
- 3) Margaret Thatcher. Vicious anti-union Tory PM and ‘cold war’ warrior dubbed the ‘Iron Lady’. Forced to resign following a mass movement against her flagship Poll Tax legislation. Died 8 April
- 4) Vo Nguyen Giap, General in the Stalinist Vietnam People’s Army, whose renowned tactical skills contributed to the withdrawal of both French and US imperialism from the peninsula. Died 4 October

FIGHT FOR OUR NHS

Public health, not private profit

Alison Hill

The latest measure of the cuts crisis in the NHS is the revelation that some patients are being forced to wait in ambulances outside hospitals because there is no bed for them and no staff to treat them.

The BBC recently asked all UK ambulance services for their waiting figures. This revealed that many patients have to wait in ambulances outside hospital for at least an hour, many around two hours. One ambulance in Wales was 'queuing' for six hours 22 minutes!

NHS England claims waiting times are improving but these figures relate to the summer months.

Now the cold winter weather is beginning to bite and people face ever-rising fuel bills, particularly older people who are vulnerable to cold-related illnesses. These can only be exacerbated if they have to wait outside hospital in an ambulance for hours on end.

Scandalous situations like these are of course a direct result of the Con-Dems' policy of cuts and privatisation. This has led to staff shortages and the closure of A&E departments entirely in some areas, putting further pressure on those that remain.

But we shouldn't let Labour off



the hook.

They paved the way for privatisation while they were in office and they championed the Private Finance Initiative which is bleeding our hospitals and health service dry while lining the pockets of the construction bosses.

Labour councils are also cutting services such as home-care and are doing nothing to increase the

Some find themselves working for less than the minimum wage because council contractors don't pay them for travel time between visits.

None of the establishment parties can be excused from the mess they have made of the NHS and the care services in general.

Time for organised action to rebuild what we have won in the past.

Time for a 24-hour general strike against austerity and cuts. Time to build a new mass workers' party which can really represent the interests of working people.

amount of accessible housing. So frail older people get stuck in hospital with no suitable home to go to. And the ambulances line up outside with more patients needing hospital care.

Care workers working in the community are having to fight the cuts in their pay and conditions.

The Socialist Party fights for:

- **No cuts. Abolish the Health and Social Care Act which allows the further selling off of our NHS to private companies in England**
- **End big business profiteering from the NHS: Abandon the Private Finance Initiative which is bleeding the NHS dry**
- **End NHS job losses and low pay. No downbanding**
- **A fully publicly funded high-quality NHS, free for all at the point of use**
- **United action to defend the NHS - the TUC must name the day for a 24-hour general strike against austerity**



New pamphlet:

Defend the NHS!

A compilation of articles by campaigners fighting to stop the destruction of the NHS

Just £2 including p&p

Phone 020 8988 8777

Make cheques payable to Socialist Party and send to Socialist Party, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

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 over 40 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!