



BOB CROW

A GREAT FIGHTER FOR THE WORKING CLASS

1961-2014



Bob Crow addresses the end of the Youth Fight for Jobs Jarrow March in 2011 which he, and the RMT, supported photo Senan

Peter Taaffe
Socialist Party general secretary

The Socialist Party is shocked and deeply saddened by the death of Bob Crow, general secretary of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT). The outpouring of grief and solidarity in response to his death confirms the major impact he had as a trade union leader – undoubtedly one of the best known – for his steadfast approach to standing up for his members.

Our thoughts are with his family. We also send solidarity to RMT members.

Where the Evening Standard once tried to portray him as the ‘most hated man in Britain’, commuters interviewed on the news paid tribute to his principles in standing up for what he believed in, and for those who elected him. Westminster and

town hall politicians can only dream of such a tribute.

The RMT’s February strike on London Underground was a beacon for workers suffering under Con-Dem austerity and fearing a precarious future. Every attempt was made to undermine the union and to ridicule Bob – but the strike had huge public support.

The RMT took the battle to London Tory Mayor Boris Johnson, who has shown in his sick-making eulogy to Bob what depths of hypocrisy can be plunged. Even the most anti-union papers had to acknowledge that the union forced an utterly arrogant and intransigent Johnson to the negotiating table. That battle must be continued to a victory for the RMT against ticket office closures and job losses.

Bob’s approach to building resistance was reflected in the RMT’s founding of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN), giving trade unionists a powerful body in which to fight austerity and to

build pressure on the TUC to call a 24-hour general strike, a campaign which Bob wholeheartedly backed.

Bob had just agreed to attend this year’s NSSN conference on 5 July as a key speaker. Under his leadership the RMT was a tireless defender of trade union rights, alongside the PCS and the POA prison officers’ union.

Mirror columnist Kevin Maguire gave Bob a fitting tribute: “in an era of political bland, he was a trade union leader who would tell it how it is”. This included on matters political. “Bob told me he favoured the formation of a new workers’ party, I said he was doomed to fail.”

Kevin will be proved wrong and Bob Crow will be vindicated. But Bob didn’t just talk about these things with journalists. Among RMT members and the working class he made the case for the building of a new mass workers’ party.

Bob was due to be the lead candidate for ‘No2EU – Yes to workers’ rights’ in the 22 May European

elections and was a co-founder and steering committee member of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) since 2010.

Under his leadership two RMT conferences voted for the union to fully participate in TUSC, alongside the Socialist Party and others. RMT members are among the workers and anti-cuts activists standing as council candidates in the biggest left-of-Labour challenge for generations.

Bob Crow always defended socialism as the necessary alternative to the rotten capitalist system. We often shared a platform with him, and he spoke at our Socialist Party annual ‘Socialism’ events on a number of occasions – including last November – receiving many ovations for his tenacious stance.

Among RMT members Bob had enormous respect and support for his uncompromising position of fighting in their interests, including fighting for renationalisation of the

railways. When the RMT come to the democratic process of electing a new leader we hope they choose someone who will honour Bob’s memory by being a fighter for the working class, including for the establishment of a new mass workers’ party with TUSC as a first step, for socialism and for international solidarity, as Bob was.

The affection for Bob Crow sums up the urge of the working class for a powerful, fighting leadership. It is fair to say that if the entire trade union leadership was made up of fighters like Bob, or like Mark Serwotka and the left socialist leadership in the PCS, and other lefts in the trade unions, the battle to stop the cuts and kick out the Con-Dems would be in a much advanced state.

But in his passing, Bob Crow also reminds us of the strength of the British working class to produce such fighters. He will be greatly missed, but we will fight on.

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photo Paul Mattsson

Bob Crow: 1961-2014 Best tribute is to fight on

Tribute from John Reid, RMT London Transport regional council president and Socialist Party member:

I have personally lost a friend and comrade and the socialist and trade union movement has lost a great leader. I pass my heartfelt condolences to his partner and his children and grandchildren.

Members of the RMT loved him as a man who, along with other activists, rebuilt our union into a fighting trade union which was never on its knees and was prepared to fight and strike if necessary for our members.

He was a passionate socialist and Millwall fan and worked tirelessly for his members. He believed in building a socialist alternative to Labour and helped to initiate the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC). At RMT conference in 2013 he opposed a resolution seeking to distance the union from TUSC, and the resolution was defeated.

Bob was also closely involved in initiating the National Shop Stewards Network in an attempt to rebuild the left fighting traditions of the trade union movement.

Our task is to honour our fallen brother by building the trade union and socialist movement.

The representatives of the ruling class in their obituaries have stated that the RMT has grown from around 50,000 members to just over 80,000 in the 12 years of Bob's leadership, bucking the trend of falling trade union membership.

Bob's brand of socialism and trade union militancy has been a resounding success resulting in thousands of our members receiving decent pay and conditions.

The RMT will continue to defend the traditions built by Bob and others,

of building a union committed to socialism and trade union militancy.

Tributes to Bob have come not just from RMT members who have in their hundreds posted moving tributes and have put up notice boards at stations, but have also come in their hundreds from working class people in Britain and internationally.

A tribute on a QPR football site sums this up: "London has lost a son. Bob cared for the members of the RMT, didn't matter if you swept a platform, cleaned a tube carriage or drove the tube, Bob got those workers a safe environment to work in, a decent wage which led to a better standard of living for the ordinary man/woman... I for one believe he was right to stick up for his members. Why should his members suffer for the mistakes of city bankers? ... RIP"

Socialist Party members remember:

Rebel councillors join tributes to Bob Crow

The 'rebel two' Southampton city councillors Keith Morrell and Don Thomas have issued the following statement: News of the death of Bob Crow came as a huge shock to us, and so many people who knew and respected him.

He fought tirelessly for his members and for working people in Britain and across the world. It was a privilege to work with Bob, who was tremendously supportive of the stand we took here in Southampton to represent the people who elected us onto the city council.

Early on in their stand against the Labour council's cuts Keith and Don were invited to speak to the RMT executive council and later, in June last year, to the RMT's annual conference. They conclude: "We drew great strength from the personal example he set of tenacity, principle and belief in the working class, trade unionism and socialism. Bob will never be forgotten".

Tribute from Tony Mulhearn, Liverpool 47 and Liverpool Socialist Party:

Demonised in life by the right-wing media, in death Bob's qualities as a fighter for his members are now given massive coverage. Bob displayed courageous and implacable opposition to the cuts policies of the Con-Dem government. He recognised that the Labour Party embraced policies little different from the Con-Dems and no longer represented the interests of the working class.

Bob will be sadly missed and difficult to replace at a time when working class leaders of such conviction are scarce. We send our deepest

condolences to Bob's family at their terrible loss.

Len Hockey, branch secretary, Unison, Waltham Forest health branch at Whipps Cross Hospital

Members of Unison at Whipps Cross Hospital would like to pass on our sincere condolences to the family of Bob Crow. He passed away at our hospital and we offer our full support and solidarity to the RMT trade union.

Members at the hospital, including porters and domestic workers, that attended meetings nationally and in Walthamstow, east London, at which Bob spoke over the recent years, have drawn encouragement and inspiration at the speeches Bob gave.

Bob's life and activity is an example for our class and our movement to emulate in the battles we must wage to defeat once and for all austerity, poverty, inequality and injustice.

Lois Austin, TUSC mayoral candidate for Newham:

Bob stood up for things that most people agree with - such as decent living standards for all and renationalisation of the railways. Under his leadership the RMT, like the PCS civil service union I work for, fought for its members, refusing to bow down to the Tories or wait in hope for a Labour government. The forerunner of the RMT, the Society of Railway Servants, founded the Labour Party. But today Labour is just like the Tories. Today, the RMT is helping to build TUSC, which was backed by Bob Crow since it was founded in 2010, to get back the political voice for workers.

Miliband wouldn't share Durham platform with TUSC supporter

Ed Miliband has paid a somewhat mealy mouthed tribute to Bob Crow. An event in 2011 showed how he really felt about the man he calls "one of the labour movement's major figures".

Miliband pulled out of speaking at the Durham Miners' Gala because, according to a Northern Echo report: "union firebrand" Bob Crow, a TUSC steering committee member, had also been invited to speak.

Miliband's spokesman said: "the decision to invite Bob Crow onto the platform at the Gala means Ed is not able to attend this year. He doesn't want to share a platform with someone who is not a Labour supporter and who has attacked Labour many times in the past".

Miliband was set to be the first Labour leader to turn up at Durham

since Neil Kinnock in 1989. Kinnock himself, followed by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, broke the tradition of Labour leaders attending this celebration of working class solidarity in 1990, during the anti-poll tax movement, as part of the long march of transforming Labour into New Labour.

In 2013 - days after Miliband's attack on Unite over Falkirk - and for the first time in 115 years, there was not a Labour MP on the platform.

Bob Crow, in contrast, told the Echo that "it is the greatest honour in the labour movement to be invited to speak". Bob went on to call for a new party of workers when he spoke.

Watch the video on the TUSC website: <http://www.tusc.org.uk/videos>

Spontaneous solidarity

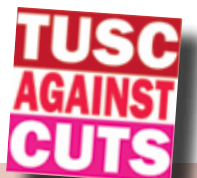
Jac Berry

A few years ago I met Bob Crow. Our anti-cuts group was due to have a meeting at the RMT office. Unbeknownst to me, we were double-booked with the Medway RMT branch AGM. I was coming straight from work at the hospital, running late and in uniform and when I burst into the room packed full of RMT members, listening to Bob Crow in full flow about the McNulty report. I was just like "oh, I'm from the anti-cuts group... have we double booked?"

Crow set the tone saying 'we should be honoured to be joined by our sister from the nurses' union'. He invited me onto the platform to address the meeting about NHS cuts and privatisation. What a legend!



In July 2011 Bob was among the 10,000 people who took part in a march and rally in Derby, which called on the government to support Bombardier. I remember Bob speaking that day and he was the best speaker on the platform. Chris Fernandez Unison rep, personal capacity, Derby



Bob Crow was an inspirational union leader who tenaciously defended his members' jobs, pay and conditions - head and shoulders above most other union leaders.

Bob also recognised, well before most other union leaders, that the overlapping austerity agenda of the big parties meant working people have to start again and build anew.

As part of his legacy, on 22 May, TUSC (the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition) will stand the largest number of left of Labour candidates seen in this country for over 60 years.

Dave Nellist, Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition national chair

Stop press: Solidarity with John Reid

John has been suspended pending investigation following a complaint against him made while he was carrying out his lawful duties on the picket line in the February strike to defend jobs and ticket offices. John is president of the RMT's London Transport regional council.

Please send messages of support to jjpiedie@yahoo.co.uk

NHS - under attack from private vultures

Andy Bentley

The government has launched its biggest single privatisation of NHS services so far by inviting private companies to bid for £1.2 billion worth of contracts to provide front-line cancer treatment in district hospitals and care for the terminally ill across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Private companies will compete to deliver cancer and end-of-life treatment for children and adults across the area - involving diagnosis and treatment such as radiology, radiotherapy, breast screening, chemotherapy, nursing and surgery for patients in hospitals, hospices and at home.

After the government and media's relentless four-year barrage of largely untrue attacks on Stafford District Hospital they think the ground is well prepared to force through its first large scale privatisation of frontline NHS services in Staffordshire.

The government has also rushed through parliament an amendment to the Care Bill known as the 'Hospital Closure Clause' (HCC). This allows unelected Trust Special Administrators who take over any 'failing' NHS Trusts in England to speed up closures or privatisation of nearby hospitals even if they are performing well. So, conjuring up just one 'failing' hospital in every region would give the government the pretext to cut, close or privatise whatever they want nationwide. But rushing the HCC through parliament also shows that the Con-Dems are still afraid of the opposition that these measures will face.

In response, Andy Burnham, Labour's shadow health spokesperson, said: "David Cameron has

placed the NHS on a fast track to fragmentation and privatisation. The next election presents the last chance to change course."

But we cannot afford to wait for a general election hoping that Labour will save the NHS. The last Labour government saddled the NHS with a total of £215 billion of repayments for big business projects worth only £55-65 billion. And decisive action is needed now to stop the government's latest privatisation plans.

Last year, 50,000 marched through Stafford against the government's plans to dismantle Stafford District Hospital, followed months later by over 1,500 at the first of six sham public consultation meetings.

This opposition, along with tens of thousands marching in Lewisham and elsewhere, gives a glimpse of the massive anger which exists nationwide against the crusade of closures and privatisation of the NHS, as did last year's trade union organised demonstration at the Tory conference.

It is now more urgent than ever that a plan of action is drawn up by the health trade unions, other unions, local communities, campaign groups, etc, against the dismantling and privatisation of the NHS, including strike action and standing 'no cuts' candidates in the May elections.

The Socialist Party is calling for;

- Immediate trade union-led action to stop large scale privatisation of frontline services across Staffordshire.
- Axe the Health and Social Care Act. Stop the destruction of the NHS.
- No cuts, closures or job losses in the NHS
- Scrap the dodgy PFI privatisation deals and cancel the debts. Kick big business out of the NHS
- End the postcode lottery. For a high quality, fully funded and publicly owned service in every area
- For a 24-hour general strike to link NHS workers with others in public and private sectors
- Support for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition as the first step towards a new mass workers' party to defend the NHS



photo E Brunskill

Such a campaign would receive the support of millions across Britain, have the potential to stop the privatisation juggernaut in its tracks and herald the end of this government even before the next general election. It would also be a warning to any incoming government to keep their hands off the NHS.



Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

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Police spy inquiry must not be another whitewash

Under enormous public pressure Theresa May, the Tory Home Secretary, announced in the Commons last week that the government would establish an 'independent judicial inquiry' into police spying and corruption.

It follows revelations last year that officers of the Metropolitan Police's, now disbanded, Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) had spied on the family and friends of Stephen Lawrence, who was murdered by racist thugs in south London, in 1993, and others.

Campaigners for justice will now have to fight to ensure that this inquiry is not another whitewash.

It has also come to light that the Met covered up information that John Davidson, an officer on the original police investigation into the murder, was connected to the father of David Norris, one of the racist gang who stabbed Stephen to death.

The government's announcement and the subsequent statement of the current Met chief Bernard

Hogan to fully cooperate with the inquiry, comes just days after an oversubscribed public meeting of COPS - the Campaign Opposing Police Surveillance - had demanded an independent public inquiry. Several trade unions, including the PCS trade union, have also backed this call.

The campaign has brought together members of the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, anti-racist campaigners, environmentalists and trade unionists.

Last year a former spy, Peter Francis, who had infiltrated the Socialist party's forerunner Militant and Youth Against Racism in Europe (YRE) in the early 1990s, revealed that the SDS wanted to smear the Lawrence family and denigrate the anti-racist movement.

Another SDS officer, Mark Kennedy, had targeted and acted as a provocateur among environmentalist groups.

Lois Austin, the former national chair of YRE and Militant supporter, spoke at the COPS meeting and

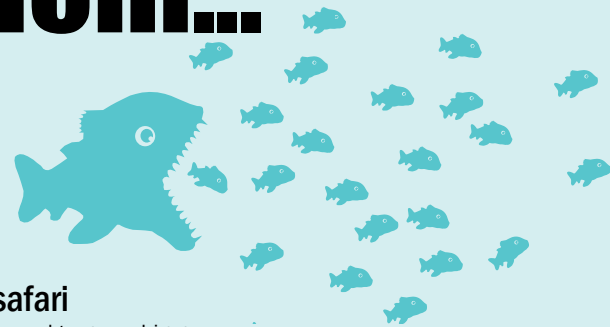
demanding a public inquiry. Lois called for an investigation into the role of politicians including former Labour and Tory home secretaries and into the SDS's successor organisation still operating today.

The Blacklist Support Group representing trade unionists victimised by employers has also condemned as a whitewash Operation Herne which was charged with investigating police collusion in the blacklist conspiracy.

The Group echoes others in COPS that the victims of undercover police surveillance can have no faith in the police investigating themselves. Socialists demand the involvement of democratically accountable representatives from the trade unions, anti-racist groups and other organisations affected.

The revelations of police spies highlight the role of the state in capitalist society to undermine and divide the working class and its organisations in order to prevent social change and maintain the status quo.

Them...



Poverty safari

The idle rich used to go on big game safaris. Now it seems that 'poverty safaris' are all the rage. Privately schooled, Oxford graduate and former editor of the world's poshest magazine, the Lady, Rachel Johnson (sister of Boris Johnson, Tory mayor of London) had a chastening experience by spending time with a low-income family in south London. Afterwards she thinks her chums are envious of her: "Bizarrely, I think there's a lot of envy. 'Lucky old Rachel, she went on a poverty safari'." Where's my elephant gun!

Benefits Castle

At least ten people wealthy enough to make the Sunday Times rich list are coining in money from housing benefit (HB) claimants. The Mirror reports that GMB union has researched this question and the Duke of Westminster, Britain's eighth richest man, possessor of a £7.8 billion personal fortune, gets paid £243,000 a year by councils paying out HB. There may be more than eight of these rich individuals increasing their fortunes by dipping into the tiny benefits of the low-paid. In 60% of cases, HB is paid directly to tenants so researchers cannot identify who the landlord who receives this benefit is. But the media will probably still run programmes like Benefits Street while ignoring the blatant Benefits Castle.

Bankers

In 2013 Barclays and Lloyds banks made more new millionaires than lottery organisers Camelot. 335 punters shared £682 million from the lottery. But Barclays laughed off declining profits, the Libor rate-rigging scandal, and threats of job losses for thousands of Barclays workers and gave £1 million plus

bonuses to 481 senior staff. More modestly Lloyds gave 27 top staff almost £1 million each. Eight Barclays fat cat bankers got £5 million while 54 got £2.5 million to £5 million. 74,600 workers at Barclays, about half the total staff, live on £25,000 or less a year.

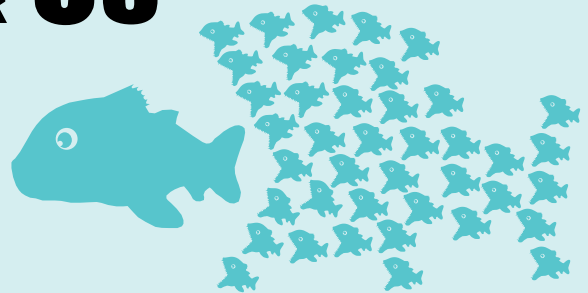
Schools out

A flagship Free School run by a for-profit Swedish company is being put into special measures after being branded by Ofsted, the schools inspectorate, as 'a failure'. The IES Breckland school in Suffolk has suffered mass resignations of staff, the standard of student work has declined since pupils started attending, and it doesn't meet requirements to keep children safe. Free Schools are the bright idea of education wrecker Michael Gove and are an extension of the Academies Schools programme launched under Labour. Independent of local authorities, and with little or no public accountability, companies and education trusts can set the curriculum and determine the (usually worse) pay and conditions of staff.

Crapita

Privatising giant Capita (often called Crapita for some reason) has, shall we say, a patchy record on competence in their businesses. But Capita now has a new cunning plan designed to remove all doubts. It's a VRA lie detector analysing voice patterns, which is supposed to deter 'benefit fraudsters'. The government's benefits-bashing plans tend to encourage crackpot schemes and some councils have already used VRA techniques. But does the VRA machine prove anything at all? One expert said the whole idea was "closer to astrology than to science." Profitable for Capita, maybe, but very dangerous for benefit claimants.

...& Us



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



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Building a fighting union leadership

Chris Baugh re-elected PCS assistant general secretary

Chris Baugh has recently been re-elected as assistant general secretary of the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS). He has written to Left Unity members:

Thank you all for my nominations for Assistant General Secretary. No other candidate received the 15 nominations needed to stand and so I have been declared elected with 166 nominations.

I believe the current leadership of the union is one of the best in the trade union movement. I am proud to be part of this leadership. I am pleased to be given another term in office and look forward to working with Mark Serwotka and Janice Godrich [the union's general secretary and president] over the next five years dealing with the many challenges that face PCS.

I urge you now to turn your efforts to the election of the Democracy Alliance President and national executive (NEC) slate.

We stand for:

- A strong democratic and fighting union
- A union which seeks to defend jobs, services, pay and conditions through negotiation but, where

necessary, by taking action

- Opposition to the self-defeating Coalition austerity programme which is driving working people into abject poverty.

There may be those in the union who disagree with the current leadership, what we are doing and what we stand for. But at no time do they say what, if anything, they would do differently.

On 16 April ballot papers will be sent out for the President and NEC elections. I hope you will do everything you can to secure a decisive victory for the Democracy Alliance slate.

This will send a clear message to the coalition government that we reject and will continue to resist their attacks on the union and its members.

Thanks again for supporting me. I ask you to support, vote for and work for the election of the Democracy Alliance candidates

Chris Baugh



Chris Baugh speaking at an NSSN conference photo Senan



PCS picket line photo Paul Mattsson

jobs but the personal details of civil servants will be off-shored.

PCS is not opposed to the creation of new jobs in India or anywhere else but these are not new jobs. Neither is it acceptable that personal records are sent out the country.

This is a political attack driven by the fanatical 'reducing the state' ideology of a government that hates the public sector and will do anything to cut services or sell off what it can for profit. There are no good privatisations and these are no exception. PCS will continue to

campaign to defend the jobs and conditions of members already privatised and fight to prevent further planned privatisations.

We are taking the campaign direct to the politicians, including Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister, whose own Sheffield constituency faces substantial losses. PCS will work with Unison who represent staff in Leeds, continue to negotiate with the employers and government, and organise and campaign among our members to resist further sell-offs.

Twitter: @johnmcinnallypcs

Shared services

John McInally

National vice-president Public and Commercial Services union (PCS)

Knowing that the general election is only 15 or so months away the Coalition government has embarked on a 'scorched earth' policy to cut and privatise as much of the civil service as possible. They are pressing for the privatisation of departmental and agency shared services.

Shared services cover functions such as staff records, personal details, payroll information. These services have been or are about to be privatised with a loss of jobs and conditions and closure of offices. Both jobs and the personal details of civil servants are to be off-shored.

Avarto and SSCL/Steria, have a record of cutting jobs and off-shoring work. SSCL have already taken

over shared services work in DWP, Defra and the Environment Agency (EA). SSCL have announced the closure of ex-DWP sites at Sheffield, Cardiff and at the former EA site in Leeds with the loss of 400 jobs.

PCS members took industrial action last November when the privatisation took place, with PCS winning concessions, but the company is rushing ahead with job cuts now it is in the private sector. SSCL made it clear to the government that the only way the contract could be delivered within the financial plan was by off-shoring. It is recruiting 200 staff in India on pay rates considerably lower than that in the UK.

While David Cameron talks to the world elite at Davos, the government aims to sell their own staff into the private sector with the knowledge that not only their

Labour council removes trade union facilities

A Carmarthenshire County Unison member

On 1 April Carmarthenshire Labour-led council will be removing the trade union secondments for Unison, GMB and Unite. Carmarthenshire County Council was already one of the worst in Wales for paid trade union secondments.

Unison has by far the most members and has one full-time secondment. Two local authority Unison branches adjacent to Carmarthenshire have four trade union secondments and another Unison branch which is much smaller has two full-time secondments!

This is clearly a political decision to stifle the Unison branch's opposition to the £30 million in cuts being implemented by the council.



Our branch has always opposed all cuts and has never been shy of criticising the council for implementing the Con-Dem cuts passed on by a passive Labour government in the Welsh Assembly.

Branch officers seeking reasonable time off risk harassment and intimidation. Managers will quote the needs of the service when not granting time off.

We are calling on the labour and trade union movement to support our campaign. Please go to this link: <http://www.change.org/petitions/carmarthenshire-council-labour-leader-kevin-madge-reinstate-trade-union-secondments> Many Unison branch members are already asking: "What is the point of New Labour?" Most would support disaffiliating from this pro-big business party who put themselves and their careers before the people who elected them.

Unison higher education - fighting leadership needed

Socialist Party delegates

Unison's Higher Education (HE) conference has, over recent years, been a small but significant opportunity to observe the growth of the mood to fight back against austerity attacks in the HE sector. This year's conference came after three individual national strikes over pay alongside UCU and other HE unions.

But to the bemusement of many delegates, the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) decided that motions over pay, including those submitted as emergency motions, were best left at the bottom of the agenda. There was a real possibility that in a one-day conference, the debate would not take place.

As the day wore on and delegates' frustration grew, the conference chair finally overruled the SOC, and allowed the six motions on pay to be moved.

The debate was passionate, with many speakers on the left arguing for continued action, hopefully alongside the teachers at the end of March. We called for a clear and de-

termined strategy to win the dispute, rather than a 'one day and see what happens' approach.

The more conservative branch leaderships and some Service Group Executive (SGE) members wanted a period of consultation with members. This was a thinly disguised attempt to prevent any action taking place for the foreseeable future and potentially derail the dispute.

In the end, the vote was narrowly lost against the left. Activists will now return to their branches, fully supporting the UCU marking ban due to start at the end of April, but knowing that action on our part is off the agenda for the next few months at least.

But the strike reinvigorated many branches. Many reported an increase in members and activists, with many young people joining and striking for the first time.

The SGE elections taking place in May will be the next opportunity to increase the influence of the left on the SGE, as Unison members recognise the need for a fighting leadership armed with a clear and determined strategy to win.

In brief

Knowsley College



Unison members in Knowsley Community College took further strike action on 6 March, in support of their sacked senior steward Barry Dunne. The strike was solid and caused major disruption to the running of the college. Members' anger was high as a result of the fact that an apparent commitment by the college to re-engage Barry had come to nothing following an 'interview' for a post that had already been promised to another candidate! Unison is preparing to take legal action in Barry's defence.

Crossrail death



A worker was killed on the Crossrail construction site in London on 7 March. Unite has demanded urgent talks with contractor BFK about health and safety on the site. The campaign against blacklisting of workers on sites such as Crossrail has always argued that trade union rights and safe working conditions go hand in hand. The importance of continuing this campaign is shown by the death of another worker on 2 March on a site in Stratford, east London. Another was seriously injured by a crane on 7 March on a site in Docklands.

Lewisham strike

Unite members working for the Attendance and Welfare Service in Lewisham, south London, were on strike on 12 March in protest at a 50% staffing cut. The council has cut £300,000 from the service. This follows a previous cut of £200,000. The impact of this cut will be devastating. The service has an enviable record in combatting school truancy by concentrating on early intervention. Now there will be less early intervention work and instead a bigger concentration on prosecution of parents - action once the damage has already been done. Workers who attended the full council meeting that made the decision to cut the service swore that having seen Labour in action, they would never vote Labour again. They are setting an example to council workers in Lewisham and lighting the spark to begin a fightback in the borough against the vicious cuts being imposed by a Labour council.

Lawyers walk out to defend legal aid

Russell Fraser

Criminal barrister and joint secretary of the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers

It is rare, if it happens at all, that those of us on the left attend protests and demonstrations with Tory party grandees among the speakers. More rare still that such a figure's words are greeted by applause and cheers. But that was the response when Sir Ivan Lawrence QC, a former Tory MP of 23 years, told those protesting outside parliament on 7 March about cuts to legal aid that he was "ashamed of this government".

For the second time this year criminal solicitors and barristers walked out over the government's continuing attack on legal aid. On 6 January there was a half-day of action with protests around the country, including the Old Bailey in London.

This time lawyers - again many in wigs and gowns - took their protest to Parliament where we were joined by campaign and grassroots organisations and many people who had used legal aid. The centre point of the protest was a giant papier-mâché effigy of the justice secretary Chris Grayling designed and built by the Brighton artist



Lawyers march on Parliament photo Heather Blockey

Patrick Bullock.

Among those speaking to the assembled crowd were Paddy Hill of the Birmingham Six and Janis Sharp whose son, Gary McKinnon, successfully fought against extradition to the United States with the help of legal aid lawyers. Mr

Hill told those watching that Chris Grayling should be renamed the "Minister of Injustice" and urged lawyers to "come out on strike for good" until we got rid of him.

Following the speeches, the rally marched from outside Parliament to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) taking

in the Supreme Court and the Liberal Democrat headquarters, led all the way by the giant rendering of the justice secretary.

At Liberal Democrat headquarters a delegation of the Justice Alliance led by Paddy Hill and Janis Sharp redelivered

over 100 copies of a document containing testimonials from over 100 organisations stating why legal aid is important. The testimonials were first delivered to the Liberal Democrats in November last year. To date Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg has not responded.

When the march reached the MoJ, protesters walked into the main foyer in large numbers and delivered a copy of the Magna Carta. At the same time the delighted crowd was treated to the sight of the Chris Grayling effigy being refused entry and then ejected from the MoJ offices.

The legal profession's nascent foray into the world of industrial action and protest has so far been successful. But in a meeting of lawyers in the afternoon it was agreed that further action would be required. One solicitor called for the next action to be a three-day strike which received unanimous support from those in the hall.

The next stage of the campaign will see barristers refusing to cover the work of colleagues who, because of other court commitments, cannot attend a particular hearing. This arrangement had always been one of goodwill. That goodwill has been tested and, it appears, has finally been exhausted by the policies of this government.

Probation workers to strike again

Chas Berry

Kent Napo branch chair, personal capacity

Around 400 members of the probation workers' union Napo met in Birmingham last week where a second national strike in our campaign to defeat privatisation was announced. The action takes place from 31 March to 1 April. It happens at a critical time, when Probation Trusts are being wound up and many will be asking whether it's too late to stop the privatisation bandwagon.

Our answer to this question is unequivocally "no"! Although staff have been told whether they will transfer to a government-owned Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) or become civil servants in a drastically smaller National Probation Service (NPS), no jobs have yet gone over to the private sector and plans to do so are in serious jeopardy. Already the privatisation timetable has slipped by two months as it was deemed 'too risky' by the senior civil servant advising justice secretary Chris Grayling.

Members' resolve in taking strike action last November and action short of a strike since then has been crucial in causing this delay. Without this resolve, Grayling would have ploughed ahead last summer and the privateers would be rubbing their hands with glee. Privatisation plans are in chaos and the profit hungry private contractors must be wondering how they could ever make money with such a non-compliant workforce!

Napo has done well to sustain this pressure but how can we ensure that the whole of probation remains in the public sector? Undoubtedly, the decision of Unison and the GMB to settle their separate disputes

is a setback for coordinated action and it cannot be denied that we have lost some momentum since our last strike. Nevertheless, Napo's strength has been its willingness to take an independent position.

General secretary Ian Lawrence acknowledged the central importance of collective action to our strategy when he said: "We stand together or fall together... that has to be the rallying cry from here on in as we seek to show society and Chris Grayling what we are truly about". And when he addressed the 2,000-strong legal aid protest outside parliament he called for joint action when Napo strikes on 31 March and 1 April. Members have been buoyed up by this action and the prospect of teachers on strike later this month.

Looking beyond 31 May when Probation Trusts shut down, it seems clear that the focus of the campaign will shift, with a new mandate for action in the CRCs to take the fight all the way up to the planned share sale in October.

We should also be talking to PCS and Unison about how we can coordinate future action across a range of issues such as pay and pensions.

**Napo
general
secretary
Ian
Lawrence**



Labour can't even offer an alternative candidate Second Maltby councillor for TUSC

Almost a year to the day after the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidate Joe Robinson won a town council seat in the ex-mining town of Maltby, in South Yorkshire, TUSC has won a second seat, this time in Maltby East.

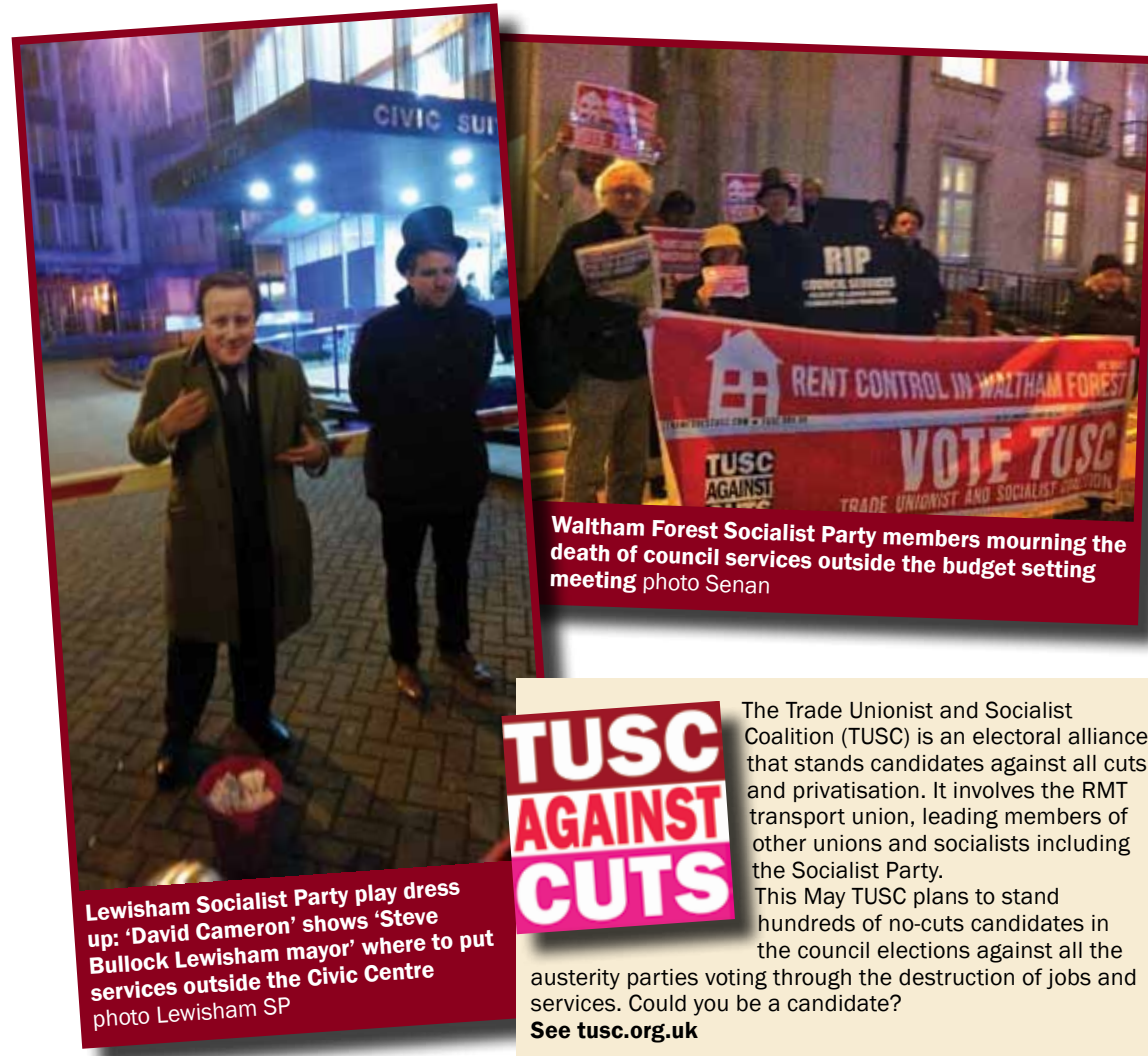
Joe won his seat with 60% of the vote against his only other

opponent, an 'independent' without description on the ballot paper, but in reality the Labour candidate.

This time, TUSC candidate Shaun Barratt, a member of the Usdaw shopworkers' union, was the only person to hand in nomination papers by the deadline, and was therefore elected unopposed. This

was in a ward where previously Labour had held four out of the five seats. Other than a different version of the Con-Dems' austerity agenda, Labour has nothing to offer workers - this time, not even a candidate!

There is another byelection soon, for Maltby South ward, which will be contested by TUSC candidate and Unison member Gavin Roberts.



Lewisham Socialist Party play dress up: 'David Cameron' shows 'Steve Bullock Lewisham mayor' where to put services outside the Civic Centre photo Lewisham SP

Waltham Forest Socialist Party members mourning the death of council services outside the budget setting photo Senan

**TUSC
AGAINST
CUTS**

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is an electoral alliance that stands candidates against all cuts and privatisation. It involves the RMT transport union, leading members of other unions and socialists including the Socialist Party.

This May TUSC plans to stand hundreds of no-cuts candidates in the council elections against all the austerity parties voting through the destruction of jobs and services. Could you be a candidate?

See tusc.org.uk

Stop the destruction of care in Britain

The underfunding of social care and the cuts in pay and conditions of care workers as a consequence of the government's austerity measures is a national scandal. In the following articles, campaigners and workers in the profession speak out on how these attacks are wrecking the provision of social care and also how to fight back.

A North West social worker

Social work, in essence, is about protecting and helping the most vulnerable and needy to make the most of their lives. Yet social work has been at the sharp end of austerity programmes, even before the current crisis. People who use the services, the army of unpaid carers and those employed in social work, have felt the impact of these cuts.

Cash-strapped councils have demonstrated they prefer to make cuts to services for vulnerable people rather than organise campaigns to stand up for their communities and refuse to implement cuts. Across the whole of the social care sector, the emphasis is on saving money rather than people's needs and enhancing lives.

Figures produced by Directors of Adult Social Services shows that over the last three years, budgets across the country for Adult Social Care have fallen from around £18 billion to £15 billion. This is against a background where demand for services is growing as people live longer. The number of people aged 90-plus is expected to treble over the next 20 years.

Meanwhile the government's proposed Care Bill will cap residential care costs for the better off at £72,000, while the availability and quality of care for the many is squeezed further.

For those using services, positive developments quickly turn into negatives as councils seek to save money.

Personal Budgets were introduced for adults from 2007; the stated motivation was to give, to those who are willing and able, more control and choice in the organisation of their care packages. Whereas someone may have previously been given five days at a day centre, now they are given a Personal Budget from which they may choose three days at a day centre, and two days on a different activity.

However, rather than receive a Personal Budget equivalent to the cost of five days at a day centre, they may, for example, get the money equivalent of four days.

This may lead to people accessing cheaper care, from unqualified sources. That is not choice or con-

trol, it is cost cutting.

This can increase stress upon carers. Carers, family or friends who provide unpaid care, are increasingly taken advantage of, with more and more expected of them.

There has been a much greater acknowledgement and awareness of the carer's role, and many people want to help in supporting a relative or friend. But increasingly this is exploited and carers are pushed into a more demanding role, to the detriment of their health, welfare and lives.

Privatised care

People, often older, who are in receipt of home care or residential care services, are at the sharp end of Tory cuts. The bulk of home care and residential care across the country has been privatised.

For residential homes many families are left with little alternative but to pay 'top up' fees, as the homes cannot provide even basic care from the ever-decreasing money they re-

ceive from councils.

the most exploited in the country. With an unsurprisingly high turnover of staff, people using the service suffer as well through a lack of continuity of staff, and missed and late calls.

Social workers are in an increasingly fragile position with many councils looking at privatising social work. At the best of times social work is a demanding and complex role, though it can also be rewarding, but now the role is becoming intolerable for many.

In a pressurised atmosphere, cuts place unprecedented demand on services. Workloads are growing in all sectors and the opportunities for genuine social work are shrinking.

Increasingly they are pressed by a finance-driven culture, to focus on how care packages and costs can be reduced.

Integration of health and social care, while in theory offering some benefits, is being guided by the need to reduce costs, and is accompanied by privatisation and increasing workloads. Mental Health Services are particularly bearing the brunt of this.

Meanwhile, children have their futures blighted by these cuts.

As poverty increases, and the birth rate increases, so will the demand for services to protect young people. The scandal of failed services in Doncaster and Birmingham, as a result of cuts will, sadly but surely, be repeated elsewhere.

Common struggle

A fightback to defend these essential services is desperately needed, and there are the first signs of this. There have been notable successes in defending services – such as mental health services in Salford, which we can build upon.

There has also been a welcome growth in user groups, to advocate for and defend services.

Trade unions in the sector need to work with these groups; it is not a choice between services or jobs, it is a common struggle, as well-paid and motivated staff lead to better services.

In social care, as with other areas of the public sector, it is time to put people's needs first. We need a broad based campaign to defend jobs and services, and to stop cuts and privatisation.



M&S style austerity

Former Marks and Spencer chief executive Sir Stuart Rose has been appointed an adviser to the NHS. The Tory press sang hymns of praise to Rose's 'big business expertise'.

The press were quieter about Rose's current job as chair of private equity firm Bridgepoint Capital. This company owns at least three private health businesses in Britain including one of the private care giants Care UK.

Care UK was paid £190 million a year from public money to treat NHS patients in 2012. Its profits soared up to £38 million in 2010 while its staff pay dropped by an average 1%.

Over 100 Unison members at Care UK in Doncaster have recently taken seven days strike action against attacks on pay and conditions and subsequently voted to undertake a further seven days strike unless the company rescinds its vicious pay cuts (see page 12).

In 2010, Rose was one of a gaggle of big business types to write a public letter congratulating Cameron's Tories

on their plans "to institute widespread cuts in public services and state benefits."

It's not just austerity and privatisation, of course, it's M&S-style austerity and privatisation. But it's bad news for the NHS and we must fight his plans.

Low-paid homecare staff working for Apex Care have been subjected to gagging orders and other draconian measures after their union, Unison, launched a campaign alleging the company has flouted minimum wage laws and imposed punitive changes and sanctions on its workforce. Staff on zero-hours contracts must get management permission to do other work, even if it is voluntary. Apex has also refused to provide staff with a copy of their employee handbook, insisting that staff may book an appointment to view the handbook in an office

‘Pushed to the limit’

I'm a support worker for adults with learning disabilities in Milton Keynes. The council's horrendous cuts are directly affecting the individuals I support, including a price hike and stricter boundaries for community buses.

Last year's budget also included cuts to homeless services, disabled children's services, dementia care and youth services. All the Labour councillors voted through the proposals.

Within my service the managing director sent a report to say our wages will remain frozen. The staff have not seen any pay increase since April 2009, this is despite working for a private charity, not a public sector service.

According to the charity's report it met its financial target in 2011. I wonder why the target didn't allow for standard pay increases. The financial report also stipulated that a handful of staff had received bonuses of as much as £120,000 that year.

Service users are also losing funding, services and even having their incredibly modest food

shop budgets reduced. Meanwhile staff are being pushed to the limit, working illegal hours just to make ends meet. This is having a detrimental impact on the quality of care being provided.

Some staff worked Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day with no additional pay, just the basic salary. Night shifts pay the same as day shifts and we are only given one weekend off a month, even the part-time staff.

24-hour and overnight shifts don't allow eight hours of sleep as you are not allowed to get ready for bed until 11pm and you must be ready for your shift at 7am.

There are regular shortages of basic sanitation supplies such as gloves, hand towels and hand wash. The site has so many broken and faulty lights that people are falling down the steps. Unsuitable staff are regularly hired as the job is so unappealing for a starting rate of £6.77 with six months' probation.

Despite an employment tribunal ruling last year saying care providers must pay staff the national minimum wage, take into account travel time and when someone works overnight on a sleepover shift, compliance is undermined by local council commissioning practices, such as reduced fee rates, not paying for travel time and 15-minute care visits, particularly in home care. A survey by the United Kingdom Homecare Association found that the overwhelming majority of care providers were only paid by local councils for contact time with clients. Less than 2% of providers were paid anything at all towards travel time

We can defend services

Last year Salford Council set out a plan that would have led to the closing of vital groups and drop-ins for mental health service users and the privatisation of the remaining services offering them one-to-one support.

Staff were told first and immediately informed service users, despite being warned not to. As far as our members were concerned service users had a right to know and their involvement would be vital in ensuring the cuts could not be enforced.

Using a number of tactics, including threats of industrial action and occupations of council meetings, the campaigners forced management back to the table. This led to a six month process of meetings, which in the end reached an outcome that drop-ins and groups would remain (albeit at different locations and with different staff), no aspect of the service would be privatised and there would be new investment in a mental health centre to assist recovery.

However, less than a week after this was announced in early January this year, we were told that the budget for the staff would be cut from this April. If enforced this will mean that the developments we worked so hard for last year will be worth nothing. Again, staff and service users have decided to fight together.

The staff (all Unison members) have already gone into dispute with Salford council and have requested a ballot for industrial action from the union.

The service users, through their organisation the United Service



USUC out campaigning against cuts photo SP Manchester

Users Committee (USUC), organised a well-attended public meeting, linking this issue with proposals to cut the number of beds at Salford's psychiatric unit.

The meeting led to the formation of "Save Mental Health Services in Salford", which has now achieved even more public awareness because of the involvement and support of Beverley Callard, the actress who Coronation Street fans will know better as Liz McDonald.

The Socialist Party has been pivotal throughout the campaign. Also, one of USUC's lead organisers has already stood as a TUSC candidate and will be doing so again in May.

We have worked with all those sincere about saving these services, but at the same time have shared our ideas and views, which has generated a great deal of respect for us from all involved.

We have learnt two key lessons throughout this ongoing battle. The first is that no matter how difficult the challenge might appear, by working together, utilising the best ideas and employing the best tactics, staff and service users can defend care services.

The second is that under capitalism we will be forced to fight the same battles over and over again. That is why we need a socialist society.

- No cuts! For a fully funded care system
- A living wage, and trade union conditions, for all working in social care
- No further privatisation (including transfers to social enterprise etc) of any social care services
- Return of care services (home, day and residential care) to local authority control
- Free quality social care
- A positive framework to end poverty and provide full support to carers
- Personal budgets based on need not cost
- Reinvestment in local authority care services
- Reinvestment in social work – to allow genuine social work with manageable caseloads, to protect and assist those who require support

Socialist Party national congress 2014

Preparing for a mighty upsurge in class struggle

On 8-10 March the Socialist Party held its annual national congress in Clacton. Around 300 delegates and visitors attended the very successful event. Branch delegates voted on resolutions and amendments agreeing both political perspectives and organisational aims.

The congress showed enthusiasm throughout the Socialist Party for building from the opportunities we face, which was particularly shown in the sessions on finance and party building. Over £13,000 was raised in a fighting fund collection and the congress launched an election

appeal to help towards the costs of campaigns for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, No2EU yes to workers rights and the Workers And Socialist Party in South Africa (donate at www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate). Here we report from some of the sessions.

A cauldron of anger in Britain

Dave Carr

“Why the hell hasn’t there been a revolution!”, exclaimed Doncaster delegate Mary Jackson, after she catalogued the vicious government attacks on people’s living standards.

Earlier, Hannah Sell, deputy general secretary of the Socialist Party, had introduced the discussion on Britain by detailing the social crisis in the country, where average real incomes have plummeted by 7% in three years due to capitalist recession and austerity.

Despite Chancellor George Osborne talking up the ephemeral and anaemic growth in the economy, the recent Office for Budget Responsibility report says growth will be insufficient to close the budget deficit. Therefore, an extra £20 billion of spending cuts is likely. As Matt Gordon said in the discussion, the strategy of the ruling class is one of “endless austerity”.

Even the Council of Europe says the Con-Dem government is no longer providing a basic standard of care for its citizens. However, as Hannah pointed out, at the other

When a determined fightback has developed then the heads of workers have been lifted

end of the social scale there are more super-rich residents here than in any other country.

This enormous inequality is accumulating a mass of socially combustible material in Britain. But it hasn’t yet ignited, largely due to the role of the right-wing trade union leaders in holding back workers’ struggles; not least in blocking the call for a 24-hour general strike. The absence of widespread strikes has led to a “sullen anger” among the organised working class. But this won’t last.

Localised struggles

As Socialist Party industrial organiser Rob Williams pointed out when summing up the discussion, there has been an “industrial lull” since the setback in the pensions struggle of 2011. Nonetheless, there have been localised struggles, which will continue to be important.

Moreover, when a determined fightback has developed, such as in the recent London Underground 48-hour strike by the RMT and TSSA unions against savage job losses and ticket office closures, then the heads of workers have been lifted. However, a widespread understanding of how union members can push leaders to act has yet to develop, but this is being created by the experience of recent years.



all photos by Senan

Politically, there is widespread disillusionment in politicians and parliament. Only 41% say they’ll definitely vote in the next general election – in effect a “voters strike”.

The Labour Party is no alternative to the Con-Dems. In the local councils they control they simply act as “agents of austerity”. The recent Labour Party special conference took only two hours to remove the last remnants of trade union influence – willingly assisted by the trade union leaders themselves.

Such are the political shortcomings of Labour that an outright majority following the next general election is not guaranteed.

Political voice

We urgently need a political voice for the working class, which the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition is preparing. A delay in the development of such a party can leave space for right-wing populist parties to try to partially fill the vacuum.

Delegates during the discussion and debate on Britain referred to many other important issues such as the European Union, immigration and its impact, the floods, bedroom tax, zero-hour contracts and poverty, fracking, the NHS, trade union blacklisting and the police (see page 3), legal aid cuts, and more besides.

Philip Stott from the Socialist Party Scotland (SPS) was warmly applauded when he reported the victory of the anti-bedroom tax campaign in Scotland. It showed that mass political pressure can win.

Philip also reported on the run-up to September’s independence referendum. He pointed out that there was a sizeable bloc of support

(47%) for a ‘yes’ vote among the poorest fifth in Scotland, compared to only 26% among the richest fifth. The establishment politicians and big business’ ‘no’ campaign (‘project fear’), which amounts to political blackmail, is rebounding on them.

Philip described the sizeable public meetings on the referendum where SPS members have raised the programme of an independent



Hannah Sell introduces the discussion

socialist Scotland.

Hannah concluded that the ground is being prepared by the crisis in capitalism and the concomitant attack on workers’ living standards for a mighty upsurge in the class struggle, most likely in the period following the next general election. The task of socialists is to prepare for such an eventuality.



Running the Tamil Solidarity campaign stall

Big opportunities for TUSC

A lively and optimistic session on the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) and the upcoming elections was another highlight of the weekend as we prepare to embark on the biggest left-of-Labour electoral challenge in generations.

Clive Heemskerk introduced the discussion by laying out the potential for TUSC and the new door that has opened up in the wake of the Collins review. For a big layer of trade unionists, this was the final nail in the coffin of the Labour Party.

He pointed to the unopposed election of the second TUSC Maltby town councillor, Shaun Barratt, to highlight that even in the most unlikely places we can find forums to fight the cuts. He outlined how Joe has used his position to fight for the council to take some of the slack for the cuts being passed down.

Nick Chaffey, in the discussion, highlighted the role of Keith Morrell and Don Thomas, the Southampton ‘rebel councillors’. Their

alternative budget and staunch opposition to cuts has seen their local swimming pool saved from threat of closure and given £1.6million of investment. Building on the rebels’ lead we are aiming to stand city-wide across Southampton as well as a number of other areas in the region.

Campaigning

Demand-led campaigns are being taken up in a number of areas. This follows the example of Kshama Sawant’s election campaign in Seattle, which was linked to the fight for a \$15 an hour minimum wage.

Nancy Taaffe showed how the example of Seattle is being applied in Waltham Forest with the campaign based around rent controls. She also raised the importance of working through the trade unions as much as possible and that “every time we stand, we increase our standing in the local labour movement.”

Also taking inspiration from the positive campaigning in Seattle,

Dan Crowter outlined Coventry’s campaign to “imagine a socialist Coventry”, trying to show what Coventry would look like under a fighting socialist council. Imagine if you had 54 Dave Nellists (Socialist Party member and former Coventry City councillor) fighting your corner?

Dave Nellist, national chair of TUSC, came in to the discussion himself and took up the issue of the battle for visibility in the media and the need to stand as many candidates as possible to break the blackout. John Reid from the transport union RMT spoke on the importance of maintaining and building on the support in the RMT and also the importance of bringing other trade unions on board.

The biggest appeal from Paula Mitchell, closing the session, was to get candidate nominations in as soon as possible. TUSC is a federal body and each nomination is agreed on by the constituent members of it, so get them in ASAP!

Suzanne Beishon

Socialist Party national congress 2014

A world readying for revolution

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge

Setting the scene for all the congress discussions, general secretary Peter Taaffe introduced the first session on world events and analysis. The need for preparation for big eruptions of struggle was a key theme. Austerity-instilled suffering and the experience of capitalist crisis, is stoking up mass rage that could erupt almost at any point – as it already has in some countries.

The experience of struggle, and its absence, will provide priceless lessons for the working class: “The fundamental Leninist insight still holds: nothing can be done without organisation.” This quote, not from the Socialist but from a Financial Times editorial on Ukraine, reflects how the potential for revolution is lodged in the conditions that exist today.

Ukraine has dominated the world's press recently and the Socialist and socialistworld.net have featured analysis of the developing situation there. The movement in Kiev, as elsewhere, initially had big elements of ‘revolution’ in it.

But, Peter pointed out, the absence of strong independent working class organisations able to avoid the influence of the far right, the elements of counterrevolution, has meant that the situation has taken a turn for the worse.

Impoverishment

Like the events in North Africa and the Middle East, Peter explained that the Ukraine events are linked to the appalling impoverishment of the Ukrainian masses. In fact around the world inequality and poverty are flourishing. One shocking indicator is that today there are more enslaved people in the world than ever before.

Peter reminded us how we were encouraged to place our hope for recovery from the economic crisis in the emerging markets – particularly the so-called BRICs, Brazil, Russia, India and China. Now, with a slowing down of growth across all of those economies, the acronym has been re-assigned to Bloody Ridiculous Investment Concept!

We are asked to translocate our hopes to the MINTs – Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey. Congress welcomed Ramon, a socialist from Mexico, which far from offer-



Ramon speaks

ing salvation, is wracked by drugs wars. But Ramon reported on steps being taken by working class people to build independent resistance, including forming defence militias.

The drive for privatisation is an expression of the rotten and parasitic character of 21st century capitalism. Big business is sitting on huge cash piles for which it can find no other profitable outlet. It refuses to invest in jobs, production or research. Peter quoted the Economist magazine which proposes \$9 trillion privatisation of buildings, land and resources.

Jim Hensman from Coventry pointed out how the G20 asked countries for plans to boost growth. For example it “urges Australia to cut the strictness of its employment protection legislation by 10% over five years”. Similar cuts are demanded in regulation in services industries, access to pensions and spending on childcare.

Minimum wage

In the US where there has been a certain economic recovery, vast swathes of the working class remain completely untouched by it. Dave Reid, recently returned from a visit to Socialist Alternative (SA) in the US (see www.socialistalternative.org), co-thinkers of the Socialist Party, ex-

plained how the minimum wage has become a burning issue in the US.

There is even a feeling among some sections of the capitalist class that the minimum wage should be raised as SA, fast-food workers and other activists demand, to improve the conditions of the working class. One unusually far-sighted billionaire who supports the call for \$15 an hour said he'd rather pay that than fork out \$150 when he gets a brick through his window, indicating again the understanding that the anger will boil up.

The election of Kshama Sawant to Seattle council has been a cause of enormous inspiration to socialists in Britain and elsewhere. In the US it has electrified the situation in the labour movement with hundreds of people applying to join SA.

Clare Doyle from the International Secretariat of the Committee for a Workers' International explained how the betrayal and mistakes of the Italian left have demoralised a working class that now faces a catastrophe of cuts.

But the CWI group there acted as the “cog that moved the wheel” to help bring about a five-day unofficial strike in Genoa that fought back a privatisation attempt in the council there.

Complications

Judy Beishon, member of the executive committee of the Socialist Party, in her reply to the discussion pointed to how the absence of strong working class forces can allow the right wing to present themselves as the alternative to the austerity-implementing establishment. They are not. But in France where a quarter of the population now lives in poverty and 8% of the population trust politicians, the Front National is pushing to make gains, with interest among young people increasing.

Judy made the point that when protest movements are complicated, socialists must carefully assess the class nature of the forces involved. Care must be taken in

selecting the best demands to advance to assist the working class to understand its central role.

Peter and Jon Dale spoke about how the working class in Egypt is drawing conclusions about the need for independent workers' action. A powerful strike movement is currently underway. When asked why they are participating, workers said that different governments have come and gone but the powerful loot and the poor get buried.

The August 2012 Marikana massacre obliged significant sections of the South African working class to see that it must break from the now pro-capitalist ANC – and to take measures to build itself a new leadership. Alec Thraves, who has discussed with many workers while on visits to South Africa, spoke about the steps being taken by metal workers' union Numsa. It has withdrawn support from the ANC and plans to use its resources – financial and its social weight – to establish a movement for socialism.

With a new strike wave on the cards and the elections in May, prepare to see the mighty South African working class start to show its strength, particularly through the Workers And Socialist Party, with the CWI, the Democratic Socialist Movement playing an important part.



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

www.socialistworld.net

‘Catastrophe’ for youth will lead to explosions

Introducing the session on youth work, Ian Pattison outlined the opportunities to build the Socialist Party among young people, particularly given the devastating impact of unemployment and cuts.

In his contribution, Matt from Derby summed up the frustration felt by some young people when he said: “Sometimes we can wonder, where's our mass movement?” But Matt went on to describe the hope and inspiration we should draw from international movements where young people have taken the lead – such as in Chile, the US and Greece. He pointed out that far from being apathetic, young people are driven to change things but have been failed by a lack of leadership, which young Socialist Party members should aim to provide.

Several contributions talked about the important work being done by Youth Fight for Jobs with the Bakers



Ollie from Doncaster speaks in the youth session

Union in the Fast Food Rights campaign, and of the day of action against zero-hour contracts on 29 March.

George from Plymouth spoke about the difficulties of working in a low-paid, unorganised sector: “I know what it's like to rely on the

overtime. I feel the fear that making yourself stand out will make those extra hours dry up.” George was one of several speakers to appeal to more long-standing members to pass on their experience of workplace organising to the new generation.

Highlighting the effect the Socialist Party can have in giving confidence to young members in the workplace, Isai described how after attending Socialism 2013, she had refused to work unpaid overtime for the first time.

Education

Dan from Sheffield spoke about the crisis of higher education funding in light of government cuts. He pointed out that several university vice-chancellors are now calling for unrestricted fees to compensate for cuts. Other speakers, such as Jesse

from Exeter, showed how campaigning at schools and colleges is fruitful. Socialist Students' campaign against the privatisation of student debt was widely endorsed.

There were also reports from different types of campaigning that areas had found useful. For example, Jaime from Cardiff mentioned Rape Is No Joke which held an anti-sexist comedy night in Cardiff for International Women's Day, and Jamie from York described the success that Socialist Students there has had with its campaign for decent and affordable student housing.

In summing up, Claire Laker-Mansfield pointed out that the ‘catastrophe’ facing young people of having no job, no home and no future will lead to explosions and that the session had highlighted that the Socialist Party is ready to show a lead to them.

Sarah Wrack

the Socialist postbag

Do you have something to say?

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

Care.profit

Care.data is the admen's name for centralising medical records. The idea, we're told, is to improve patient care so healthcare professionals can access medical records. The government delayed implementing the scheme because of "public misunderstanding". But people 'understand' that the NHS plans to sell private medical data to drug firms and insurance companies, some hell-bent on privatising the health service.

Patients may well suspect government plans especially after the government appointed Atos to oversee the extraction of GP records to the Care.data system. Atos's brutal administration of plans to cut the benefit bill made their brand so "toxic" that they want to ditch the contract ahead of time.

If you say anything to your doctor in confidence you don't want Atos (and whoever they sell data to) also to be privy to the information. You can opt out of this scheme and many doctors are sympathetic to patients wanting to do so. Atos's retreat from the DWP's cruel schemes is a victory for benefits campaigners. To ditch this grubby little scam would be another one.

Derek McMillan

It's a bank

photo Paul Mattsson

The TSB bank's new advert is called "the bank that's not like other banks", it says that the individual who started it did so to "help those struggling to overcome poverty" with the "sole aim to help hard working local people".

What a joke! Banks exist to make profit. But it's telling that they are so desperate to shake off the bad image. Banks know there is huge mistrust for them, they broke the economy, gambled our money and then got bailed out. To add insult to injury they still pay themselves huge bonuses. TSB is a bank like every other bank!

Helen Pattison

If not now, when?

This letter from Cathy Meadows, Nottingham Socialist Party was published in the Guardian.

An article by Zoe Williams laments that the left can't countermand the image of the "not really" disabled by quoting figures. True; but it would help if leading Labour spokesperson Rachel Reeves ("tougher than the Tories on benefits") didn't join in the narrative.

Labour councils are persistently pursuing residents who are in council tax and bedroom tax debt – largely the consequence of benefit reforms – with summonses, bailiffs and evictions. This sends a message that those under attack at best aren't worth fighting for and at worst deserve it.

A national local council campaign of legal non-cooperation with the council tax support scheme and bedroom tax, backed by community groups and campaigners, alongside a serious demand for David Cameron to make up the funding shortfall, would cut through any existential doubt that such mistreatment was in some way justified, would give hope to those under attack, and pave the way for fighting off other disastrous welfare reforms. If not now, when?

Cathy Meadows
Nottingham & Notts Scrap the Bedroom Tax Defend Council Tax Benefit

Seedy offer

Facebook told me of a petition to try and get online gambling firm Paddy Power to retract their offer of cash inducements if athlete Oscar Pistorius is acquitted in his murder trial. Pistorius was one of BT's 'Ambassadors' before the 2012 London Olympics. No doubt both parties saw benefits from this arrangement.

Although the alleged murder took place after the Olympics finished, BT have made no statement implying that Pistorius was an inappropriate person for the company to publicly associate with and even worse, no statement of condolence to his late partner's friends and relatives. For BT it's a case of cash and kudos in the bank and that's all they care about.

A BT worker

Defying the odds

This year is the 125th anniversary of the Bryant and May 'Match Girls' strike. Kevin Maguire's article in the Mirror, reminded us of the debt trade unionists owe to these courageous young women workers who defied seemingly impossible odds to take on their bosses and help establish 'New Model' industrial unions.

I sat through a recent presentation to union reps by a union-retained solicitor. I was delighted to see an item on industrial action on the agenda and thought my union had embarked on a similar new militant course. But the presentation mainly spoke of "insurmountable obstacles to organising a strike and



photo London SP

how much it costs your union". Reps were left wondering how anybody in our union ever takes strike action. Our resources were built up with members' money and were created to support members' struggles. Resources seldom used are no good to anybody. Letting ourselves be scared off ever taking action by the difficulties involved does a great disservice to the memory of the striking match workers who took on insurmountable odds – and won!

Ronnie Job

The horror that was World War One



20,000 British soldiers were killed on the first day of the battle of the Somme

Pete Watson

House clearing recently, I found a will written by hand by my grandfather dated 28 June 1916, three days before the Battle of the Somme. He lived through that battle but 20,000 British soldiers were killed in its first day with 40,000 wounded.

By the battle's end that November a total of 1.2 million soldiers were dead and wounded on both sides. Over ten million soldiers died or were wounded, and countless others lost their lives during World War One.

Tory Education Secretary Michael Gove defended Britain's role in this slaughter, claiming it was a "just war" to combat aggression. He attacked Germany's "pitiless" approach to occupation, saying they were "aggressively expansionist" and scorned the international order. Britain, he said, was 'defending the Western liberal order' by resisting Germany.

Gove conveniently ignores Britain's own imperial role. Britain was then still one of the three major economic powers along with the USA and Germany. It gained that imperial position precisely by being "pitiless" and "aggressively expansionist" in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere.

Britain, though, was being overtaken by others. It no longer had the economic clout it had, as the USA and Germany exploited new technology. It could no longer "rule the waves" as Germany was fast catching up in warships. Conflict between the capitalist powers was inevitable.

Britain's strategy was to support France and Russia against the alliance of Germany/ Austria-Hungary and (before 1914) Italy just enough, hoping they would all exhaust each other, making Britain the victor. Only a small expeditionary army was sent to France in 1914. But British imperialism underestimated German capitalism's power and was forced to conscript rapidly to prevent a German victory.

True picture

This is the true picture of 1914. Germany was no less "democratic" than Britain. The vote was available to more men in Germany than in Britain, and votes for women came sooner. Germany may have invaded Belgium and started war in the West, but it was imperial interests that governed and caused the war. British imperialism wanted war.

Gove said that General Haig, British commander in chief at the Somme, was not a butcher but a

patriot. Haig was in fact both and a cold-hearted, arrogant and ruthless representative of his class.

On the battle's first day, 1 July 1916, British troops walked slowly in daylight across "no man's land" under orders and to their death. Haig ordered the battle to continue to November, even after it became a quagmire of mud where no gain could be had. The battle's futile nature was shown when only five square miles of land were gained after months of fighting.

World War One was no victory for British workers. Many working class towns were empty of men by 1918. And Britain came into debt to the USA which hastened Britain's decline as a world power.

The centenary of WW1 will grab media time this year. I won't wear a red poppy but I will remember my grandfather and all who fought and died on both sides.

The best honour socialists can give to the millions who died is to remember that a small voice of Marxism resisted patriotism and nationalism in 1914. They stood for a new world where imperial conflict would end. Against all the odds they laid the basis for revolutions across Europe that toppled monarchies and brought fear of revolution to the architects of trench slaughter.

Capitalism's murderous logic

Dave Boyes

Hampshire Socialist Party

World War One was fought between capitalist states trying to save their systems. Capitalism's major powers aimed to solve the problem of maintaining demand at home by colonising non-capitalist areas abroad, securing markets for surplus production and seizing cheap supplies of raw materials and food.

Between 1880 and 1910 imperialist European powers occupied ten million square miles of Africa, driven by capitalism's need for markets. The logic of capitalism demanded aggression and exploitation for its own survival.

In 1913 Rosa Luxembourg told German soldiers, the Social Democratic Party and the German people - 'do not lift the weapons of murder against your French and foreign brothers'.

For this brave address (and her revolutionary determination) she



Rosa Luxembourg

was jailed for a year by the German authorities and later murdered! We must make sure such death and destruction never happens again by replacing capitalism with international socialism.

Socialist Party Badge**New Socialist Party badge**

Good quality enamel badge - £2.50 each, including postage.

Bulk rate: £15 for 10, including postage.

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Stop cuts and police repression in Tottenham!

The trial is currently taking place of Nicky Jacobs, one of those charged with the murder of PC Blakelock during the Broadwater Farm riots in 1985. The riots happened in the aftermath of the death of Cynthia Jarret who suffered a heart attack during a police search of her home.

The original investigation into the murder saw teenagers interviewed naked and with no guardian present, evidence tampered with and hundreds arrested, with many violently attacked while in custody.

Relations between police and residents in Tottenham, particularly young people, have deteriorated over three decades during which a long list of people from or living in the area have died while in police custody. The Mark Duggan 'lawful killing' verdict has contributed to this.

When discussing with young people in the campaign to defend jobs,

education and youth services in Tottenham (involving Youth Fight for Jobs, Day-Mer youth, Unite the Youth and Voice of Youth), police repression is a big issue. The cuts are making the problem worse. As schools become academies, students express feelings of being constantly under surveillance.

The police commissioner has said he is open to ideas from local community leaders and politicians about how to improve the situation. But the idea of asking the very people who are impacted by the police's behaviour doesn't feature.

Many young people in Tottenham are aware of the area's history with the police. Young black men are 28 times more likely to be stopped and searched and a Metropolitan police officer is 30 times more likely to stop and search a black person than a police officer outside of London.

There will be a presence outside



YFJ campaigning in Tottenham after the 2011 riots photo Paul Mattsson

the court during the seven week trial and YFJ campaigners plan to attend, along with Socialist Party members. Going forward, we will continue with our campaign for decent jobs, access to education and for the re-

turn of funding to local services.

Our first meeting had 50 people at it from the different youth groups. The main problem is that everyone's talking about Tottenham, but no one is asking young

people what it's like to live in Tottenham. We are discussing bigger actions in the coming months, such as a protest march on 19 April from a job centre to a local college.

Helen Pattison

Campaigning on International Women's Day

I am a single mother on a low wage, living in a village and relying on expensive public transport with no buses after 6pm or on Sundays. So I understand some of the problems facing women affected by this government's onslaught of cuts, who want to get involved in the fight-back but are hampered by their situation.

On International Women's Day Leicester Socialist party decided to hold a stall aimed at these women, campaigning for a £10 an hour minimum wage and free childcare - which struck a chord with many women and men. A man walking past with a baby in a pushchair did a u-turn when he heard us talking about fully-funded childcare.

We sold 14 papers, raised some fighting fund and met four young people interested in getting involved in the Socialist Party. Two women comrades who hadn't been involved in activity or meetings for a while came to help on the stall with their children and a new young member did her first stall and sold her first paper.

The atmosphere was light-hearted despite the seriousness of the issues; some of us dressed up in Victorian women's outfits and we played music through the megaphone.

Comments we heard on the stall included: "I agree with everything you're doing and I really want to help but I have two young children and I can't go out in the evenings," "I want to get involved but I can't come to a meeting in a pub," "I



On the stall in Leicester photo Hannah

wouldn't usually come over to talk to you because politics is all about men and doesn't seem to have anything to do with my life."

Several women said they would try to come to our follow-up meeting on women fighting back against the cuts.

We have already decided to do a rota of Saturday stalls in three towns

in the county, in addition to our Saturday stall in Leicester and our Friday stall outside the council offices.

As well as meaning the branch does activity in new areas, this will enable comrades who can't travel to take part. If women can't get to us, then we have to go to them!

The day after the stall I had dis-



Progressive Workers Federation Pakistan, and BLLF's Mirpur Khas Sindh Women Group (CWI in Sindh, Pakistan) held a rally against religious fundamentalism on International Women's Day. The march rejected Taliban, Sharia and racism. The protest was covered by local and national television. There were speakers and performances by children photo CWI Pakistan

cussions with and sold copies of the paper to four women in my village.

We are also considering restarting our Saturday discussion group for women and holding regular meetings and campaign stalls on issues particularly affecting women.

Helen Gadsby
Leicester Socialist Party

■ A Rape Is No Joke anti-sexist comedy night took place in Cardiff on International Women's Day. The very successful event was attended by 60 people. See www.socialistparty.org.uk for a more detailed report

Turkey solidarity protest

1,000 people from the Turkish and Kurdish communities in London gathered in Trafalgar square on 11 March before spontaneously marching to parliament. This was in protest at the death of Berkin Elvan, the 14 year old boy who fell into a coma last year during the Gezi Park movement.

There was a minute's silence for Berkin, who had been out buying bread when police fired a gas canister at him, which hit him on his head. He lay in a coma for 269 days before losing his battle for life. The silence was also dedicated to Bob Crow.

A speaker from Haringey Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition spoke, urging workers to take Turkish and Kurdish people's lead and carry on the fight against cuts and attacks. The crowd then chanted "Stand up Turkey, London is with you".

Youth Fight for Jobs (YFJ) activists took part in the protest. We highlighted that young people everywhere have their lies destroyed by police violence, poverty and austerity.

Capitalism has shown it can offer no future for young people. That's



Berkin Elvan

why YFJ and other groups such as Day-Mer Youth organise and work with young people to fight for a decent future, decent jobs, services and free education.

Youth Fight for Jobs members

Anti-fracking campaign steps up in Lancashire

On 9 March hundreds of people marched through Manchester to protest against the plans for thousands of oil and gas wells throughout Lancashire. This is one of the largest anti-fracking protests held so far in Britain.

A recent survey by Manchester Evening News found 73% of people were against oil and gas fracking.

The march was lively and high spirited and culminated in a rally at Cathedral Gardens.

There were several speakers from the Barton Moss anti-fracking camp.

One of them said that the way to stop the drilling at Barton Moss was mass civil disobedience. He called for hundreds of people to turn up every day to stop the drilling trucks. The same speaker also criticised the unions for funding the Labour Party which is pro-fracking.

Cameron has promised a 'fracking revolution' in Britain that will see oil and gas fracking wells all over the country. We must stop him.

Dylan and Jo Murphy
Huddersfield Socialist Party

SOLIDARITY WITH DONCASTER STRIKERS

Care workers take on the privateers

Care workers in Doncaster are on their second seven-day strike against massive pay cuts. Around 150 nurses and care workers in the learning disability supported-living service were outsourced to the lowest bidder by Doncaster Labour-led council last September. Since then they have been battling against Care UK's attempts to cut their pay. But they are determined to fight back, as this report of the first strike shows.

Alistair Tice

“Historic is an over-used word” said Jim Bell, Unison full-time officer, “but it really is historic that Doncaster Care UK workers are striking 30 years on from the beginning of the miners’ strike.

“Then and now, we face the same type of employers. Like the

miners we have drawn a line in the sand in the face of a profiteer who thinks they can bully us into submission. Give yourselves and the miners of ‘84 a massive cheer.”

With that the roof came off as 200 strikers and supporters got to their feet at Jim’s fitting introduction to the final day rally of an inspiring seven-day strike.

They have been striking against Care UK tearing up the TUPE transfer protection of NHS terms

and conditions and axing enhanced payments for unsociable hours, which will lead to around 50% pay cuts. This strike is against the privatisation of the NHS and in defence of the welfare state. What these professional and skilled care workers mean to their service users was explained by Sandra, a 70 year old with a mentally-ill daughter. “You are part of their lives,” said Sandra, “but where are the bosses? Collecting their Mercs or at the bank counting their money. For me, you’re not just carers but superstars!”

Kirstine Carbutt, a Unison shop steward speaking as a striker, said: “This company doesn’t care about us or about the service users - it only cares about this”, rubbing her hands together, meaning money.

To illustrate that point, a Care UK advert in the local jobcentre

was read out. It invited applicants with their own vehicle for £6.73 an hour with no enhancements.

Even worse, since the transfer, new staff have been taken on for £6.50 an hour. This is only pennies over the minimum wage. They were on strike as well and got a special mention.

Unison branch secretary Yvonne Butcher, and John Cafferty, the union regional secretary, brought full support for the strikers.

Daily Mirror columnist Paul Routledge has written a very supportive article. He spoke, saluting the strikers saying: “There’s no guarantee of success if you strike, but there is the certainty of failure if you don’t have a go.”

And then the strikers voted to have another go, for another seven-day strike as soon as possible,

in an inspiration to other workers facing similar attacks. This will start on 19 March.

The Mid-Yorkshire NHS Unison branch, which took nine days of strike action last year against down-banding, has already donated £1,000 to the strike fund and a Doncaster Unite branch another £1,000. £625 was raised by strikers at the demo against the Lib Dems on 8 March and £593 at a miners’ strike anniversary meeting in Sheffield.

The 20,000-strong “30th anniversary of the miners’ strike” Facebook page is publicising the strike.

Send messages of support to admin@unison-dab.org.uk and send donations, cheques, made out to: “Doncaster, District and Bassetlaw Health Branch”, to Jenkinson House, White Rose Way, Doncaster DN4 5GJ.

What we stand for

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

As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international.

The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI), a socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

Our demands include:

PUBLIC SERVICES

- No to ALL cuts in jobs, pay, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.

- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and ‘Free schools’!

- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone’s health needs – free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!

- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

WORK AND INCOME

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £8 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards £10 an hour. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.
- Reject ‘Workfare’. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade

unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker’s wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.

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

ENVIRONMENT

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

RIGHTS

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman’s right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

NEW WORKERS’ PARTY

- For a new mass workers’ party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers’ party! Support the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition as an important step towards this.

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses’ neoliberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!