



the Socialist

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END LOW PAY

FIGHT

UNTIL

WE WIN



Vicky Perrin

Teaching assistant and Unison executive member (personal capacity)

The coordinated action over local government pay on 10 July will bring up to 1.5 million workers out on strike from across public sector unions. The 1% 'offer', following a three year earnings freeze, is a pay cut not a pay award.

Typical local government full-time hourly earnings are the same now as in the early 1990s. Part-time hourly wages have fallen to 2002 levels. 8% of full-time and 38% of part-time local government workers earn less than the living wage.

Meanwhile living costs soar through the roof: food bills up by 16%, electricity and gas by up to a staggering 57%. These price rises mean nearly a 20% fall in real wages with pay-day loans and food

banks plugging the gaps for the army of working poor. 'Recovery'? Not for us!

Strike against austerity

But this strike and the mood that has led to the coordinated action is also about a whole lot more. We are battling a wholesale jobs massacre as local government is dismantled, jobs are slashed and public services sold off to private profiteers.

If our jobs have so far escaped the axe, we face increased workloads and pressure, and increasingly brutal disciplinary and sickness procedures in stealth job cutting by managers.

Enough is enough

Workers are reaching the point where they feel pushed to the limit by this demolition government of millionaires hell-bent on the de-

struction of public services.

Those of us who are school support workers in Unison and GMB have gained a massive boost in being able to strike alongside our teaching colleagues. Joint picket lines at school gates, refuse depots, libraries and council offices will, at last, give local government workers a feeling of our own strength.

Not a one-day battle

This fight will not be won on 10 July alone. In building for the ballots the message was clear from union members: this is no time for token one-day action. We demand a determined and escalating battle that delivers us a victory and a first mighty blow to the austerity agenda.

In the planned further action in September, the unions must use every weapon in their armoury. Our members in academy schools, who are not part of the July action,

must be given the chance to fight, as should the army of health workers in their pay dispute as our NHS is dismantled and privatised.

The TUC must seize this opportunity and the massive potential it presents. Public and private sector workers alike have waited long enough to unite and fight. The opportunity for a 24-hour general strike could be just a few months away.

Things could move rapidly through 10 July and beyond as a mood of confidence and angry determination ignites among workers and union leaderships must not be allowed to lag behind and dampen the flames.

10 July is the beginning of a fight we must win.

Fighting poverty pay see pages 5, 6 & 7

National Shop Stewards Network conference

ALL WELCOME

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Conway Hall
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Delegate/visitor fee £6

Speakers include Seattle \$15 minimum wage organiser Ginger Jentzen, RMT president Peter Pinkney, BFAWU bakers' union general secretary Ronnie Draper, POA general secretary Steve Gillan and PCS president Janice Godrich.

Visit shopstewards.net



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Coulson conviction: Cameron should go!

After 'cash for questions' and MPs claiming 'expenses' for extravagant living, the on-going exposure of the links between the top politicians and the Murdoch empire is a scandal too many. While cosyng up to the Murdoch empire in their mutual interests and those of other big businesses, Tory Prime Minister David Cameron has led the driving down of living standards for the rest of us, inflicting unrelenting austerity.

Cameron and Osborne and their whole rotten government should get out of office and call a general election. They can then be consigned to the dustbin of history by all those suffering at the hands of their cuts onslaught and disgusted by their corrupt behaviour.

Cameron's blind eye to phone hacking criminality was obvious over years. In 2007 he employed Andy Coulson as his communications chief just months after Coulson admitted to having "overall responsibility" for phone hacking and quit as News of the World editor. The evidence already in existence against Coulson and the normal vetting procedures were brushed aside in Cameron's haste to work with him.

Then four years later, when in 2011 Coulson resigned from Cameron's top team because of more hacking revelations, Cameron maintained his support, saying he was "very sorry" that his friend and protégé had felt "compelled" to resign because of the pressure he was under.

Now however, Cameron has been effusing sorrow of different nature - to save his own skin after a jury finally convicted Coulson of conspiracy to hack voicemails.

Wealth of Murdoch

This was possibly the highest cost trial in British legal history. The criminal acts in Murdoch's News International have cost the taxpayer £33 million in police investigations and trial expenses. So rich is Murdoch's empire however that it has so far spent around double that huge sum - an estimated £60 million - on defence. This certainly hasn't broken Murdoch's bank, as his wealth is massive and escalating. Before phone hacking first surfaced his companies' shares had a combined value of \$48 billion. Now, their value is \$85 billion.

This wealth was used to throw every possible argument and confusion against the prosecution in the trial, helping to ensure that multi-millionaire Rebekah Brooks, News of the World editor prior to Coulson, was acquitted. The hacking of murdered teenager Milly Dowler's



David Cameron is feeling the heat over Coulson appointment

phone was done while Brooks was editor. During the trial she said she didn't know hacking was illegal - but she still brazenly denied responsibility for it. Guardian journalist Nick Davies has reminded us that in 2003 Brooks even admitted that her journalists had acted illegally by paying police for information.

This information wasn't put before the jury because it would have broken parliamentary privilege rules, having been part of evidence given to the parliamentary media select committee. Much other information was withheld from the jury or unavailable for one reason or another, including the hard drive from Brook's computer when she had been editor, which was 'lost'.

Nevertheless, the best legal team that money could buy was not able to let Coulson off the hook, such was the "industrial scale" of the hacking and the particularly damning level of the evidence against him.

Press intrusion

This trial was a 'show-down' between a layer of rich celebrities and politicians who were outraged at being targets of the hackers, and Murdoch's News International (now News UK), though ordinary people were also caught up in it - those who had suffered some aspect of their lives being exploited by the tabloids. The

hackers left a trail of destroyed marriages, fragile mental health and other trauma on their victims. Critics of News International and those on the political left were particularly targeted.

Murdoch's papers saw themselves as above the law, controlling parliamentary politicians and other influential people, who were bowing down subserviently in order to receive favourable media coverage. At the end of June Labour MP Tom Watson commented: "Murdoch just got too powerful. He owned much of Britain's media estate. He still does. But it's politicians who gave Murdoch his power. And I'm sorry to say, I don't see much changing. They're still queuing up to take a bow, albeit less obsequiously than before".

Those Murdoch-friendly politicians include past and present leaders of Watson's own party. Tony Blair is a godparent to one of Murdoch's children. When Milly Dowler's phone was hacked he offered help to Rebekah Brooks rather than the Dowler family. Ed Miliband earned the disgust of workers in Liverpool and beyond last month when he was pictured promoting a copy of the detested Murdoch newspaper, the Sun.

Murdoch and other media barons nurtured a huge web of links between themselves, the politicians of the main capitalist parties and the tops of the police. Among those who resigned over revelations of accepting favours

from Murdoch's machine and 'mishandling' the phone hacking allegations were the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of the London Met police.

Class interests

Of course the government is in league with big business generally, not just the media multinationals, but the Tories have found particular common cause with Murdoch because of his virulent right-wing, anti-working class, anti-trade union stance. This was recognised by Brook's lawyers when they unsuccessfully tried to ban trade union members from the hacking trial jury, wary of potential hostility.

Tom Watson is right, in that despite the Leveson inquiry and now this hacking trial, not much is changing. Leveson's recommendation of independent media regulation was met by howls of outrage from the media barons, who made sure it didn't pass first base.

The Socialist Party was among those who warned about such regulation from an entirely different point of view. Those who 'regulate' were not going to be 'independent' of pro-capitalist interests; and their regulations could potentially be used to hamper left-wing newspapers and trade unions from finding out important information and exposing super-exploitation, tax evasion, and other scandals.

Moreover, they would only be able to tinker, faced with the wealth and domination of the media industry. The power to choose what to print and broadcast would fundamentally rest with the owners of the media corporations - in the main a small, super-rich elite, who serve their own interests and those of capitalism, which are closely intertwined.

So the road to ending the media's lies, discrimination, intrusions and criminality lies not so much in new regulations and anti-privacy laws - phone hacking is illegal in any case - but in developing an entirely different type of media that would be under democratic working class and popular ownership and control.

The main printing and broadcasting facilities should be nationalised, to be made available for all strands of opinion to be heard and discussed and for good quality journalism to have the means of flourishing.

The revenue of the Sun and other papers and websites that promote their rich owners' personal views and bigotry will plummet when mass production alternatives are on offer that reflect the interests, culture and democratically decided boundaries of the overwhelming majority in society.

Want to fight the cuts?

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The relentless pursuit of profit by the super-rich brought about the banking crisis and recession. Our world is run on that basis - the short-sighted, chaotic capitalist system that exists only to enrich the fat cats.

We need an alternative to this unequal and exploitative system. Taxing the rich would be a good start - for one thing it could easily wipe out the deficit. But more fundamental change is needed.

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 for every possible improvement for working

class people.

The banks and major industries would be publicly owned and democratically controlled. It would mean democratic planning of the economy under workers' control and management to meet the needs of all and to protect the environment.

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 45 countries. See page 9.

SOCIALISM2014

Weekend of discussion and debate
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FIGHT AGAINST CUTS CRISIS & CAPITALISM

For more information and to buy tickets call 020 8988 8777 or visit

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Jimmy Savile - a Tory union basher

Most people are now aghast that in 1988 serial sex offender Jimmy Savile was given a key position running Broadmoor psychiatric hospital by Tory MP Edwina Currie, then a junior health minister, despite the fact he had no expertise in mental health. According to the Guardian "She was also supportive of Savile's promise to confront unionised prison officers." Currie told an NHS inquiry that Savile had looked at "everything he could use to blackmail the POA (Prison Officers Association)", and she thought this approach was a "pretty classy piece of operation".

Below, **BRIAN CATON**, former General Secretary of the POA and Barnsley Socialist Party member, recalls how Savile's appointment caused enormous damage.

I have read with some disgust recent newspaper articles relating to the "Tory Knight" Savile and comments reported to have been given by Edwina Currie, former Tory Health Minister, regarding Savile's work at Broadmoor Special Hospital in the 1980s and 1990s.

I became the POA National Officer responsible for the special hospitals in 1990. Savile had been 'hanging around' Broadmoor for a number of years at that time and was an irritant to both staff and patients.

Following discussions, the union decided to use the media to highlight the fact that Savile's presence was a threat to security and a dis-



The Tory government gave Savile the keys to Broadmoor to fight the POA

traction from the necessary therapy, treatment, care and security for some of the most damaged, dangerous and difficult people in the country.

Broadmoor management's reaction was to attack the union and its officials (the POA had 99% union density across the then five special/state hospitals system).

The government had commissioned a report, the Olliff report, which sought to eradicate the POA. The report sought to move special hospitals into the mainstream NHS and away from the very special and necessary administration held jointly under the Department of Health and the Home Office.

These changes were a disaster and resulted in escapes, a dangerous loss of control and deterioration in constructive treatment and therapy for extremely ill patients.

We are now told that Savile was part of these misguided plans by a Tory government, which had already wreaked havoc with its money-grabbing 'Care in the Community' programme, which closed psychiatric hospitals, sold the land and put nothing back into the care

of very vulnerable people released into an uncaring world.

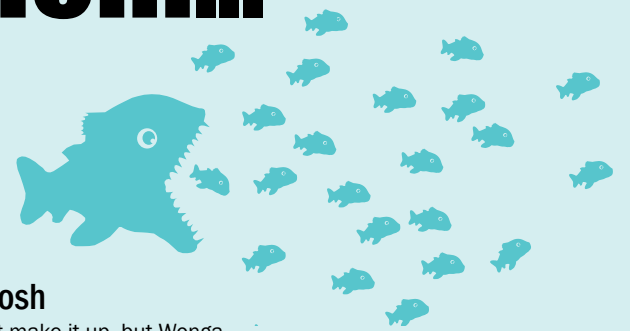
I made many verbal attacks on Savile, his friend and Head of Broadmoor, Alan Franey, and indeed Charles Kay, Head of the Special Hospital Service Authority, all of which were justifiable and honestly put.

But to now hear the shabby acts of Tory ministers in placing Savile to undermine the POA I feel that it is time that the people with responsibility for the management of Savile's activities must be brought to task, including the aforementioned managers.

I would never say that special hospitals did not have problems, as indeed did the staff that worked in them, but the management at senior levels, up to and including ministerial oversight, was perverse in the extreme.

It is not just David Cameron's choice of press advisor that shows how bad the millionaire Tory politicians' judgments are - they have made bad judgments for years and have sought to use all manner of evils to attack trade unions and the working class.

Them...



Wonga tosh

You couldn't make it up, but Wonga did when the high interest rate payday lender sent threatening letters from non-existent legal firms to its customers. Wonga has coughed up £2.6 million to 45,000 customers as a result but it managed to avoid a fine because the 'misconduct' occurred before the new regulatory body - the Financial Conduct Authority - started. Until the intervention of the Law Society, who pointed out that Wonga may have committed blackmail and deception, the police had taken no interest in pursuing the case.

off-exchange venue. Behind Barclays closed doors these wheeler dealers were able to trade large blocks of shares anonymously, with prices posted publicly only after deals were secured.

These dark pools operate without transparency or supervision and echo the dodgy practices which led to the 2007-08 financial crash. Barclays is now being sued by New York's securities regulator for allegedly misleading institutional shareholders.

Living wage

At its AGM, Tesco shareholders gave company chairman Richard Broadbent a grilling over its relatively poor trading performance. But the hardened chairman was left rocking on his heels when eleven year old Lucas Pinto asked whether Tesco would introduce the living wage for its staff by the time he was old enough to work!

Inequality Britain

The Office for National Statistics' latest figures in income distribution show that the richest fifth of the population have gained in earnings over the years 2011-12 and 2012-13 while the poorest in society have seen their disposable income plummet.

The top 20% of households had a gross average income of £81,300 in 2012-13, almost 15 times greater than the poorest 20% who had an average income of only £5,500. These figures cover only declared incomes and do not show the huge differences in wealth - property, shares and other assets - between the social classes.

Gold diggers

Despite the enormous cost to the public purse and the abysmal quality of service provision from private companies, the Coalition government is pressing ahead with its privatisation agenda.

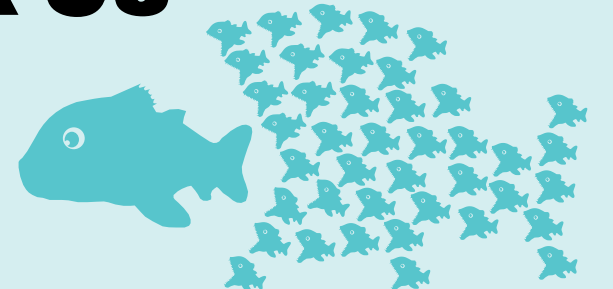
Next up for grabs is the probation service, worth an estimated £8 billion in contracts over the next decade. Companies with a notorious track record in running public services - Sodexo, Capita, Geo group, Amey etc - are all looking to cash in. Notwithstanding trade union opposition, Justice Minister Chris Grayling is pushing this rip-off policy. This is despite preparations for the sell-off being hit by a massive IT failure in June when thousands of offenders' case files were erased or lost.

Off message

Ofgem, the toothless industry regulator, is to investigate the energy market after it revealed that the 'Big Six' providers are scooping £101 profit a year from every household - an incredible 1,000% increase in only five years. Ofgem has neither powers to cut prices nor halt price increases.

The doubling of profits in one year is despite a fall of up to 38% in wholesale energy prices. The unashamed profiteering of the Big Six makes a mockery of Ed Miliband's timid pledge of a future Labour government to freeze prices for 20 months.

...& Us



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

What we saw

DPAC and other activists attempting to save ILF by occupying grounds of Westminster Abbey see YouTube

Activists campaigning against the Con-Dems' axing of the Independent Living Fund for disabled people attempted to occupy the grounds of Westminster Abbey in central London last Saturday but were prevented by a large force of police. Scrapping ILF next June and transferring responsibility for 18,000 recipients to cash-strapped councils will severely impact on the quality of life for severely disabled people.

Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!
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Underfunding crisis threatens NHS

Doctors have recently warned that the National Health Service (NHS) is facing collapsing services due to an underfunding crisis. However, the Con-Dem government is keen to point out that spending on the NHS is both 'ring-fenced' from austerity cuts and is rising in real terms. In reality...

- The government is pushing through £20 billion in 'efficiency savings' ie cuts, by 2015, while NHS England estimates a £30 billion shortfall by 2021.
- Making cuts means fewer staff and poorer healthcare. Since the Con-Dems came into office there are 5,000 fewer nurses working in the NHS. Staff shortages have resulted in trusts having to use agencies to supply staff costing even more money. For example, there has been a 60% rise in the total bill for locum doctors in the past three years.
- The drive to achieve Foundation Trust (FT) status (all hospital trusts were meant to become FTs

by April 2014) has also sparked rounds of cost cutting. It contributed to the scandal of 'excessive deaths' at the Mid Staffordshire Hospital because management cut permanent staffing levels on wards.

- Furthermore, the rate of inflation in the NHS is significantly higher as a result of the excessive cost of drugs charged by mega-profitable pharmaceutical companies.
- NHS resources are also being siphoned by rip-off Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts. Construction and maintenance of all new buildings in the NHS must be done through PFIs. These decades-long deals amount to a

super-expensive hire-purchase arrangement, except that the buildings are not owned by the NHS but leased back to health trusts. PFI payments have drained many trusts of resources threatening healthcare provision. Over 25 trusts are currently facing bankruptcy.

In 2012, South London Healthcare Trust had to be placed in administration, following bankruptcy, because PFI repayments amounted to 14% of its income.

- Under the 2013 Health and Social Care Act, 60% of the NHS budget will be open to for-profit private health providers.
- Since 2005, Independent Sector Treatment Centres (ISTCs) run by for-profit companies have been awarded contracts in the NHS to deliver minor elective treatment, but are estimated to charge 11.5% more for operations than those carried out by the NHS.

RMT annual general meeting

Remembering Bob Crow through struggle

Jared Wood

The 2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union (RMT) paid tribute to the magnificent role of our former general secretary, Bob Crow.

Bob's militant industrial traditions and his socialist politics were celebrated by union officials and delegates along with international visitors representing metro workers from New York and Turkey, transport workers from France and shipping workers from the USA.

Bob's tragic death earlier this year as a massive blow to the whole trade union movement yet the RMT AGM also demonstrated that our fighting spirit and determination to defend jobs, pay and conditions at work lives on.

Battles against the cuts imposed as part of the McNulty programme on National Rail are developing across many train operating companies.

The idea has been raised of a national rail strike which will gain support over the coming months.

With London Underground members, also likely to take further strike action over massive cuts to tube funding, the union could be

involved in strike action of unprecedented scope.

The AGM called on the next government to renationalise all rail services and end the expensive and counter-productive system of franchising that bleeds public money in the pursuit of profit.

The AGM also unanimously reaffirmed RMT's support for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC).

In a historic vote the RMT has removed sections of the union rulebook that gave automatic support to the Labour Party. From now on Labour will be considered in the same way as any other party if a branch or region wishes to support it in an election.

Twenty of the 60 delegates attended the TUSC fringe meeting and heard Dave Nellist explain how TUSC is looking forward to next year's local and general elections.

The AGM also voted not to accept the position of the executive to make no recommendation to members in Scotland over the Scottish Independence Referendum.

This matter will now go back to the Council of Executives for further consideration. A significant section of the conference delegates are pushing for RMT to recommend a Yes vote.



Bob Crow at an anti-privatisation rally photos Paul Mattsson

It appears London Underground (LU) management has reneged on agreements made following the last LU strike. As we go to press, the RMT are discussing possible further action. LU electricity supply workers at the

LU Power Control Room, members of RMT, TSSA and Unite, are due to strike for eight days from 8pm on 1 July. The dispute, over pensions, length of service, working conditions and future jobs, could close the tube network.

Unite conference debates union's Labour link

Rob Williams

There was a vibrant debate on the relationship between Unite and the Labour Party at the union's policy conference.

Because it was a policy conference and not a rules conference, motions could not discuss disaffiliation from Labour and setting up a new party.

But a composite that came from motions from LE1228 and LE1111 branches called for a conference to be organised so that the political strategy of the union and the relationship with Labour and alternatives could be discussed.

Seconding the motion, Socialist Party member Suzanne Muna made the point that the "not now, not now" anti-disaffiliation argument would still be made if Labour came to power and implemented

cuts. But whereas Tory leader David Cameron looks over one shoulder at right-wing Ukip, Labour leader Ed Miliband doesn't yet have to look over his shoulder at a mass left alternative that could put pressure on him.

The last speaker in the debate, Jamie Coccozza, a Glasgow Socialist Party Scotland member and rail worker, explained to conference that the successful \$15 Now campaign in Seattle - already mentioned

at the conference - involved, as well as the struggle of unions, the election of city councillor Kshama Sawant, a socialist representative of workers on a socialist

programme.

This showed that having an alternative could put huge pressure on Labour.

As Jamie explained, even the Democrats now have had to discuss the idea of a \$15 an hour minimum wage.

The executive put forward a statement, which was passed by around three votes to one, that maintained the union's existing strategy within Labour and opposed the call for a conference.

But during this debate, and when delegates listened to general secretary Len McCluskey putting forward this strategy and praising

Ed Miliband, there didn't seem to be enthusiastic support for that idea.

It was more that delegates at this stage don't see any alternative to the idea of supporting Labour in the 2015 general election. There were no real illusions that Labour would be a radical alternative to the Con-Dems.

Even McCluskey, and members that supported the executive statement, have to accept that this issue will remain central for Unite whether Labour win or lose next year's election.

Reflecting on this, a motion encouraging Labour councillors to vote against cuts passed, with two delegates who are also Labour councillors speaking against the motion.

So far Labour has expelled or suspended the handful of councillors who have voted against Labour council cuts.

The National Shop Stewards Network 2014 conference will include a workshop to discuss 'political representation for workers after the Collins Review', with TUSC national chair Dave Nellist and BFAWU union president Ian Hodson. See NSSN adverts on pages 1 and 5.

Over 10,000 votes for Martin Powell-Davies in NUT leadership election

Socialist Party member Martin Powell-Davies received 10,470 (27%) votes in the election for the general secretary of the NUT teachers' union. The current general secretary, Christine Blower, was expected to win and did so with 28,428 (73%) votes.

Martin commented on the result:

"I am pleased that the strength of support for my candidature represents a real achievement for my campaign.

After the Local Associations National Action Campaign (Lanac) voted to back my stand in February, I only had three months to gather the nominations required.

That first target was achieved but, although outnumbered five-to-one in local association nominations, the three-to-one vote in the actual election records a closer margin when it came to members' votes.

My support was generated by a campaign that sought to reflect the anger of classroom teachers at the

conditions they face - and a frustration among many NUT members that the union was failing to campaign with sufficient clarity and determination to oppose the ongoing attacks on our pay, pensions and conditions - and on education as a whole.

Even my opponents acknowledged that my election materials were well-received in schools. Some certainly feared that the final margin of Christine's victory might be tighter still.

My demands for clear campaign goals and for a clear calendar of strike action struck a chord with teachers at every meeting that I was

able to address.

To secure over 10,000 votes, despite all the disadvantages facing my campaign, is a real achievement. I believe that my campaign has helped make sure that the union has responded by sharpening its campaign messages.

My campaign has also helped keep up the pressure for maintaining strike action on 26 March and now 10 July - action which must now be built for as strongly as possible."



Martin Powell-Davies

Former NUT general secretary Fred Jarvis has attacked Lanac in a new book which says the left is "plotting" a "union takeover".

But Lanac, founded in June 2012, is growing as rank-and-file teachers see the need to escalate action to stop Gove's 'reforms'.

Far from being some shadowy organisation Lanac has a clear democratic

structure giving all affiliated NUT Associations a vote at its steering committee.

In attacking Lanac and other more long-standing left organisations in the union, Jarvis is also attacking the NUT as a whole and aiding Gove and all the politicians who want to attack teachers and dismantle state education.

In brief

PCS action stops sell-off

Although we are still awaiting for the official Government response to the consultation into proposed Land Registry privatisation, workers have been informed that privatisation will not be happening within this term of government. A report in the Mail on Sunday however, indicates that business minister Vince Cable may go further and scrap privatisation plans altogether. The Mail article also made a clear and unambiguous link between the government climb down and the PCS union campaign, in particular, the 48-hour strike in May. What this shows is that campaigning works and action gets results.

While we wait to examine the full details of the government report, to ensure that privatisation is definitely off the agenda, our priority is now to secure agreements around no office closures, no compulsory redundancies and no outsourcing of our members' work.

Dave Lunn, vice president, PCS Land Registry group

Pathologists

Biomedical scientists working for Northampton General Hospital have voted by 83% for strike action and action short of strike in response to attacks on terms and conditions.

The Unite members have 90 days to sign new contracts or be sacked. The new contracts will see workers forced to double their night time shifts from seven days in 14 weeks to 14 days in 14 weeks while out-of-hours payments are slashed by 8%. Members face losing £6,000 a year.

The hospital trust is spending up to £1 million a year on eight locum pathologists - more than double any possible saving from the changes.

HMRC action continues

HMRC members in the Midlands were on strike on Thursday 26 June as part of our rolling regional week of action in the jobs and staffing campaign.

HMRC is refusing to consult meaningfully with the union on massive job cuts and privatisation across the country. By next year HMRC will have halved in size since 2005 while the "tax gap" continues to grow.

We have the closure of enquiry centres, forcing people onto an already failing telephone system that answered only one of ten calls on 31 July last year, for example. The department is also persisting with an unpopular and discredited performance management system.

Alex Morgan, assistant branch secretary, PCS HMRC Leicester branch

Ministry of Justice

Hundreds of PCS members in the Ministry of Justice took strike action in Newport and Bootle against privatisation on Monday 30 June.

Website

For more reports on strikes and other trade union and workplace issues see the Socialist Party's website:

www.socialistparty.org.uk

Fighting for a living wage

Camden school caterers speak to the Socialist

Labour-run London borough of Camden is accredited as paying at least the living wage. However, it has passed on some of the Con-Dem cuts by introducing performance-related pay to reduce its overall pay bill.

And the living wage does not cover all its subcontractors; it is asking them to commit to it, only when their contracts are renewed, which in some cases is years away.

Camden Unison is currently running a major campaign for school meal caterers in the borough to be paid the London living wage of £8.80 an hour. Bob Severn spoke to two Unison reps - Jane and Alysha - about their campaign.

Alysha: The job we are doing is the same service that you would get in a top-quality restaurant. The difference is we're dealing with children, so there are a lot more procedures in place. We've only got three to four hours to do all that work in. We are extremely underpaid because £6.31 (the minimum wage) an hour is just not good enough.

Jane: If you're off sick you don't get sick pay. So only being on £6.31 an hour - say you're off for a week - that's over £100 but you've still got to pay your bills.

Alysha: I have seen 60 year old women doing the jobs that you'd expect someone my age - and I'm 28 - to do. How can you expect someone who's 60 years old to push those heavy trolleys? They're big metal trolleys and they're hot.

Alysha: They don't take into consideration grieving. When my grandmother passed away - my grandma raised me - I was heartbroken. I only got three days off, one day unpaid.

Jane: I can't manage on this wage, I just can't. Every month I've got stress.

Am I going to have my money there to pay all my bills? If I'm sick it's: 'oh my god, well I've now lost that wage. How am I going to pay that bill?'

You shouldn't be under that stress. I'm not the only one - we all feel like that.

Alysha: We're all in the same boat, we're all in it together, yet you see catering workers in our neighbouring borough Islington getting paid £8.80 for doing exactly the same job.

Our company have got contractors within that borough who are getting paid £8.80. Why them and not us?

Jane: Islington local government gave them the money to do it - Camden won't do it. That's what we were told.

"I can't manage on this wage. Every month I've got stress. Am I going to have my money there to pay all my bills? If I'm sick it's: 'oh my god'... You shouldn't be under that stress"

Bob: What are the aims of your campaign?

Alysha: Our aims are to get £8.80 an hour for every single worker, get sick pay and be treated like people not animals. We will keep campaigning until we get what we're entitled to.

Jane: At the end of it there'll be a massive headache but it'll be worth it because we'll win it.

Alysha: The union's making people feel at ease, that there is someone there to fight for you.

A lot of us are bringing our work



London school caterers on the march photo Paul Mattsson

home with us. Because when you come home you're tired, your kids aren't seeing the best of you either. With me I'm moody - my poor son - they don't see the best of you.

Also, they want a pound to go to the shop with their friend - why can't our kids have a pound to go to the shop with their friend? Because the employers won't pay us. Parents then look like the bad ones to our kids.

Jane: The kids suffer as they want to do what their mates are doing. As they get older they want to do more.

Bob: So what are your plans?

Alysha: We've got a mass meeting for us reps to explain the changes that we want implemented and what the company have said and what steps will be taken after that.

Jane: If the workers have any questions, we'll try and answer them as best as we can.

Alysha: We'll have a demonstration in September 2014. This campaign has been going on since September 2013, already we have made...

"Because when you come home you're tired, your kids aren't seeing the best of you either. With me I'm moody - my poor son - they don't see the best of you. Also, they want a pound to go to the shop with their friend - why can't our kids have a pound to go to the shop with their friend? Because the employers won't pay us..."

Jane: ...quite a big bit of progress

Alysha: But we just have to stay united, supporting each other, and keep putting the pressure on the bosses until we do get £8.80 an hour and do have better working conditions.

For example: uniforms that actually fit us, kitchens that have proper equipment in it, health and safety shoes - a hairnet for everyone! People are having accidents...

Jane: ...because they haven't got the proper equipment.

Alysha: They're giving all these different excuses on why they're not providing it.

There needs to be more structured procedures in place when it comes to things like lateness, sickness, sick pay, holiday pay - all of these things which are in the proposal.

This is what we've gotta fight for and if it comes to a strike we're willing to strike all the way.

Jane: That's it. Everyone that's joined the union will be out. We've got more and more members joining, and if they all go out then that's the kitchens closed.

Doncaster Care UK workers continue pay struggle

The first phase of Doncaster Care UK workers' battle against 35% pay cuts, which included 34 days of strike action, has drawn to a conclusion.

Improvements have been secured from the original proposal of no enhancements and members will now progress through the pay bands subject to the usual performance indicators.

The Employment Tribunal decision went against us and our members democratically decided to accept transitional payments to temporarily alleviate the hardship that Care UK is raining down on us. But if Care UK bosses think this is

the end of Doncaster Unison resistance they can think again.

During the last nine months, Care UK has made it clear it intends to adopt a static version of transfer of earnings (TUPE).

It is not abiding by any pay award made to NHS staff since our transfer from NHS to Care UK on 1 September 2013. There is also no proposed pay rise this year.

No alternative

So Care UK leave us with no alternative but to submit our own pay claim for 2014-15.

The claim is for a meaningful in-

crease in basic pay for all staff and a minimum starting rate of £7.65 an hour, the current living wage.

A company that makes millions of pounds profit from public sector contracts is so mean that it does not even pay its lowest graded staff the living wage.

We therefore have the ludicrous situation that many of our members who work for this organisation need to claim in-work benefits to survive.

The consultative vote on further industrial action produced an 85% mandate for a further strike ballot, which is now going ahead.

Adapted from Unison Doncaster Care UK bulletins

The National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) is using its 2014 conference on Saturday 5 July to help build the growing campaign for a £10 an hour minimum wage.

Ginger Jentzen from the victorious Seattle \$15 Now struggle will speak about a campaign that is a beacon for millions of low-paid workers in the USA and around the world. Alongside Ginger will be Ronnie Draper, the general secretary of the BFAWU bakers' union. The BFAWU became the first union to call for £10 at their conference in June and have now been followed by the GMB.

New £10 Now T-shirts that can be bought for £8 at NSSN conference or ordered from info@shopstewards.net. Women's sizes are small, medium and large. Men's sizes

£10 Now T-shirts



are medium, large, XL, XXL and XXXL. NSSN Conference 2014 11am-5pm, Saturday 5 July Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1R 4RL Delegate/visitor fee £6

10 July STRIKING A BLOW AGAINST POVERTY PAY

\$15 an hour in Seattle: historic win for workers

In the US city of Seattle the election of socialist Kshama Sawant (member of Socialist Alternative, co-thinkers of the Socialist Party) has been key to the victory of the campaign for a \$15 an hour minimum wage.

\$15 an hour means 100,000 workers in Seattle will see a rise in their wages. \$3 billion will be redistributed from business into the pockets of working families over the next ten years. Unsurprisingly big business fought hard to water down the \$15 minimum and it will be phased in over a number of years and there are other loopholes.

Kshama and the 15 Now campaign will continue to challenge the loopholes and to fight to ensure that \$15 is fully implemented. But the bosses' arguments that a decent minimum wage would see a massive cut in jobs or that they could not afford it don't stand up.

That this obscene inequality poses danger even for the super-rich is increasingly recognised. Seattle-based multimillionaire investor Nick Hanauer has warned in a "memo" to his "fellow zillionaires" that: "You show me a highly unequal society, and I will show you a police state. Or an uprising. There are no counterexamples. None. It's not if, it's when." He previously wrote that: "Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour would inject about \$450 billion into the economy each year... That would give more purchasing power to millions of poor and lower-middle-class Americans, and would stimulate buying, production and hiring." But the vast majority of big business strongly opposes raising the minimum wage. Why? If big business pays workers poverty wages that means more profits in the pockets of the super-rich.

Walmart workers, like many public sector workers, are forced to rely on in-work benefits to make ends come anywhere close to meeting. But figures show that it could pay its US workforce almost £6,000 more a year and still make an annual profit of £10 billion.

In her speech at the city council vote Kshama

pointed out that in the chamber it was not big business that was voting against immediate implementation of \$15 but the Democrats.

Seattle is rich in lessons. It shows that when workers organise and fight back, we can win. It shows that the pro-big business parties cannot be relied on to defend workers. And it shows that, as Socialist Alternative explain, "you don't have to be a socialist to fight back - but it helps!"

Kshama Sawant wrote that: "A real mass movement must welcome everyone who wants to join the struggle, but history has shown again and again that movements are most effective when they have a core leadership who refuses to accept the limitations of capitalism and who can build mass support behind a vision of an alternative."



Fight for a future

"In my election campaign last fall and in the movement for \$15, I learned that working people are inspired by an unapologetic, principled approach.

"Let's demand what people need to live a dignified life, not just what the political establishment says is 'realistic'."

"To push things forward, we've got to provide a vision of what's possible with the huge wealth working people create - and not confine ourselves to the crumbs this broken system of capitalism can 'afford' to give us.

"The victory in Seattle was an excellent first step. We must use the energy to spread the fight for \$15 nationally and to expand the struggles on other key issues facing working class communities. If we organise with a bold perspective and a socialist vision, we have a world to win."

What is true in the US is true here. Join the socialists today.



There's too much month at the end of the money!

There's too much month at the end of the money,' said a PCS member in the Midlands at a workplace meeting to prepare for the planned strike action on 10 July.

This strike of civil service workers, local government workers, teachers, firefighters, with others potentially joining too, shows that workers want a fightback to defend their living standards. And pay is at the heart of that.

A union spokesperson told the BBC: "GMB members serving school meals, cleaning streets, emptying bins, looking after the elderly, helping children in classrooms and in all the other vital roles serving our communities are fed-up with being ignored and undervalued... Their pay has gone up only 1% since 2010 and in October even the national minimum wage will overtake local authority pay scales."

Unison explains that, for the public service workers who have been on a virtual pay freeze since 2010, inflation has cut 16% out of the value of their pay packet.

But the super-rich are not touched. Britain now 'boasts' 104 billionaires, with a collective wealth of £301 billion, up by more than a fifth in a year. To add insult to injury it's reported that their cost of living is actually falling. Prices for caviar and fine wines are dropping.

We pay the price

But for the rest of us, as well as the pay freeze in the public sector there is the scandal of zero-hour contracts and a chronically low minimum wage. This is exacerbated by rising food prices, soaring rents and cuts to jobs and public services.

Workers in the public sector are often at the sharp end of this. According to Unison almost half a million local government workers earn less than the living wage, set at £7.65 or £8.80 in London. This is not enough to live a decent life but more than the measly £6.31 current minimum wage level.

Unison, GMB and Unite are calling for a pay rise of £1 an hour for local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. A pay rise of £1 an hour would mean that workers on the lowest scale point five would rise from £6.45 to £7.45 an hour.

Councillors have a choice but the Tories, Lib Dems, and Labour have used their elected positions to vote through horrendous cuts to workers' jobs, pay and to the public services we all rely on. While Labour receives millions from the Labour-affiliated unions, 80% of the councils under its control do not even pay the living wage.

Councils have been hit by government funding cuts, no question, but Unison has found that they have £19 billion in their reserves. Unison says that the extra £2.3 billion they put in the bank in the last two years could fund the £1 an hour claim, with some to spare.

Socialists argue that councils should pay a decent wage and refuse to implement cuts in services. By using their reserves and borrowing powers any council on the side of the working class not the 1% could buy time to build a campaign to force the government - either this one or the next - to properly fund local government.

This highlights the need to stand candidates in elections who are committed to opposing cuts and defending jobs and pay. It also shows the need for Unison, Unite and the other affiliated unions to break with Labour and to form a new mass workers' party that could be relied on to stand up for workers.

The Socialist Party is part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) along with the RMT transport union and key leading union activists. In May's council elections, Unison and Unite members were part of the 561-strong anti-cuts TUSC stand.

The Socialist Party gives its backing to the union campaign for £1 an hour increase. It is a scandal that any worker should live in poverty. That's why we campaign for the immediate implementation of the Living Wage as a step towards a minimum wage of £10 an hour with no exceptions, with regular increases to cover price rises.

At their recent national conferences the demand for £10 an hour was taken up by the BFAWU bakers' union and the GMB.

It's not just in Britain that pay is a hot issue. In the US, following the victory in Seattle, the campaign for \$15 an hour is spreading like prairie fire (see left). A higher minimum wage needs to be part of a programme of other measures to help low-paid workers, including a major investment in job creation, an end to zero-hour contracts, the introduction of rent controls and the construction of new council housing. At present the low-paid spend between a third and half of their income on housing.

Escalate the fightback

But it is going to take a fight. Members of the BFAWU bakers' union in Hovis showed that bad working conditions can be defeated when they successfully resisted the imposition of zero-hour contracts. Workers in the land registry have scored a victory against privatisation. And there are many local victories that prove that workers have power when they are organised.

The action on 10 July will show this. But it must be a step in a determined campaign of action. Public sector workers have shown their determination to struggle time and again. Two million walked out in defence of pensions in mass coordinated strike action on 30 November 2011. In local disputes across the country workers, especially low-paid workers, have shown they are ready for action.

But their courage has not been matched by the right-wing trade union leaders who, instead of building on the big success and popularity of the strike, settled for a few crumbs. That gave the Con-Dems and their big business masters the confidence to relentlessly turn the screw in pushing down workers' pay and working conditions.

The strike on 10 July is another opportunity to launch a battle against

austerity. In doing so, the unions could draw behind them millions of unorganised workers and all those suffering from these brutal cuts. Unison has already named 9 and 10 September as the next dates for action in this pay strike. They should be the next steps in the mass coordinated strike action, building for a 24-hour general strike that can smash the pay freeze.

This will open up the prospect of defeating this government of the 1%. It is understandable that some workers are sceptical about the prospects for this struggle given the woeful role of the right-wing trade union leaders in recent years. However, the only way to defeat the attacks of the employers and the government is to determinedly set out to organise and fight until we win. The strike on 10 July is an important first step.

The best way to keep pressure on union leaderships - through building the broad lefts, democratic fighting left organisations in the trade unions, through organising local strike committees and involving more members in the activity and structures of the unions.

To end poverty pay we say:

- Join the action on 10 July - picket lines and demonstrations and the public and workplace meetings to prepare for it
- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £10 an hour without exemptions as a step towards a real living wage. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings
- Fight until we win - organise further united strike action including a 24-hour general strike
- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists to provide a fighting, political alternative to all the pro-big business parties. Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now!
- Fight for a socialist alternative to the inequality and exploitation of capitalism



Two million walked out in defence of pensions in mass coordinated strike action on 30 November 2011. In local disputes across the country workers, especially low paid workers, have shown they are ready for action

Wales: one in five earns below living wage!

Ronnie Job
Unison steward, personal capacity

As the ballot of Unison members in local government confirms a majority for strike action on pay, a report for the Living Wage Commission has found that over one in five workers in Wales earns less than the Living Wage (calculated at £7.65 an hour). There are just 18 employers in Wales accredited as Living Wage employers by the Living Wage Foundation.

Scandalously those earning less than the Living Wage include thousands of council workers employed in Labour-led authorities. They will be striking on 10 July to try to halt the 20% drop in real wages Unison estimates has taken place under the Con-Dems.

The Labour Welsh Government has responded to the report's findings by saying that they are proud to be a Living Wage employer and that they encourage other employers to do the same.

You'd think Welsh Labour would start with the half of all councils in Wales that they lead but some of these Tory Tories in driving down their workers' wages. Bridgend's Labour-run council, in the First Minister's own constituency, announced it was withdrawing from national pay bargaining and was only forced to retreat by a campaign of the trade unions, with no help from the First Minister who refused to get involved.

Cardiff's Labour-led council made a big hoo-ha about adopting the Living Wage but that doesn't apply to the jobs they have outsourced to private providers. And it is even more sneaky; they haven't attacked the hourly rate but have reduced the paid working week for all

workers by an hour, an effective 2.7% pay cut! Cardiff council workers report that workloads aren't cut and council workers are expected to do as much in less time for their reduced pay. Top managers cheerfully admit privately that it is a ploy to get the same amount of work for less pay. Trade unionists fighting to end low pay can't expect any help from Labour then.

If anybody was in any doubt, Ed Miliband spelled it out at the GMB conference when he told delegates he would not be supporting strike action on 10 July. This probably won't stop a number of Welsh Labour politicians posing for photos on picket lines on the day but you'd expect a lot more, given the £5.7 million Unison alone has paid to the Labour Party since 2010.

It's not good enough; union members in those Labour councils not paying at least the Living Wage and especially in those like Cardiff and Bridgend, trying to drive already low wages down even further, should join with the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition to build a political alternative and secure elected representatives who will actively support trade unionists fighting to stop the race to the bottom on our wages.

Only concerted and coordinated strike action can stop this race to the bottom and 10 July must be the springboard to further, more widespread action, not a one-off protest.

Wages have been driven down so much that the Living Wage would be a big advance for many workers in Wales but in order to get by, workers on the Living Wage still need to claim benefits. The campaign for the Living Wage can only be a first step towards a minimum income that reflects the real cost of living and is why the Socialist Party supports the demand for £10 an hour.



Obituary: Ian Whyles - miner, socialist and class fighter

Jon Dale

Ian Whyles, a member of the Socialist Party and its predecessor Militant for 34 years, has died aged 78.

Ian was a miner at Whitwell Colliery, North Derbyshire, and played an important role in the 1984-85 miners' strike.

During Ian's childhood his dad was seriously injured at Whitwell pit and "was chucked on the scapheap". Their home had a shared outside toilet down a long yard. "We were so poor it made you want to change the world," said Ian. He won a grammar school place and could have continued in education, but went down the pit aged 15.

When he was 43 a workmate introduced him to Alan Alberry, a Militant supporter in the nearby Clowne village. He joined Militant.

A few months later Ian had a heart attack while underground. He later wrote a vivid article for the Militant paper describing being stretchered out of the pit.

Militant

"I used to sell up to 22 copies of the Militant outside the pit each week," Ian recalled. "The NUM secretary, a right-wing Labour Party member, said to me: 'You can't stand on the road selling those.' I said: 'That's a good idea. I'll stand inside - in the [pit-head] baths!'"

Local right-wing Labour Party members "didn't want us in the party. I'd had a heart attack when I'd applied to join and my mate came to see me. 'I've got some bad news,' he said. 'They don't want us. They've turned us down!' Dennis Skinner had to put pressure on the branch to accept us.

"At our first meeting, I sat down to be told I was in someone's chair! After we started to speak, one right-

winger threw his hat down and said, 'That's it - if this is going to be political I'm not coming again!' (He never did.)"

Ian took part in Militant miners' national meetings and understood that the coming battle was for the future of working class communities.

"When the strike started in Yorkshire I was getting ready to go down the pit. Three youths got out of a car and asked for directions to Welbeck pit in Notts. I said to them: 'You'd better come and stand on our gate.'

"The NUM branch president came over to talk to them and said, 'We'll have a meeting.' They spoke in the canteen, when the shift voted to walk out. Then there was a meeting of all shifts, which voted to stay out."

In the final week of the strike, Ian had another heart attack. He didn't work again until almost 18 months after walking out.

"At the end of the strike, it affected people who'd fought so hard to win," said Ian. "It was like bursting a tyre - after all the effort, it was no longer needed. People felt deflated.

"I didn't see it though. I was in hospital. It gave me time to sit and think. I read our paper and Trotsky's autobiography, My Life. We had Militant meetings and discussions. Militant saw the reasons for how it ended. We realised it had needed a general strike to win and had been calling for this for months."

Continuing struggle

Ian could have finished work on health grounds but chose to return underground and keep up the NUM union's fight. After Whitwell closed in 1986 Ian never got another job but threw his energies into his local community.

In 1989 as a voluntary youth worker, he took five young people on an overnight coach trip to a Glasgow poll tax demonstration.



Ian Whyles marching in Glasgow photo East Midlands Socialist Party

Ian's integrity, willingness to help others, modesty and dry humour won him many friends and widespread respect. When he stood in local elections, he got one of the highest percentage votes of any Socialist Party candidate nationally.

In recent years Ian's care responsibilities and travel difficulties prevented him from attending Socialist Party meetings. But he kept up regular discussions and maintained

his generous financial support. Only two days before his unexpected death he bought Socialism Today, paying £5 as usual.

Ian was a fighter for his class. His commitment and selflessness remain an inspiration to his comrades. East Midlands Socialist Party members send their condolences, particularly to Muriel and Rachel.

Ian's funeral is on 7 July at 1.30pm, Chesterfield Crematorium



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Kent TUSC stands up for Freedom Passes

Mia Terry-Duffield

Kent socialists, workers and students kicked off their Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) election 2015 campaign with four new candidates pledging to fight price rises for young people on local public transport.

Kent Freedom Pass (KFP) gave Kent's 11-16 year olds unlimited countywide bus travel.

But Kent County Council (KCC), who last year hiked up prices from £50 to £100, doubled the price again and restricted travel to Monday to Friday, between 6am and 7pm.

Originally KCC proposed a £100 charge for a travel card with £350 worth of standard price bus travel. After this was gone, young people

would just pay the normal fare!

Students could not use the bus beyond their first term at school, let alone any social or extra-curricular activities. A scheme for 16-19 year olds will now cost £400.

But the KFP is a KCC subsidy to private bus companies, which siphon off as profits any money not spent on running the service. Stagecoach, East Kent's main provider, posted profits last year of £218 million, money owed to busworkers and service users!

Young people set up a "Kent Freedom Riders" campaign for free travel, taking the battle to campuses and schools.

Kent TUSC supports this move and demands free travel for young people, whose education, extra-curricular activities and social time must come before private profits.

Birmingham schools: Challenging Gove's agenda

Theo Sharieff Winston

Over 400 people attended a public meeting in Birmingham on 26 June after government attacks on some schools in predominantly Muslim areas of the city.

It marked the launch of the 'Putting Birmingham School Kids First' campaign and the start of a local fightback against Michael Gove and Ofsted's coordinated attack on Birmingham's Muslim community.

Parents who spoke stressed fears of further isolation of the Muslim community as allegations of radicalism among their schoolchildren creates an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion across Birmingham.

This division of the city along ethnic lines during a period of unprecedented attacks on the working class, doubtless delights the government.

One speaker pointed out that, while there are issues of governance in the affected schools, this was a result of Tory policy to gut local authorities which originally would have overseen and potentially handled the matter.

Due to Ofsted's political nature, he called for an open public inquiry conducted by community members themselves to dispel any government propaganda.

Socialists would support this but the teachers' unions and the labour movement must take the lead in this inquiry.

London Pride march

The 2014 London LGBT Pride march was held on 28 June. The Socialist Party was there with stalls, leaflets, petitions and selling the Socialist.

The high turnout to this year's march, despite torrential rain, shows that Pride is still a vibrant celebration of the LGBT community and gives others the opportunity to show support and solidarity.

However, what has been apparent for many years is Pride's creeping de-politicisation and its domination by commercial sponsors. In past years the trade unions have formed up at the head of the march, but corporate sponsor Barclays led the 2014 parade. Big business can clearly see the profits to be made from the LGBT community. Groups were asked to pay to form contingents.

But there are still many issues impacting on the lives of LGBT workers and youth; from pay restraint and the housing crisis, to funding for the NHS and the impact of austerity policies on charities and community organisations. These and other issues should feature as a fundamental and integral part of the march.

The fight for LGBT equality is not yet complete. Let's reclaim Pride and fight for our rights.

Elenor Haven

Bradford: Fast Food Rights

Bradford's Fast Food Rights protest organised by Youth Fight for Jobs (YFJ) targeted McDonald's on Kirkgate on 28 June.

We leafleted outside the shop and met many people who wanted to find out more.

One local restaurant worker took away recruitment forms for the rest of the staff at his workplace. Several people who read our slogans 'For a living wage of £10 an hour' and 'Scrap zero-hour contracts' indicated their support.

Ian Hodson, national president of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) which initiated the Fast Food Rights campaign pointed to the billions McDonald's earns every year, and the flights it laid on for top executives to go to the world cup, while keeping 90% of its workforce on zero-hour contracts and only paying minimum wage.

He reiterated the call for a £10 an hour minimum wage and urged people to join the campaign.

Iain Dalton, Yorkshire Youth Fight for Jobs

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	£ target	£ received	April-June 2014	Final chart
North West	1,200	2,158	■	■
Northern	600	808	■	■
South West	1,400	1,685	■	■
East Midlands	1,600	1,828	■	■
Wales	2,300	2,522	■	■
Yorkshire	2,900	2,912	■	■
London	6,100	5,330	■	■
West Midlands	2,100	1,658	■	■
Southern	1,200	889	■	■
Eastern	1,200	570	■	■
South East	750	349	■	■
England & Wales	3,650	3,454	■	■
TOTAL	25,000	24,169	■	■

South Africa - victory in platinum miners' strike!

Workers' and Socialist Party

The Workers' and Socialist Party (WASP) hails the resolution of the five-month-long strike in the South African platinum sector as a victory not only for the mineworkers and their union Amcu, but for all workers and poor people.

The increases for the lowest paid workers of R1,000 in the first and second year and R950 in the third represent unprecedented gains and a significant step forward in the struggle for a living wage for all.

The settlement which has now been accepted by workers is evidence that determined and united struggle pays. The significant concessions that have been forced out of the mining companies expose as lies their claims of unaffordability.

Clarification

The determination that has enabled workers to endure five months of hardship is an inspiration to workers and fighting communities and youth across South Africa and beyond.

The strike has clarified who stands on which side of the class battle lines. WASP has made our support of the workers clear throughout the strike.

Political parties such as the ruling African National Congress and the South African Communist Party have left beyond doubt that they side with the bosses. Strike-

breaking trade unions such as the NUM, Solidarity and WAU have also imprinted their betrayals in the minds of hundreds of thousands of workers.

This strike, inspired by the martyrs of Marikana has been the most important since the 2012 mine-workers' strikes.

It has posed the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist economic system - the need for the mining industry to be nationalised

The determination that has enabled workers to endure five months of hardship is an inspiration to workers and youth across South Africa and beyond

so that the massive mineral resources can be used both to end poverty wages and create jobs and also to develop mining communities and society as a whole.

This step forward should serve as a platform from which the labour movement takes the lead given by Amcu to continue the fight to these ends.

That mineworkers must prepare to resist the likely attempts by the mining bosses to claw back tomorrow what they conceded today. Retrenchments cannot be accepted - the mineral wealth of this land if enough to provide jobs for many more!



Miners' have been fighting for a living wage photo Socialist Party

row what they conceded today. Retrenchments cannot be accepted - the mineral wealth of this land if enough to provide jobs for many more!

Confidence boost

The platinum workers' victory will certainly boost the confidence of workers in the metal and engineering industry and in the public sector, who face looming strike action and tough wage negotiations.

WASP will continue to stand firmly on the frontline of these struggles and work to maximise their level of organisation, unity and clarity.

Read more at
www.workerssocialistparty.co.za

What is WASP?

The Workers' and Socialist Party (WASP) was established by the Democratic Socialist Movement (CWI South Africa) and others in 2012. Its launch followed the events of 16 August 2012 when 34 striking miners at the Lonmin mine in Marikana (themselves fighting for a living wage) were killed by police. The massacre and aftermath exposed to many workers how far to the right the ruling ANC has moved since it was seen to lead the struggle against apartheid and that there was an urgent need for a new political party to represent the working class. WASP has since gained support from



thousands of workers by leading struggle and putting a socialist programme.

Solidarity needed against nationalist attacks in Sri Lanka

Keerthikan Thennavan

Tamil Solidarity joint national secretary

Tamil Solidarity joined others in protest against recent attacks on Muslims in Sri Lanka. At least four people were killed and 100 injured as mobs ran riot in the southern coastal town of Aluthgama.

Once again, they were led by the right-wing Buddhist nationalist group, Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) - with the backing, behind the scenes, of president Mahinda Rajapaksa's brutal regime. He is using groups like BBS to whip up Sinhala nationalism, and as a means to divide and rule the island.

The confrontation was sparked by a seemingly minor event: an argument over a traffic incident. Bodu Bala Sena used that to call a rally on 15 June.

There, BBS leader, Galabodatte Tero, whipped up the mood of the crowd into one of searing anger: "If one Muslim lays a hand on a Sinhalese, that will be the end of all of them," he threatened.

Divide and rule

He then used the poverty of the vast majority of the Sinhala people to further enrage the crowd, by saying that the Muslim small-businesspeople and shopkeepers have money, while they have nothing.

Of course, the Rajapaksa regime encourages this kind of view. That is because, if people are fighting each other, they will not be blaming the regime for the extreme poverty affecting most people in Sri Lanka -

Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil.

The only way to fight effectively against this generalised poverty is by uniting in common struggle for work on a living wage, for decent housing, education and health services, and for workers' organisations (such as trade unions) which are genuinely independent of state control.

If people are fighting each other, they will not be blaming the regime for the extreme poverty affecting most people in Sri Lanka - Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil

Following the rally, with the crowd's mood at boiling point, they were allowed to march into the predominantly Muslim areas, chanting anti-Muslim slogans.

The mob set about attacking houses and anyone they could find on the streets. After a while, the regime sent in the Special Task Force and imposed curfews in Aluthgama and Berumulla, using water cannon and tear gas to disperse the crowd.

The Muslim Council of Sri Lanka has welcomed the curfew, but we have to issue a warning here: be careful what you wish for!

In reality, the curfew has been directed against the Tamil Muslims. It actually stopped them from organising their own self-defence, and allowed the Buddhist monks and their followers to go from house to house attacking Muslim families and stealing from their houses.

We do not have any faith in the regime's security forces to defend communities in Sri Lanka.

United response

We will give every support to the people under attack. And we support action taken by communities, organised workers and other oppressed people, to organise their self-defence - and against the right-wing groups backed by the regime, such as Bodu Bala Sena.

At the end of the day, a united response is the only way to defeat these divisive forces, and this brutal regime.



Houses and people in the mainly Muslim areas were attacked

The Committee for a Workers' International

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

The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against global capitalism and to fight for a socialist world. For more details including CWI publications write to: CWI, PO Box 3688, London E11 1YE. email cwi@worldsoc.co.uk

www.socialistworld.net

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Review: Murdered By My Boyfriend

A harrowing look at violence against young women

Sarah Wrack

BBC Three's 'Murdered By My Boyfriend' tells us from the start that it is a true story. The details are all as they took place for a real-life woman from Nottingham, who was killed by her boyfriend when she was 21. The writer, Regina Moriarty, carried out extensive interviews with the woman's friends and family, who wanted the programme to be made as a warning to other young women but asked that all names be changed.

The programme is powerful and haunting throughout. Over the opening credits we hear screams, see flashes of what will later be the final, brutal scene, and hear a young woman say: "This is the end of my story. The journey here was not straightforward. It began when I fell in love."

Ashley is 17 and working part time in a clothes shop while at college. She dreams of owning a

Intimate partner violence accounts for a quarter of all violent crime and costs £5.8 billion a year to the criminal justice system, health and social services, local authority housing and loss to the economy through time off work

beauty salon, of falling in love and settling down with a family of her own. She meets Reece at a party – he's good looking, charming and makes it clear that he likes Ashley straight away. Reece is good with her friends, he's generous and he

doesn't pressure her to have sex – "a real gentleman," Ashley comments.

The title of the programme, along with Ashley's periodic narrations from beyond the grave, mean the audience knows where this will lead. We see the significance when he first, with a teasing smile on his face, wants to know who a text message is from.

After three months, Ashley finds out she is pregnant. She wants to talk about their options, pointing out that she's only 17 and is still studying. But Reece insists that she should have the baby, that he'll take care of everything and that they can be a proper family. It's while she's pregnant (as in 30% of domestic violence cases) that the first physical attack takes place.

Control

The programme gets across a chilling sense of the complete control over Ashley's life that Reece assumes. He is constantly logging in to her Facebook account to check her messages. He tells her to change what she's wearing. He demands photos to prove where she is and who she's with. He controls her money and checks receipts to see where she's been.

In this way the programme helps show that domestic violence is a consequence of the idea that women 'belong' to men, and that men have the right to enforce obedience from their partners.

These ideas have been embedded in society over centuries and are intrinsically linked to the structures and inequality of society divided into classes.

Georgina Campbell, who plays Ashley, brilliantly gets across the transformation of a happy, funny, ambitious teenager into a scared and worn down woman. The

One in four women will experience domestic violence at some point in their life



Georgina Campbell as Ashley (second right) with friends

violence escalates over the course of the programme leading up to the final, deadly attack, which is hard to watch.

Ashley leaves Reece several times. Her friends beg her not to go back, but she feels trapped. Reece stalks her, turning up at her house demanding to see their daughter. At one point she starts to believe she could have her own life – she sleeps with Jamie, who has liked her for years. But Jamie tells her they can't be together because he's too scared of what Reece will do. Tragically it's Reece finding out about Jamie that triggers his last outburst.

The audience feels with Ashley the sense of there being no way out, that she'll never be free – echoed by Reece who shouts through her door when she refuses to let him in: "I'll never let you go!"

Awareness

At the end of the programme, text explains that the real life Reece was sentenced to life in prison for Ashley's murder. It says: "It took four years for Ashley to die. In that time at least 229 other women in Britain were murdered as a result of domestic violence." That was one of the most powerful things about 'Murdered By My Boyfriend' – it was written about one real woman, but could have been written about thousands.

Young women aged 16 to 24 are the most at risk of intimate partner violence. But 75% of women aged 11 to 21 are unaware of what constitutes abuse – for example 21% think

It is estimated that incidents of domestic violence go up by 26% when England win and 38% when England lose in world cup matches



Reece's violence escalates throughout the programme

Domestic violence and the cuts:

- Funding for services for victims of sexual and domestic violence has been cut by 31%
- The legal aid budget is being cut by £350 million a year - it is estimated 54% of women suffering from domestic violence would not qualify for legal aid
- Two out of six specialist refuges for women from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups closed and two others suffered significant funding cuts
- Respect services, working to reform male perpetrators of domestic violence, suffered budget cuts leading to a 78% reduction in the number of clients they were able to assist

there is no problem with a partner controlling what you wear.

Last year the government expanded its definition of domestic violence to include this type of coercive behaviour and to cover 16 and 17 year olds. This is a good step forward. But when combined with huge cuts to support services, including refuges, and access to legal

aid, its impact will surely be limited.

In this context it's vital that violence against young women in relationships gets more attention, so programmes like 'Murdered By My Boyfriend' have an important role to play in raising awareness. We then have to oppose all cuts as well as fighting the inequality and prejudice of capitalism.



Reece uses social media to keep constant track of Ashley

Further reading

Articles:

- Combating violence against women: A socialist perspective on fighting women's oppression (Hannah Sell - www.socialistparty.org.uk)
- Domestic violence: Can new laws work alongside cut-backs? (Eleanor Donne - Socialism Today issue 179, www.socialismtoday.org)
- A brief history of the Campaign Against Domestic Violence (Heather Rawling - www.socialistparty.org.uk)

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

Christine Thomas
£5.99

What consequences will the economic crisis and its aftermath have for women? Are inequality, discrimination and oppression inevitable in our lives?



Women: fighting austerity, fighting for equality

£1

A collection of articles from the Socialist, covering issues including women and the cuts, abortion rights, the Slutwalk protests and the beauty industry.

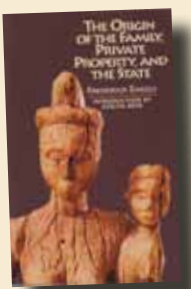


The origin of the family, private property and the state

Friedrich Engels

£12

Engels demonstrates that the family, private property and the state are all products of specific economic and social conditions.



The great British housing disaster

One of the most pressing social problems facing millions of people is the lack of affordable housing to buy or rent. Successive Labour and Con-Dem governments, and their local government counterparts, have failed to invest in building sufficient council housing and instead, encouraged profit-taking private developers and landlords to supply housing. The result has been a disaster.

In London and the south of England in particular, where housing demand is greater, house prices and rents during the recent recession, when people's incomes have been squeezed, have gone stratospheric. Whereas in parts of the north of England, Scotland and Wales, house prices have fallen, leaving some mortgage payers in 'negative equity'. It's patently obvious that government policy based on the private sector to provide sufficient housing has failed and that the only solution is a mass council house building programme, coupled to rent capping in the private sector.



The overheating housing market is threatening economic recovery

Osborne's housing bubble

The government's 'help to buy' first time house buyers scheme, launched to much fanfare by Tory Chancellor George Osborne in March 2013, instead of giving people a leg-up onto the property ladder has helped fuel a housing price bubble by attracting international investors into the London property market.

"The impact of the scheme has mainly been through raising price expectations. The direct impact has been small... But the publicity of the scheme has raised expectations that prices will rise. And that boosted demand" (Matthew Pointon, Capital Economics).

Osborne is adamant that his scheme isn't causing a housing bubble but both the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Bank of England (BoE) have said that rising house prices represented the biggest threat to the

UK's economic recovery.

BoE Governor Mark Carney said he and the Financial Policy Committee would not extend the scheme beyond its initial three-year period if it started to threaten the stability of the economy. He also called for a tightening of the rules on mortgage lending to cool the housing market.

Carney also said the fundamental problem was an acute housing shortage after decades of low housebuilding rates but added that it wasn't one the Bank could address. A problem which this government, like its Labour predecessor, has clearly failed to address.



Osborne and Carney not seeing eye-to-eye

Only the rich catered for

Roger Shrivs

Lewisham Socialist Party has been asking people to sign our petition, calling on our local council to build thousands of council houses and introduce rent controls in private properties.

It is given new urgency by recent developments. Tory London mayor Boris Johnson's disastrous plans to let private developers build for-profit new unaffordable riverside

homes, mainly for wealthy people, in Deptford will shortly be finalised. There has been little consultation.

Convoys Wharf used to house press tycoon Rupert Murdoch's paper supplies for his Fortress Wapping.

After Murdoch closed his plant, he sold the site to developers. The latest of them, Hutchison Whampoa, appealed to Johnson for help. 'Boris' took negotiations out of the hands of Lewisham council and the Wharf is in line for a big sell-off.

3,500 homes will be built, 3,000 of them at very unaffordable rents. The other 500 would be "affordable" which Johnson will set at 80% of market rents ie distinctly unaffordable. Many of these flats will remain empty and those sold will be mainly for richer people.

Local people are neglected. Lewisham's council housing waiting list of 18,000 will hardly be lowered - the whole area may have no council or other affordable housing. There are scant provisions for jobs, schools, transport, etc.

As sweeteners, they are allocating some money to partly offset the impact of this scheme with social provision but it is patently insufficient. Local people met recently to start fighting this example of rule by property moguls.

All that is solid...

Paul Kershaw

"If people hoarded food on the basis that its value was sure to go up when others began to starve and would pay anything, we would stop their hoarding. But hoarding is now happening with shelter.... Increasingly it is the financing of housing that is our biggest problem: the mortgage or rent, the bills and the inequitable taxes."

This is how Danny Dorling starts his recent and fact-packed book 'All that is solid: The great housing disaster'. He goes on to underline what this means for people's lives: "When we talk about our housing and wealth, ultimately what we are talking about is our freedom. When a disaster looms in housing so, potentially does a disastrous loss of freedom. We become less free of fear for our future."

Dorling concentrates on inequality, showing how growing inequality cuts across figures that seem to show improving housing conditions. In terms of bedrooms per person, the 2011 census would suggest Britain is better housed than ever. Even in London, the most overcrowded region, there are more bedrooms than people. But when you look at the distribution of those rooms a different picture emerges over the last 30 years.

Through most of the 20th century, the way people were housed became more equal; the number of bedrooms enjoyed by the richest 10% of the population fell to three times as many as the poorest 10% in the 1981 Census. But then it began to rise again, reaching 3.7 times in 2001 and accelerating to five times as many in 2011. Here we glimpse the lived reality of Thatcherism and neoliberalism.

Dorling comments: "We have far more bedrooms than we have ever had before. But a few have been taking more than their fair share,

increasingly so ever since 1980; and very recently they have been taking far more again with each year that has passed since the crash."

He is right to argue that inequality is at the heart of the housing crisis.

What cheek the Tories have to argue that the bedroom tax will engineer a fairer distribution of scarce bedrooms when, at best, it would only redistribute between those with least, while those with most continue to get more.

But Dorling's proposals for change are exclusively about housing and who gets housed where.

He does explain that housing is inseparable from finance and highlights the effect of an increasingly insecure labour market, but what is needed is a socialist programme to bring about wider socialist change in order that people lives are not blighted by poor housing conditions and insecurity.



All That Is Solid:
The Great Housing Disaster
by Danny Dorling
Published by Allen Lane

A socialist programme of action

- Tackle the housing crisis by mass building of council houses
- Cap all rents in the private sector at council rent level
- Scrap the bedroom tax
- For a £10 an hour minimum wage for all
- Nationalise the house-building companies
- Fight for a socialist society based on the needs of the overwhelming majority of people

Housing facts in brief

➤ The cost of an average house in the UK is ten times bigger than the average salary, rising to 14 times bigger in London, according to the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). £250,000 average house price in UK; average earnings £26,910

➤ House prices per square metre have risen by 13% since 2009, going up by 34% in Greater London (61% in Lambeth, south London). However, prices in the North and Scotland fell by 3% and 5% respectively. (source: Halifax)

➤ While profits may be increasing, output in the building sector is 11.3% below its pre-crisis peak. Last year only 109,370 new homes were built in England, when 240,000 new homes a year are needed in order to meet demand.

➤ Tesco is sitting on enough land to build 15,000 new homes - a massive 4.6 million square metres. According to the Guardian, the proposed new garden city of Ebbsfleet could be accommodated by the retailing giant's land bank.

➤ Rents take up an average of 50% of disposable income, a trend that is only likely to worsen. The number of housing benefit claimants who work has risen by 104% since 2009.

➤ £24 billion pounds of taxpayers' money a year goes on housing benefit - most of which is going in the pockets of private landlords. Providing council housing with genuinely affordable rents and capping rent would reduce the bill.

➤ The government has cut £7 billion in housing benefit and made draconian cuts in council tax benefit adversely affecting low income families. Claimants under 35 years, in particular, have been hammered by the government's introduction of a lower rate of housing allowance.

➤ There has been a 26% rise in homelessness in England over the last four years, meaning 112,070 people lack proper shelter. The number of rough sleepers in London alone rose by 75% in the same period to reach 6,437.

➤ An estimated 70% of homeless people suffer mental health problems yet homeless shelters have been closed and health services cut.

➤ The government's affordable housing budget for 2011-2015 has been almost halved. The social rented housing model has now been dropped in favour of an 'affordable rent' tenure. New homes built will be let at up to 80% of local market rents with 'flexible' tenancies of a minimum of two years instead of secure lifetime tenancies.

➤ In London, over 271,000 council homes have been sold off since 1980. More than a third of them are rented out by private landlords. 9.3% of private rented homes suffer from damp.

South East
London
TUSC
Public
Meeting:



The Fight for Affordable Housing
Speakers include
TOMMY SHERIDAN,
Scottish socialist
Thursday 10 July, 7.30pm
Barnes Wallis Community
Centre, 74 Wild Goose
Drive, New Cross,
SE14 5LG

Labour woos big business

NEEDED:

A POLITICAL VOICE FOR THE WORKING CLASS



TUSC supporting Care UK strikers

A Unite member

Public service workers across the country are striking on 10 July to say no to pay cuts, no to pay poverty, no to attacks on pensions and to demand an end to workloads that, for some, mean they are no longer healthy enough to enjoy a half-decent retirement.

Council workers, teachers, firefighters, civil servants and leisure workers will take inspiration from standing together, striking together and marching together.

On 10 July when public services grind to a halt, workers will be able to see, by sheer example and experience,

that the working class is potentially the most powerful force in society. The bosses, the ruling class, the brutal Con-Dem government, will get a taste of the opposition to come if they continue with the austerity agenda.

But what of Ed Miliband and the Labour Party? No doubt we will get more of the same shameless hypocrisy, scrambling for votes by condemning the government for making cuts too quickly and too deeply, while also saying striking is not the answer. And don't forget: the Labour Party is 100% committed to cuts and privatisation.

Labour is offering an 'olive branch' or an olive tree to big business by promising even more tax

breaks. This is despite corporation tax being at record low levels and ignoring the millions that are lost to tax scams by these companies.

Miliband has made clear who he supports. He proposes cutting benefits for jobless young people in an effort to force youth into dead-end, insecure, low-paid jobs.

Questioning

Workers are increasingly asking the question - why do the trade unions give millions to Labour? It promises to attack us if it is elected into government and we have no doubt because it already kicks us at local level.

This was starkly illustrated recently when Unite members on strike

at Labour-run Lewisham council lobbied the full council meeting in protest at massive cuts to the service that they work in.

Unite members watched as every single Labour councillor voted for the cuts. In turn, every single Unite member who attended that night said that they would never vote Labour again. Why, if Labour councils are carrying out brutal cuts are we handing them our cash?

It's like paying somebody to buy a strong pair of boots on Friday, so they can kick you hard on Monday. It makes no sense.

But what does make sense is that we need a party of our own. We need to be funding candidates who stand at elections to fight cuts, to fight pri-

vatation, to demand decent jobs and to demand fair, decent pay.

That is why the Socialist Party is building the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) - an alternative to the dead-end provided by no hope Ed Miliband. TUSC gives us the chance not just to say no but to say yes, to vote and fight for a future for all, for the many not the super-rich few.

The 10 July strikes are a big step forward in the fight against austerity - it will be one step closer to the general strike action needed to fight austerity. It also shows the need for workers to have our own party, that supports our struggles - a mass workers' party committed to building a better, socialist future.

www.tusc.org.uk

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 £10 an hour without exemptions as a step towards a real living wage. 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!