

£1

(£2 solidarity price)

Issue 861

Date 25 June - 1 July 2015



www.socialistparty.org.uk

the Socialist

Reports of anti-austerity demos

City of London fills with defiance - what next for the movement?

> Pages 2 and 3



Jeremy Corbyn's Labour leadership challenge

> Editorial: pages 4 and 5



Greece: Syriza backtracks

> Pages 6 and 7



After huge anti-austerity demos...

ORGANISE THE FIGHTBACK!

Neil Cafferky

Over a month's wages are about to disappear from the pockets of millions of low-paid families. Despite hundreds of thousands taking to the streets on the fantastic anti-austerity demos on 20 June, more cuts are threatened. Plans by David Cameron's Tory government to cut tax credits could see families with two children lose £1,690 a year.

This catastrophic cut in living standards will force many working class people further into poverty. This from the party that has the cheek to claim it stands for 'hard working families'.

The reality is very different. The Tories are determined to bulldoze through welfare cuts of £12 billion, alongside billions of cuts in services, to pay for tax handouts for the wealthy. It's like the Tories have decided to reimagine the tale of Robin Hood, except this time, the Sheriff of Nottingham is the hero!

For anyone wondering how to pay the bills, Iain Duncan Smith has a solution. Employers must pay higher wages.

Unfortunately, this isn't a sign that IDS is signing up to the £10 an hour minimum wage demand. While the Tories are always keen to enforce pay cuts on workers, they say any wage rises must be 'voluntary' by the employer.

In the real world workers know that wage rises of the kind needed to plug this gap only come about through organising in unions and where necessary, taking strike action.

However, it's no coincidence that when

enormous squeezes in workers' pay and living standards are being devised, plans are afoot to restrict even further the right to strike.

The Tories have brazenly set out their plan of attack against the working class. We need to be equally bold in organising the fightback! The trade union movement must begin preparing for a 24-hour general strike as a warning to the Tories that they will face a huge backlash if they go ahead.

Only pressure from union members can push union leaders to deliver the action we need. Come to the National Shop Stewards Network conference on 4 July to launch that campaign.



National Shop Stewards Network

9TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE: **STOP THE TORY UNION BUSTERS!**

Saturday 4 July
11am to 4.30pm
Conway Hall, Holborn,
London WC1R 4RL

www.shopstewards.net

Speakers include

- PCS general secretary **Mark Serwotka**
- BFAWU general secretary **Ronnie Draper**
- FBU general secretary **Matt Wrack**
- RMT president **Peter Pinkney**
- Youth Fight for Jobs organiser **Helen Pattison**
- Anti-blacklisting campaigner **Dave Smith**
- Tamil Solidarity trade union coordinator **Isai Priya**



All photos Paul Mattsson

A vast mass of people compressed into the streets around the Bank of England in London on Saturday 20 June, eager to show their anger and opposition to the Tory government's vicious austerity agenda. Estimates of the huge turnout ranged from 70,000 to over 200,000. The mood was very buoyant, as the size of the demo brought home to everyone that the fight-back against Cameron's plans has really begun, and this just six weeks after the shock result of the general election.

After an opening rally of speakers invited by the demo organisers - the People's Assembly - the march set off through the City of London, packing the streets through to Blackfriars and then along Fleet Street towards its destination - Parliament Square.

Many of the individuals and groups - who came from all over the country - were new to demonstrating. Young people were strongly present. All clearly felt that they can't sit back and watch a renewed onslaught on people's living standards while the richest get richer.

Trade unionists were also key participants, though not on this occasion in a highly organised form with large union contingents, which are an inspiring and important hallmark of TUC-led demonstrations.

Self-made placards were prominent, with inventive and humorous messages condemning austerity - from the carefully polite to the rude or crude.

The hundreds of placards on offer from the Trade Unionist and So-

cialist Coalition (TUSC) and those of the Socialist Party were eagerly snapped up, until all were gone.

Thousands of Socialist Party leaflets headed "Organise! Strike! Resist! to smash Tory austerity" were also enthusiastically taken, with their message on the need to build for a 24-hour general strike meeting widespread support.

A number of the anti-cuts candidates who stood for TUSC in the 7 May elections spoke from a TUSC stage while the marchers were assembling, attracting a lot of interest.

Later, the Socialist Party hosted a stage on Whitehall, with speakers including former 'Liverpool 47' councillor Tony Mulhearn who was in the leadership of the major Liverpool anti-cuts battle in the 1980s that achieved victory.

Socialist Party members sold over 1,000 copies of the Socialist and more than 200 people gave their details to find out more about joining the Socialist Party.

Judy Beishon

Rally

Trade union leaders, singer Charlotte Church, comedians Russell Brand, Mark Steel and Francesca Martinez, and politicians addressed many thousands crammed into Parliament Square for the rally at the end of the demo.

The cruel effects of austerity were expressed by speaker after speaker but what concretely should be done next to stop the new Tory government assault?

Read more online at socialistparty.org.uk

John Rees, from the People's Assembly, correctly said we "cannot win with one demo" and called for mass action to "make society ungovernable" by organising "protests, meetings, direct action".

But his proposals did not go beyond calling for protesters to "lay siege" to Tory Party conference later this year, and to build resistance across the country.

Similarly, Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite the Union, said the "fight goes on" but left it at a call for "solidarity" and "community spirit".

In contrast, Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary, said it was necessary to "say not just what is wrong but what to do". He got a rousing response when he posed the question: "Six and half million in trade unions - why not strike together?" He pointed out that by "stopping all work" we can "turn the government back".

The Socialist Party agrees. Mass actions, including more big demonstrations, are very important in building mass resistance to austerity but this needs to be linked to a plan of industrial action against cuts and attacks on trade union rights. We call on the unions to start building for a 24-hour general strike.

A successful anti-austerity movement also needs to be 100% against cuts. The Labour MP for Edmonton, Kate Osamor, said she would use

her seat in parliament to speak on behalf of the anti-cuts movement. But she had nothing to say about the huge cuts passed on by Labour run councils without a semblance of resistance, or Labour's support for the Tories' £30 billion worth of new cuts during the life of this parliament.

Caroline Lucas, the Green MP, got a rousing reception for her anti-cuts stance but she has had to distance herself from Green-controlled Brighton council's cuts.



The mood was very buoyant, as the size of the demo brought home to everyone that the fightback against Cameron's plans has really begun

Jeremy Corbyn, the left candidate for Labour Party leader, got a rousing response when he rounded on the grotesque inequalities in society and pointed out that the richest 100 people now have the same wealth as 36% of the population.

He did not refer to his Labour leadership bid (more on pages 4 and 5), but spoke eloquently about 150 years of class struggle in Britain and how it created the Labour Party and won important reforms for the working class.

The question of political representation for the anti-austerity movement and the working class was left hanging in the air in Parliament Square.

Altogether there were 30 speakers during the demonstration's opening and closing rallies, but unfortunately the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, which stood over 748 anti-cuts candidates in May's elections and collectively received over 118,000 votes, was refused the chance to speak.

Speakers at Saturday's rally talked in general terms about the need to "rebalance and rethink" our society, called for "social justice" and the need to "change our society".

Julie Hesmondhalgh, the Coronation Street actor, used the 'S' word, correctly stating that "socialism is not an anachronism".

The Socialist Party agrees. Only socialist policies - such as opposing all cuts and calling for the nationalisation of the main pillars of the economy, under democratic public ownership - can start to reverse the attacks on the working class and poor and bring about a society for the many, not the capitalist elite.

Niall Mulholland



The Unite contingent on the demo

Child poverty soars

Matt Gordon
Bristol Socialist Party

By 2020, almost a quarter of UK children will lack the basic necessities needed to keep body and soul together. That is the definition of 'absolute poverty' and the figures come from a damning indictment by a leading charity.

Child poverty fell from 3.4 million in 1998 to 2.3 million in 2010 after New Labour's Child Poverty Act - but now it has risen massively, condemning millions of low income families to suffering and penury.

The report commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that children in relative poverty (ie less than 60% of average income) will rise from 2.6 million in 2009 to 3.3 million in 2020.

Working-age adults in relative poverty will also rise from 5.7 million in 2009 to 7.5 million by 2020.

The report states that this is a direct result of the cuts carried out by the last government, and the £12 billion of further welfare cuts will make things worse.

As well as attacks on benefits, wages remain stagnant and there is a 'poverty premium' that forces the poorest to pay more for rent, gas, electricity and even food, meaning the cost of living is highest for those least able to pay.

The Tory response is push for



more cuts and to redefine what poverty means to reduce the figures. They continue to demonise welfare claimants as workshy, when being in work does not protect people, especially children, from poverty.

None of Labour's would-be leaders, with the exception of Jeremy Corbyn, provide any solutions. They too support additional cuts - which are driving people to food banks and now fuel banks as well.

The report correctly lays the blame for increased child poverty at the feet of the government and austerity, but it is also goes further

by saying that schools need proper funding, that long-term youth unemployment must be tackled, and that a living wage is needed. The report states that five million people currently earn less than a living wage.

We call for a £10 an hour minimum wage. This will reduce the need to claim tax credits and housing benefit while lifting millions out of poverty.

One of the richest countries in the world has more than enough resources to end child poverty, but only socialist policies can do this.

Scotland anti-austerity rally, Glasgow

24-hour general strike demand gains support

Matt Dobson
Socialist Party Scotland

5,000 trade unionists, young people and anti-austerity campaigners attended the Scotland United Against Austerity rally called by the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) in Glasgow on 20 June.

The mood of people at the rally reflected a real desire for action against austerity and a searching for the best way to fight back.

Socialist Party Scotland was prominent in George Square, calling for the trade unions to take national co-ordinated action against austerity. Our central demand for a 24-hour general strike received a fantastic response.

We also called for the Scottish government and all local councils to set 'no cuts budgets' and refuse to implement Tory cuts.

The highlights of the rally included striking Dundee hospital porters, on all-out strike for fair pay for eleven weeks. They were represented onstage by Unite senior shop stewards Ronnie Heeney and Graham Nelson. They concluded: "We need

a general strike and a political voice for working class people. Victory to the porters, victory for caseworkers, victory to the working class!"

Larry Flanagan, general secretary of the largest teaching union, EIS, invoked the example of the mass non-payment campaign against the poll tax that brought down Thatcher (with the Socialist Party's predecessor Militant playing a leading role).

Janice Godrich, National President of the PCS civil service union and Socialist Party Scotland member put forward a clear strategy for the labour movement after the general election.

30 people applied for more information on joining Socialist Party Scotland on the day. 183 copies of the Socialist were sold and over £200 in fighting fund raised.

In addition, we distributed thousands of Socialist Party and Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) leaflets.

The Scottish TUSC conference is taking place on Saturday 27 June in Glasgow at 1pm in Renfield-St Stephens Centre, Bath Street.

Full report on www.socialistpartyscotland.org.uk

Hull: A new generation of activists

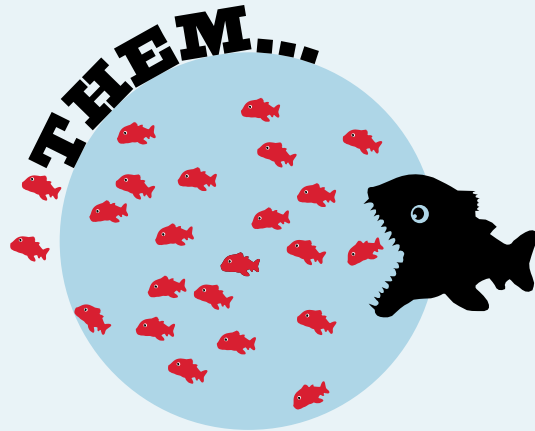
Around 300 people, many of them young, turned up in Queens Gardens in Hull on Saturday 20 June to protest against the Tory austerity agenda.

The emergence of a new younger generation of activists is a shot in the arm to older workers who are perhaps feeling a little down after the Tory election victory.

Speakers included councillors Gill Kennett and Gary Wareing from Hull Red Labour. Mike Whale and Paul Spooner spoke on behalf of the Socialist Party.

The star speakers were the three sixth form girls from Wyke College, Ellie, Hannah and Holly who explained that watching the election night on television made them all realise that they had to do something to fight back against austerity.

50 copies of the Socialist were sold, and seven people filled in Socialist Party join cards.



Cruel cuts

If anyone didn't think the government's welfare benefit sanctions regime is unjust then they should consider the vindictive and humiliating letter sent to a Loughborough claimant.

Mr Gaskin, a wheelchair-bound man suffering from multiple sclerosis who can only communicate by blinking his eye, was written to demanding that he attend a Jobcentre to prove he should still receive welfare payments. The letter said he would be discussed with about "the possibility of going into paid work, training for work, or looking for work in the future".

Presumably this is part of Prime Minister's David Cameron's plan to end welfare claimants' "dependency" on benefits.

dren, families and adults that we work with are going to experience ever increasing hardship and the college closure is yet another blow for our social work colleagues and for service users."

Unaffordable housing

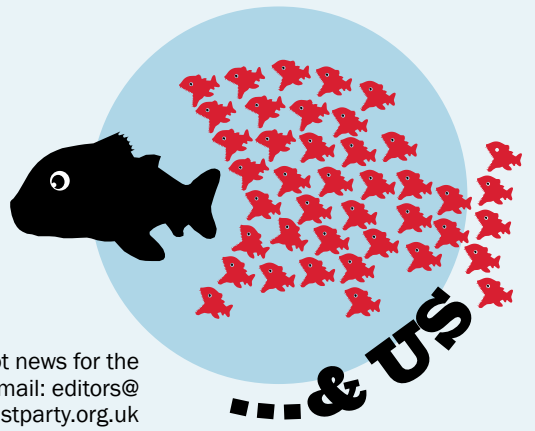
The average house price in London is now £498,000 - 33% higher than in 2007. A first time house buyer now needs a minimum salary of £77,000.

Rough sleepers

According to outreach workers the numbers sleeping rough in the capital, almost 7,600, rose by 19% compared to a year ago. The housing crisis was a factor with 1,665 rough sleepers reporting they had previously lived in long-term accommodation, including 1,115 from private rented homes.

Nursing barrier

The government's anti-migrant plans will wreck the NHS says the Royal College of Nursing. Non-European Union migrant workers will have to leave the UK after six years if they are not earning £35,000 a year under the government's minimum earnings threshold. Yet most nurses only earn between £21,000 and £28,000 a year. Some 3,300 nurses could be affected by 2017 under this new immigration law at a time of nursing shortages due to cuts to nurse-training places.



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

Have you got news for us? DEADLINE: Friday before publication date, urgent news: Monday

020 8988 8777 editors@socialistparty.org.uk @socialistpaper

Editor: Steve Score
News: Dave Carr

Letters/reviews: Roger Shrivves
Sales: Alison Hill

Youth: Scott Jones
International: Sarah Wrack

Workplace/campaign news: James Ivens
Photographers: Paul Mattsson



What we think

The entry of Jeremy Corbyn, a long-standing Labour left, into the Labour leadership contest has generated interest in an otherwise moribund 'pro-business', mostly Blairite-dominated contest. 'Hope springs eternal'.

There are some who have perhaps now renewed hope that, after decades of disastrous Labour right-wing rule, politically and organisationally within the party, somehow the pendulum could begin to swing back towards the left as a result of Jeremy's challenge.

We wish Jeremy well - we hope that he gets the maximum number of votes and, in the unlikely event that he wins, we would welcome that. But over and above this, we hope that a discussion around the issues he raises - opposition to nuclear weapons and to Trident, renationalisation of privatised industries like rail etc, opposition to austerity, an alternative left programme - will lead to a numerical strengthening of the left and generate renewed interest in socialism particularly amongst young people.



We wish Jeremy well - we hope he gets the maximum number of votes and, in the unlikely event that he wins, we would welcome that

But we do not believe that he will succeed in reclaiming Labour as a political weapon for the workers' movement. Any attempt to foster illusions that his challenge could do this, is a dead end. The process has gone too far, transforming Labour into a British version of the Democrats in the USA.

The expunging of Clause IV Part 4 of Labour's constitution, which enshrined the movement's socialist aspiration, and the erosion of the trade unions' role within the party, are not of recent vintage but go back to the 1990s. They were preceded by the wholesale persecution - including expulsions - of the left for standing up to the Tories, fighting the poll tax, and so on. Labour councils have 'passed on' savage cuts, often without lifting a finger to protect workers.

As the New Statesman has pointed out, Jeremy Corbyn only managed to get on the ballot paper because of a 'nail biting' last-minute decision of some on the so-called Labour 'centre right' to 'lend their votes' to him for their own cynical political reasons. Until that morning he only had 19 nominations from Labour MPs.

The New Statesman confessed: "All that has happened is that a serious, principled left-wing candidate has been able to run, not because of the strength of the Labour left, but because of a combination of public campaigning... and the charity of some of Labour's more moderate Labour MPs."

Further delay

The danger of accepting this 'charity' could yet be further delay in workers drawing the obvious conclusion from the consistently rightward direction of Labour, that it is now an urgent task for the unions and the working class to take the necessary steps towards a new mass workers' party. The vote-lenders quite consciously wish to burnish the image of the Labour Party as a place within which socialists and the left 'still have a place', as spear

Labour leadership contest CAN JEREMY CORBYN'S CHALLENGE HELP TO DEVELOP THE SOCIALIST LEFT?



Jeremy and the other candidates on the televised debate

carriers for an unreconstructed Labour right.

This is underlined by the political positions of the three main contenders for the Labour leadership. Andy Burnham who, it is rumoured, the majority of trade union leaders support, wants to "combine the best of Tony Blair and Ed Miliband"! (Observer, 14.6.15). What "best"? The murderous Iraq war, which Jeremy Corbyn has denounced, or the opening of the door to privatisations which PFI represented?

Ed Miliband with his programme of austerity-lite and support for a mythical 'progressive capitalism', despite a few radical demands was situated essentially on the same political ground as Blair and Brown. And let us remember that these electoral 'wizards' managed to alienate and lose over 4 million Labour voters from 1997 leading to defeat in 2010 and this year.

Moreover, Burnham was jeered at the GMB

Bernie Sanders, who is standing for the Democratic Party's nomination for President in the US



conference because he refused to oppose the Tory government's vicious welfare 'cap', as did Yvette Cooper. Even the pro-Labour Paul Routledge in the Daily Mirror revealed that Burnham had begged for tea at Buckingham Palace with the Prince of Wales and signed himself off: "I have the honour to remain, Sir, Your Royal Highness's most humble and obedient servant." After which, Routledge commented: "What a creep!"

So far to the right are the candidates, with the exception of Jeremy Corbyn, that even right-wing Unison general secretary Dave Prentis semi-seriously warned at his union conference that Unison "will review its links with Labour if it drifts towards the right". This is an indication of the pressure of the ranks on even remote and bureaucratised union leaders. There is a limit to the anti-worker, pro-capitalist positions that will be tolerated.

It also indicates the pressure for a new beginning for the working class outside of the Labour Party. Dave Prentis will not be in the vanguard of this movement, but it will come from below.

US campaign of Bernie Sanders

There are some parallels with what is happening in the US at the present time where radical left figure Bernie Sanders is running a campaign denouncing the rich and

Tony Mulhearn speaks to marchers on the 20 June anti-austerity demo. Tony was one of the Liverpool 47 councillors in the 1980s who took on the Thatcher government and set a needs budget in the city



the massive inequality which corrodes US society. This has succeeded in electrifying workers and young people, even affecting Hillary Clinton's campaign - pushing her to the left, in words at least - for the Democratic Party's nomination for the presidency.

US Marxists have welcomed his campaign and are energetically participating in it but at the same time they criticise Bernie Sanders for remaining within the framework of the discredited Democratic Party, a political arm, along with the Republicans, of the capitalists in the US.

At the same time, they have also suggested that his campaign should have the aim of mobilising the maximum number of workers and youth, primarily outside the Democratic Party, not to prop up this discredited political weapon of the billionaires.

It should become the basis of a new mass left formation which can offer a real political alternative for the US working class who are open to such an appeal, as the tremendous support for Socialist Alternative's Kshama Sawant in Seattle demonstrates.

The same applies to the Labour Party in Britain, which has been transformed from a workers' party at its base, but with a pro-capitalist leadership into an out-and-out pro-business capitalist outfit. This is manifested primarily through its political programme but also in the organisational methods through which the leadership contest is to be run.

It has more the character of a 'primary' in the image of the US. In the past, the active members and organisations of the party were the ones who democratically decided policy and selected the candidates.

This has been completely undermined and watered down by the so-called reforms of the Labour right, culminating in the Collins Report.

This effectively eliminated the trade unions' organised presence in the Labour Party. They were still expected to cough up millions of pounds - £11 million in regular donations in 2014 even before the general election, for which Unite alone made special donations of £3.5 million - while their power was completely neutered.

£3 buys a vote

This has now been taken much further in the farcical rules for this election leadership contest.

In national newspapers, Labour has resorted to publicly advertising: "Your choice. Shape the future. Who should lead the Labour Party? Turn your opinion into a vote just by sending a text... If you share Labour values and if you want to see the best Labour Party possible, help choose our next leader... Register as a Labour supporter now for £3 and have your vote in the leadership contest" (The Independent).

So anybody, literally anybody, who can text and pay a measly £3 can decide who is to become the leader of the Labour Party. Not content with having their own party, the Tories, and their preferred leader Cameron, want to be able to determine the outcome of the selection of the leader of the Labour Party as well! The rules under which this leadership contest is conducted are ideal for them.

This is a perfectly fashioned weapon - for instance, of the most venal capitalist paper, the Sun, who described Jeremy Corbyn as a "terrorist loving lefty" - to literally select the leadership of the Labour Party; not indirectly

as they did in the past but more directly, through urging support, with massive publicity, for their preferred candidate. This is akin to the buying of votes!

After all, Simon Heffer in the Sunday Telegraph recently wrote: "The brutal truth: there is no need for a traditional workers' party any more." From its inception at the beginning of the 20th century the capitalists were hostile, fearing an independent workers' party, the Labour Party, and strove by every means to undermine and eventually extirpate it.

They eventually succeeded through the medium of Blair and Brown but it seems that even this is not enough; the remaining shell of the Labour Party must be destroyed, the working class politically further dispersed without their own party.

Build the socialist left

Jeremy Corbyn's campaign, despite its good intentions, will not resuscitate the Labour Party. What it can do however is to help prepare a significant left force, mostly from the heavy reserves of the trade unions, that can engage in debate and discussion, raise the level of understanding and prepare for the emergence of a real socialist left which can form the backbone of a new mass political force for the working class.



Jeremy Corbyn should make a direct appeal to all Labour councillors to resist the cuts that are coming by adopting no-cuts 'needs' budgets

Its programme must be unashamedly socialist but also at its heart must be a strategy of action, able to reach working people and mobilise them to confront capitalism, and above all, at present, the Tory government. It is not sufficient to be in opposition to austerity, planned poverty. How do we organise to defeat these attacks on the working class on a national and local level?

For instance, Jeremy Corbyn should make a direct appeal to all Labour councillors to resist the cuts that are coming from Osborne and Cameron, not just by a show of hands in councils but to throw down the gauntlet to the government by adopting no-cuts 'needs' budgets.

Nationally, the TUC and all the main unions must match the words of opposition to the government's attacks on the unions - through the restrictions on ballots and changes to the political funds, the further slashing of public expenditure, etc, with an immediate decision for a one-day general strike to follow the demonstration on 20 June.

Jeremy Corbyn should be to the fore in making demands of this character and then, if the leadership election results in 'more of the same', a continuation of Blairism, whether it be Kendall, Burnham, or Cooper, he should draw the obvious conclusion and break from historically obsolete Labour and help to found a new mass force.



Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

www.socialistparty.org.uk

020 8988 8777

@Socialist_party

Text 07761 818206

/CWSocialistParty



Ireland: fighting for LGBT rights North and South
20,000 marched in Belfast on 13 June for marriage equality in Northern Ireland. This follows from the successful referendum for marriage equality in the South earlier last month. Also in the South, the Employment Equality Bill, proposed by Socialist Party (CWI Ireland) TDs in the Dáil, was passed. The Bill ends the right of religiously controlled schools and hospitals to discriminate on grounds of religious ethos. See articles at www.socialistworld.net



Belgium: solidarity with Greece
5,000 attended a protest in Brussels in solidarity with the Greek resistance against the dictates of the 'Institutions'. Members of Linkse Socialistische Partij/Parti Socialiste de Lutte (PSL/LSP - CWI Belgium) sold 143 papers and 7 subscriptions to their paper as well as 23 copies of the paper of Xekinima. They raised around €500



Hong Kong: defending refugees
Sally from Socialist Action (CWI China, Hong Kong, Taiwan) speaking at refugee demo in Hong Kong, demanding an end to the inhuman treatment of refugees. See report at www.chinaworker.info

“
The Syriza-led government has now caved in and crossed its own 'red lines'



GREECE:
SYRIZA
BACKTRACKS

Tsipras has been in negotiations with EU leaders and institutions

The response of workers' and social movements to the deal will be important

Niall Mulholland

The outlines of a possible deal between the Greek government and the Troika (the EU, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund) are being put together as the Socialist goes to press.

This is after months of bullying from the capitalist institutions, including EU threats of Greek state bankruptcy. The Syriza-led government has now caved in and crossed its own 'red lines' to close a funding gap of billions of euros owed to the IMF and the ECB and thus avoid default.

In return for keeping alive hopes of staying inside the Eurozone, Tsipras has agreed to increase the pension age, which is already at 67, by further restrictions on early retirements. Those in work will be made to pay higher pension contributions and health charges.

Economy

As well as some measures of taxing the rich more, VAT, which attacks the living standards of the working class and the poor, will go up. The Greek government reckons this will raise €680 million this year and €1.3 billion next year.

In spinning the deal, the Greek economy minister, George Stathakis, concentrated on the increase in tax surcharges for "middle and higher income earners", a levy on firms with a net income over €500,000 and a rise in corporation tax from 26% to 29%. He claims this will raise €2.6 billion.

Andreas Payiatsos from Xekinima (CWI Greece) commented: "This deal will suffocate the economy. It meets all the budget demands of the Troika, imposing €7.9 billion worth of cuts in the course of the next 18 months, to pay the debtors. The

majority of this will be paid by the working masses.

"Despite the spin by Syriza leaders, the deal is terrible for pensioners, workers and the poor. Syriza has abandoned its 'red lines'. It is true that the deal does not hit wages and pensions directly, but they are doing it indirectly, by raising VAT and workers' fees for social insurance funds.

"The Syriza government has tried to put more burdens on the rich by increasing taxes, but these are meek measures and do not change the general disastrous situation for working people, those who are retired and the poorest.

"The Greek government proposals will put the economy back into recession. Greece has already lost more than a quarter of its national income since the crisis began. Unemployment is officially at 26% (much higher in reality, particularly given the mass exodus of migrating youth)."

More cuts

While welcoming Syriza's U-turn, the EU indicated it wants even more cuts before the Troika gives new funds to Greece. Nothing is guaranteed, but a deal could be agreed after a meeting this week of the Eurogroup finance ministers and later at an EU summit.

"Syriza is in turmoil," Andreas commented. "Even the Syriza-run radio station does not know what to say. Only right wing Syriza spokespeople went on the mass media to try to explain away the government's abrupt climb-down.

"Xekinima calls on the left wing of Syriza in the Greek parliament to vote against any deal. Of course if the Syriza left does vote against the deal, the Tsipras leadership can rely on the opposition - MPs from

same in the end" or "Syriza is no different to the others".

Syriza should not underestimate the importance of these voices. Of course all the polls show that it has an important lead over New Democracy (the traditional capitalist party), but this lead is becoming smaller.

Syriza response

The Institutions want to force Syriza to its knees. How is the leadership of Syriza responding to this pressure? It says that if rupture is required between Greece and the Institutions, then rupture we shall have. However, it never explains what this means!

“
Only by refusing to pay the debts, nationalising the main industries, banks and services under clear democratic public ownership, can austerity end for the Greek people

A rupture with the Institutions means exit from the eurozone. This is very well known to the leadership of Syriza. So, why don't they say it, openly, publicly and boldly to the Greek people in order to prepare it for this development?

There is a big section of the population which is ready for a head-on collision with the Institutions, if and when this is necessary, to secure their living standard and basic rights. This does not mean that the majority wants collision, or wants a return to the drachma, but that they understand it may be necessary.

If the leadership of Syriza proposed to the Greek people a colli-

sion with the EU, together with a concrete plan about how to come out of the crisis, the response of the Greek people would be magnificent.

Let us talk concretely about what a rupture would mean. When, on 5 June, the 'unthinkable' to the ruling class took place, and the Syriza government refused to pay an instalment to the IMF, the sky did not fall.

The Institutions proposed 'capital controls' to the Greek government, as were applied in the case of Cyprus. The Greek government said no! Why? Since when is the left a defender of the freedom of movement of big capital in global markets?

It is a measure that the government of the left should aim at, so as to stop big capital and the rich sending their money abroad thus threatening a collapse of the banking system.

Socialist measures

The government should have prepared for a transition to a national currency, linked inseparably with the initiation of a series of socialist measures.

This means: nationalisation of the banking system, nationalisation of strategic sectors of the economy, an economic reconstruction plan based on national coordinating bodies by industry and between industries, the writing off of the debts of small businesses and self-employed workers who were destroyed by the crisis, long-term interest-free loans to small businesses, professionals and small non-profit co-operatives and democracy in production with social and workers' control and management in all aspects of the economy.

On the basis of such a socialist programme, there is hope and a positive perspective - not only for Greece, but for workers across Europe, who will support and embrace it. On the basis of capitalism, facing its deepest international crisis since the 1930s, there is none.



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, 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.

- 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 MASS 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.
- 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!

**Join the fightback!
Join the Socialists!**

www.socialistparty.org.uk

02089888777

✉ @Socialist_party 📞 Text 07761 818206 🌐 /CWiSocialistParty



What next for the NHS?

Jackie Grunsell
Lancashire GP and Socialist Party member

On Friday 8 May, health workers in England gave a collective groan of despair at the news the Tories had won the general election. It's not that many had illusions any of the establishment parties were offering a plan to dramatically improve health care, but the Tories' Health and Social Care Act 2012 (HSCA) has been an absolute disaster for the National Health Service (NHS).

Over a year after its introduction a British Medical Association (BMA) survey of doctors revealed only 5% believed the Act had improved services for patients. Nearly three-quarters felt that competition, with increased use of private providers, has led to services becoming fragmented.

BMA Chair of Council, Dr Mark Porter, stated: "While everyone else in the NHS has been working to make it better for patients, the government, through its misguided legislation, has been doing the exact opposite. How can we ever achieve whole and seamless care when so many services have to be touted to private bidders? How will these services work together for the good of patients when they are constantly eyeing up each other's business? How can services improve when the law can impose competitive tendering but cannot be used to protect or prefer publicly-run services?"

The government's policies are not misguided but a deliberate attempt to undermine the NHS and create a private insurance based healthcare system similar to that in the USA. They have indicated they have every intention of continuing to implement the HSCA in the face of opposition from every major health workers' union and professional body.



Health secretary Jeremy Hunt



The lifting of the cap on hospitals treating and getting funding from private patients means that increasingly underfunded health trusts will turn to this as a source of income

In the run-up to the elections the Tories clearly felt the pressure over the NHS, making the pledge of increased funding of £8 billion by 2020. This is laughable when an estimated £30 billion is needed to plug the funding gap that already exists. No one knows where cuts will come from to deal with the current deficit.

The recent announcement of a £200 million cut in council funded public health services will also mean the NHS is left to pick up the pieces due to a lack of smoking and obesity prevention, school nurses and sexual health services, among others.

The Tories have also made the empty pledge of thousands more doctors. There are no details of how they plan to make this happen, to reverse the shortfall, particularly in general practice and the difficulty of recruiting and retaining people in the profession.

Extra workers?

Health secretary Jeremy Hunt has admitted that in order to get the 5,000 extra GPs (General Practitioners, ie doctors) the government is promising, about half of all medical school graduates would have to choose that specialisation. But this year, the NHS struggled to fill existing GP training positions. And a British Medical Association survey of over 15,000 GPs last month found that a third of them intended to retire by 2020.

Meanwhile the GP magazine Pulse printed an article last week revealing that more than 160,000 patients across the UK were displaced as a result of their practices closing in the past two years.

Pulse also revealed a 500% jump in the number of practices seeking advice from NHS managers about closure or merging.

The BMA GPs Committee chair Dr Chaand Nagpaul believes the figures obtained by Pulse are the "tip of a much bigger iceberg".

He says: "There are many practices on the brink of collapse, while others may not be closing, but are signifi-



Photo Bob Severn

cantly reducing the level of services they can offer. We have many practices running at half capacity and having to reduce the number of sessions." Practice closures are putting even more strain on those left nearby, who have to take on those patients en masse.

Prime Minister David Cameron's announcement that the government is committed to a seven-day NHS is yet another pipe dream on the basis of present health spending. In theory this is a great idea but with services stretched beyond breaking point for even five days now and further cuts to come, this is an impossibility.

Seven-day working in the NHS would require large numbers of new staff, the cost of this is nowhere near met by the £8 billion promised. If the government try to implement this plan, it will in all likelihood mean further closures of emergency and maternity services and closing more GP surgeries, due to having to provide cover with even fewer staff.

The continued privatisation of healthcare is set to continue apace

with more and more service contracts coming up for tender over the government's term of office.

The lifting of the cap on hospitals treating and getting funding from private patients means that increasingly underfunded health trusts will turn to this as a source of income.

In this situation, combined with growing waiting lists to see and be treated by specialists, it's easy to see how more patients who can afford it, will start to go private or take out private insurance to cover certain conditions which are not well catered for in their area by the NHS.

And they will begin to take priority in a chronically cash-strapped, under-staffed NHS, exacerbating the inequalities in health care that already exist and creating a service based on your ability to pay, not on need.

The news that NICE (the National Institute for Clinical Excellence) has abandoned its work to set standards for safe nurse to patient ratios in different hospital settings, means that cost will continue to be the driver for staff levels rather than patient safety.

The continued privatisation of healthcare is set to continue apace



Seven-day working in the NHS would require large numbers of new staff, the cost of this is nowhere near met by the £8 billion promised

Dr Peter Carter, chief executive of the Royal College of Nursing, said: "If staffing levels are not based on evidence there is a danger they will be based on cost."

Increasingly, the NHS is measured on how trusts perform financially rather than on the availability of care and how that care is delivered.

The profit motive that is seeping into the heart of care must be robustly challenged by the trade union movement and wider community.

What is the solution for the NHS?

■ The 2012 Health and Social Care Act (England) should be scrapped and privatisation of healthcare immediately stopped and reversed where it has already taken place.

■ Abolish Foundation Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups. Ending the cost and waste of a competitive market in the NHS would save money. Integrated health services are cheaper and provide better care for patients.

■ Reverse the pay freeze for NHS staff. Health workers are demoralised and undervalued. They need pay rises linked to inflation as a minimum. Better paid adequate numbers of nursing staff would reduce the need for costly agency workers, reduce sick leave and improve morale and patient care.

■ Invest in social care and community health services. The massive cuts in these services and privatisation have led to vulnerable people being left in the community without the support they need. This means unnecessary hospital admissions and patients being kept there longer than necessary or being discharged unsafely only to bounce back in via A&E. Services are completely unable to cope with demand

and need bringing back into public ownership with investment in well paid, properly trained staff.

■ Nationalise the pharmaceutical, medical supply industries and all private health providers. These companies are ripping off the NHS, charging over the odds for their products. Compensation to shareholders should be paid only on the basis of proven need.

■ For democratic control and accountability of health services. Plan health care on the basis of the population's needs, with care decisions made by democratically elected representatives of health workers, the community, as well as local and national government.

■ For united action to defend the NHS. Trade unions should take action supported by anti-cuts campaigns and service users. For health campaigners to link up with groups fighting other public sector cuts. Support the call for a 24-hour general strike against austerity.

■ For a socialist planned economy. End poverty, bad housing, unemployment, dangerous workplaces, pollution and inequality - the biggest killers and causes of ill health.



Privatisation an "unmitigated disaster"

When Circle, the private company infamous for its failure at Hinchbrook NHS hospital, took over the dermatology services at Queens Medical Centre (QMC) in Nottingham, workers and patients were right to fear the worst.

The privatisation of QMC resulted in the exodus of the majority of the consultant dermatologists putting the service in crisis, with cancer patients now having to travel elsewhere for treatment. Circle was forced to recruit locums (temporary consultants) costing as much as £300,000 a year!

An independent report into the unit's near collapse has branded it an "unmitigated disaster". It was a national centre of excellence when

run by the NHS. So much for the spurious government claim that private companies can provide a better, more cost efficient service.

The report's findings fell short of according responsibility to the reckless handover of the department to a private company. However, there are numerous cases where privatisation has adversely affected people's lives and this government's push to further extend private involvement in public services must be stopped.

It is the responsibility of those who work in the NHS, as well as their fellow workers across the public services, to fight back against the dismantling of the NHS and free the service from Tory backed profiteering health companies.

Nottingham Socialist Party member

NHS in Wales: a crisis of underfunding



Photo Becky Davis

Claire Job

Long-term underfunding is destroying the NHS in Wales. Funding for all public services is determined by the 'Barnett Formula', which robs Wales of around £300 million annually compared to England (estimated by Holtham Commission in 2009).

The Welsh Labour government decides where the money goes and has not 'ring-fenced' NHS spending (as in England and Scotland) leading to bigger relative cuts. Welsh Labour accepts and administers Tory cuts passively and as a result Welsh people have a derelict NHS and collapsing local government.

NHS funding in Wales fell by an average of 2.5% a year in real terms between 2010 and 2013. Despite the Welsh government coming up with extra money in 2013-14, it is projected that by 2016 the Welsh NHS budget will still be 3.6% lower compared to 2010. The Nuffield Trust estimates a funding gap that could be as much as £3.6 billion by 2025.

Labour's 'modernisation' of the NHS in Wales includes downgrading of maternity units, A&E departments and the loss of 2,000 hospital beds. This means reduced access to health care for many in Wales, especially for those without a car, the elderly, disabled people and some of the poorest communities with the furthest to travel.

Fightback

The fightback has come from local community campaigns set up in the face of these cuts, while the leadership of Wales Trades Union Congress (TUC) and health unions turn a blind eye because of their unwavering loyalty to Welsh Labour.

In Rhyl, 2,000 people protested in February against downgrading

of maternity services which would mean life threatening journeys for women and new born babies in distress. The campaign won a reprieve as a judicial review put a hold on these plans.

Similarly, hundreds of people from West Wales descended on the Senedd (Wales National Assembly, Cardiff) in April to protest about the downgrading of their local district general hospital.

One of the symptoms of neglect is the significant problem with recruitment and retention of staff. One-third of Welsh medical graduates choose not to work in Wales when qualified and the Welsh NHS has 400 junior doctor vacancies. There are also concerns about nursing staffing levels and skills mix in Welsh hospitals. This of course leads to more spending on agency staff which feeds rather than resolves the problem.

Neglect in funding is leading to neglect of people. The Andrews report unearthed failings in care provided to older people in Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot hospitals. Currently, Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board has been placed under 'special measures' with a shocking discovery of "institutional abuse" on a mental health ward.

Funding for the NHS in Wales should be determined by the needs of the population, not by shrinking budgets from a Tory government hell bent on attacking the working class and a Welsh Labour government with no backbone to fight!

Austerity in Wales is having a detrimental effect on the health of the population at a time when funding for health is dwindling. We must demand the Wales TUC and health unions lead on a fightback to protect the health of Wales and link this to a fightback involving the whole of the UK to reclaim the NHS.



The Socialist Inbox

Do you have something to say?

Send your news, views and criticism in not more than 150 words to Socialist Postbox, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD, or phone 020 8988 8771, email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk

Slavery in prison

The Tories boast of their abhorrence of slavery with the Modern Slavery Act. Yet slavery is growing with work on token pay in our prisons, and in the benefit system with Workfare. I refused to submit to this here at HMP Coldingley, despite being aged over 50 with a long list of chronic health problems.



So I've been placed on basic regime and moved to worse accommodation with no in-cell toilet of running water. What we need is a union for both inmates and claimants. Letters of support to DS Wain, A8016AM, HMP Coldingley, Shaftesbury Road, Bisley, Woking GU24 9EX.

David Wain

Class anger 1945

I read Geoff Jones's review (Socialist 859) with personal as well as political interest. One of the few political events my dad attended was Churchill's rally at Walthamstow greyhound stadium in 1945. Churchill had been lionised as the great war leader and was also a local MP, so tens of thousands turned up to hear him.

But in working class areas of the East End and elsewhere, Churchill was hated. He had been a firm supporter of the policies which caused depression in the 1930s. In 1926, he edited the 'British Gazette', the government paper published during the General Strike. Such policies left him widely hated by workers and this surfaced even during the war.

Public records show that in the Blitz in 1940, residents booed Churchill and the royal family while visiting bomb sites. Churchill the class warrior had not been forgiven. Churchill was wary of returning to the East End, while the royal family could only return when they pledged not to leave London during the war, "so they could look the East End in the eye".

Members of my family had good reason for despising this privileged representative of capitalism.

Kevin Parslow

We reserve the right to shorten letters. Don't forget to give your name, address and phone number. Confidentiality will be respected if requested.

Split services

Labour councils privatising services is not new. Birmingham's Labour council has split its leisure service in two but only privatising one part. Privatisation experts Serco runs fitness centres where people work out, generally in more middle class areas. The council runs services to promote mental and physical health, stopping smoking and tackling obesity in the city's poorer parts where little or no profit is to be made.

From being able to use my premier-ship card at all bar one swimming pool or leisure centre in the city, it is now only valid at eight centres. The council's crude, insulting stereotype is that poor people only need weight management and smoking cessation facilities whereas more affluent people use a gym to work out.

This will leave many people with a long journey to a gym to work out. Birmingham's Labour council only has three policies; cut, privatise and give big business what they want. Don't trust Labour with our services.

Clive Walder

Stop evictions



It looks like the campaigning that socialists did against the possible eviction of a woman and her two children in Walthamstow has won at least a temporary victory. However, I recently visited someone else facing the same problem. The recent intensification of evictions of many women and their children is an onslaught. We need a grassroots/ trade union response, both to physically stop the bailiffs and also to raise secure tenancies politically in every arena.

The Greater London Assembly elections are coming up next year. We have to make the 'London challenge' about stopping the forced evictions and gaining security of tenure and access to council homes if you do face eviction.

Nancy Taaffe, Waltham Forest

THEATRE REVIEW: THE RED LION



Suzanne Beishon, reviews 'The Red Lion', which is at the Dorfman Theatre, National Theatre until 30 September 2015.

It's a business, and nothing I know in this world will stop it." - A line that could be taken from any comment piece that has appeared in recent weeks about the depth of corruption in football's governing body, Fifa. Instead it's from timely new play 'the Red Lion'. Writer Patrick Marber returns to the National Theatre after a long absence with a beautiful three-man show set in the desperate, passionate and quasi-religious world of a non-league football club.

Need to belong

Located entirely in the club's beautifully crafted high-ceilinged dank changing room - whose single-glazed ventilated windows with stained walls reminded me of my old school gym - Marber's play is less about football and more about needing to belong.

The curtain rises to reveal an overweight elderly man lovingly strapping an ironing board to the players' rickety treatment table and caressingly decreasing the sparkling clean team shirts that look out of place in the unkempt surroundings.

Kit-man John "the Lege" Yates (Peter Wight) is a loyal former player and failed manager of the Lions, motivated by his love for the game and his club.

Alongside him, Daniel Mays plays fast-talking hotshot chancer-manager, Jimmy Kidd, who is looking for his fast break into the big time while juggling debts and a troubled family life.

Waxing lyrically throughout - sometimes a little too much - the two men are united in their love of football and their belief in the abilities of wayward teenager, "the new Messi" Jordan, played by athletic young actor Calvin Demba.

However it quickly becomes evident that even at this level, the trio aren't immune to the pressures that



Money, drugs and dodgy-dealing agents circle in on the desperate threesome who have found their worth at the beleaguered club

penetrate clubs of every division. Money, drugs and dodgy-dealing

Socialism Today

The Socialist Party's magazine

The June issue includes:

● Britain - Tory win will see harsh austerity but new waves of struggle by Peter Taaffe

● Scotland - SNP rise, Labour fall in political seismic shift by Philip Stott



£2.50 including postage:
Socialism Today PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD.
Subscribe for £18 a year at www.socialismtoday.org

Why I joined 'I NEEDED TO GET INVOLVED WITH THE FIGHT'

Peter Rippon

After turning 18 in 1974, I proudly put my X on a ballot paper for the first time. I marked it against the candidate representing the party of my parents, the party of Keir Hardie and Aneurin Bevan and the party I firmly believed represented my class, the Labour Party. I continued to vote in exactly the same way at every election from that day until including the General Election of 1997.

As the term of the government elected in May 1997 unfolded, I became more disillusioned, and in subsequent elections I did not vote. The choice before me was "Which shade of blue?" and politically I detest 'blue'. I did attend the polling station each election however and with juvenile glee wrote individualised rude comments against each of the candidates.

As this year's election approached I was resigned to adopting my normal routine of scribbled abuse, when I saw an interview with Dave Nellist on Russia Today's 'Going Underground' programme explaining what TUSC stood for, both as an acronym and as a movement. At last! I had someone to vote for. Well I did if my constituency, Iarrow, was one of the lucky 135 which had a TUSC candidate. I checked and it was. Joy!

My joy was soon tempered as I realised that the date of the election coincided with my flight to the Netherlands to watch a football match, I know it's only football! My flight was in the morning but I calculated that if I voted very early I would have just enough time to get to the airport.

'I rushed in to vote TUSC'

On the morning of 7 May, I impatiently knocked on the door of the polling station 10 minutes before opening time. It didn't open, but when it did exactly on time, I rushed in as fast as a 59 year-old with an arthritic toe can and proudly marked my X against TUSC candidate Norman Hall.

I did get to the airport on time and sitting in a bar in Rotterdam the next day it sunk in that the 'dark blues' had won. I decided that I needed to do something. I needed to get involved with the fight. So I did.

I started by taking part in the anti-austerity demonstration in Newcastle on 6 June and then, as a result of attending a public meeting afterwards addressed by Socialist Party Deputy General Secretary Hannah Sell I was enthused to join the Socialist Party. My fight starts here.

Incidentally the football match that I had travelled to the Netherlands to watch was postponed as a result of a police strike! Now isn't that ironic.

Growing the party in Sheffield

At the annual Heeley Festival in Sheffield, Socialist Party members held a stall and had a great day.

We raised £176 for our fighting fund from plant sales by Liz 'green fingers' Morton!

We also had 2 people apply to join

the party and sold 12 papers.

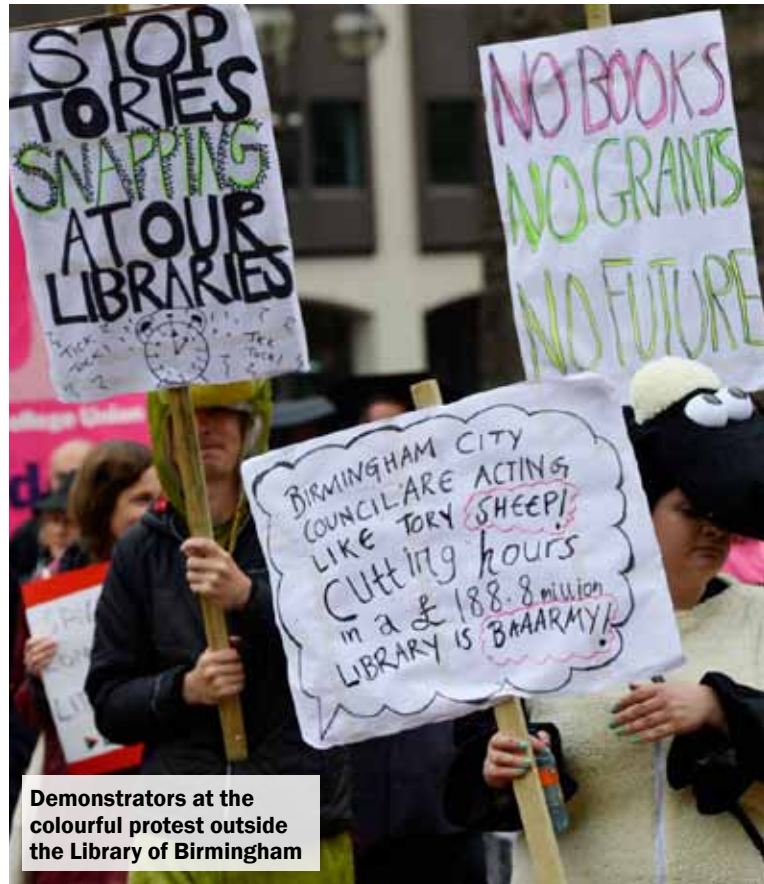
Any other branches with keen gardeners should note that this is a good way of raising fighting fund money - as well as attracting local people to stalls.

Jeremy Short



Carlisle Socialist Party supporting Cumbria Pride on 20 June

Labour wields Tory axe at Library of Birmingham



Demonstrators at the colourful protest outside the Library of Birmingham

Clive Walder

Birmingham Socialist Party

150 people, a dalek, a crocodile and Mickey and Minnie Mouse protested on 13 June against cuts to the Library of Birmingham.

It will mean a reduction in opening hours from 73 a week to 40 and

possibly the loss of up to 100 jobs.

The library, which has been open less than two years and cost £188 million, is seen as a cultural icon.

Visitors from Sydney and South Africa have expressed astonishment that Europe's largest public library, which houses unique archives, doesn't open until 11am. Reduced

opening hours have already caused huge queues and disruption to those using its services.

Library cuts are a deliberate choice by the Tory government. However, the Labour cabinet member responsible for libraries submitted a lengthy statement saying that the cuts were made 'with a heavy heart'.

He claimed they were forced on the council by government spending limits and that they had to prioritise between frontline and non-essential services.

Consultation said 'no'

Birmingham council's own consultation about the library's future produced an overwhelming no to any cuts.

Thousands of working class people use the library like the unemployed to access job opportunities, the vulnerable to seek out details of support groups and even in the computer age large numbers of students and children still use them to study.

Speakers at the rally included Alan Gibbons, author and member of the National Libraries campaign, the library Unison steward, students who have been sitting in past closing time every Friday and Birmingham's Young Poet Laureate, who lambasted the Labour council for carrying out Tory cuts.

The council is also considering a ban on amplified open air speeches in the city centre, it's an obvious attempt to undermine demonstrations.



Socialist Party Fighting Fund

	£ target	£ received	April to June 2015		Deadline 30 June 2015	
North West	1,200	2,143				179%
Northern	600	771				129%
West Midlands	2,100	2,286				109%
South West	1,400	1,518				108%
Eastern	1,200	1,175				98%
East Midlands	1,600	1,488				93%
Yorkshire	2,900	2,586				89%
England & Wales	3,650	2,798				77%
Southern	1,200	677		56%		
London	6,100	3,365		55%		
South East	750	339		45%		
Wales	2,300	1,029		45%		
TOTAL	25,000	20,180				81%

Donate today!

If you agree with what you read in the Socialist, consider making a donation to the Socialist Party's fighting fund:

■ pay by card via 020 8988 8777 or socialistparty.org.uk/donate

■ cheques payable to 'Socialist Party', PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD



Campaigning for the victims of police brutality, racism and killings

Paula Mitchell
London Socialist Party

Ten years on, a former police firearms officer is to be prosecuted for the murder of young black man Azelle Rodney in 2005. Anthony Long is accused of shooting “as soon as Azelle Rodney came into his gun sights”. The police were following three people travelling in a car, suspected of criminal activity. The moment the car stopped, Long opened fire and shot Azelle eight times.

Court challenge
On the same day as this news, it was reported that the family of Jean Charles de Menezes are taking their case to the European Court of Human Rights to challenge the 2005 decision that no officers will be prosecuted for the horrific gunning down of a completely innocent man. In the days after the 7/7 bomb attacks on London transport, Jean Charles was mistaken for a ‘terrorism suspect’ and executed in front of horrified passengers on a tube train in Stockwell station.



Photo Paul Mattsson

“These are not isolated cases. Mark Duggan, Sean Rigg, Joy Gardner, Cynthia Jarrett, Roger Sylvester, Derek Bennett, Smiley Culture, Kingsley Burrell... there is a long list of deaths of black people at the hands of the police

The police then told blatant lies to absolve their responsibility - such as claiming that he ran from them and jumped the gates at the station, when he did nothing of the sort. The local community was in effect in a state of siege for a week, with police at every turn. An inquiry in 2007 fined the Met police for 19 failings. But questions still remain. Why, if the Met thought they were chasing a terrorist, did they not arrest him before they reached Stockwell tube station where Jean Charles was killed? These are not isolated cases. Mark Duggan, Sean Rigg, Joy Gardner, Cynthia Jarrett, Roger Sylvester, Derek Bennett, Smiley Culture, Kingsley Burrell... there is a long list of deaths of black people at the hands of the police. The Socialist Party condemns police harassment and racism. We call for an end to repressive police powers and demand an independent, trade union-led inquiry into police brutality and killings.

Follow us on Twitter @Socialist_Party

Wales: Local government re-organisation

A serious threat to jobs and public services

Mark Evans
Branch secretary Carmarthenshire County Unison and member of Local Government Service Group (personal capacity)

According to Labour’s Leighton Andrews, public services minister in the Welsh Assembly, cutting the number of councils in Wales to eight or nine (taking Wales back to pre-1996 arrangements with far bigger councils) would cut the cost of local government. This is precisely the concern of Unison and other local government workers. It is estimated that 15,000 jobs could be lost as a result of local government reorganisation in Wales. Unison full-time officers, who acted as apologists for the Labour government when it meekly passed on Con-Dem cuts, have now, under pressure from local government Unison branches, been forced to call on the Assembly government to finance reorganisation. This has to be a line in the sand because otherwise reorganisation will be a means of inflicting more cuts.

Leighton Andrews has claimed that the case for fewer local authorities was ‘compelling’. No doubt this was claimed by others when councils were made smaller and more numerous in 1996. Socialists are not opposed to reorganisation in principle. We support the need to reduce chief executive officer’s pay and for elected councillors to receive only genuine expenses. However, claims that reorganisation is about these issues is a smokescreen for the real objective - further cuts. These proposals, if implemented, would reduce democratic accountability. The Williams commission report on which Leighton Andrews proposals are, in part, based provides little in the way of research or evidence to justify his proposals. It did however warn that larger councils would struggle to meet diverse local needs or maintain fair democratic representation in such areas. These proposals threaten our jobs, services and working class communities. They should be opposed and campaigned against by Unison, other trade unions, anti-cuts groups and working class communities.



Photo SP Wales

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONES OF THE WORKERS’ MOVEMENT

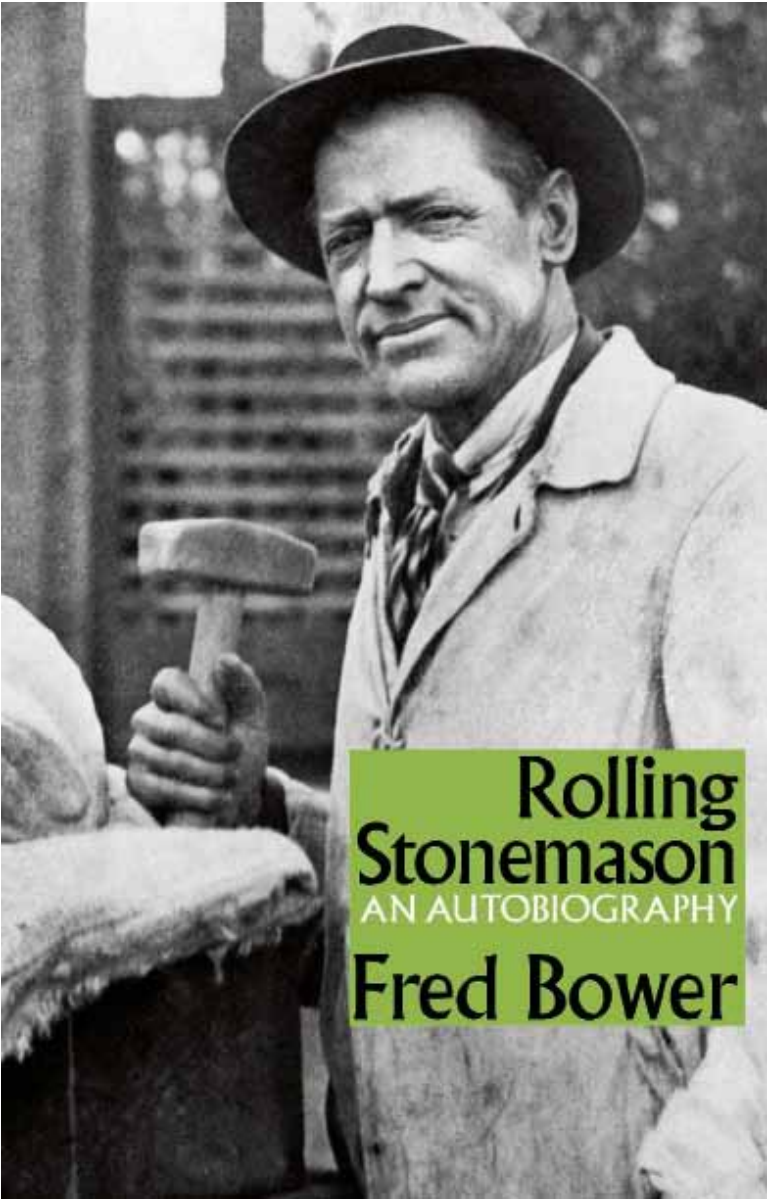
Peter Taaffe
Socialist Party general secretary

Rolling Stonemason: An Autobiography by Fred Bower - worker, socialist and artist - is a little pearl of a book. Friedrich Engels, co-founder with Karl Marx of scientific socialism, once wrote that the basic ideas of communism, meaning democratic socialism today, were handed down from the French Revolution by the great revolutionary Gracchus Babeuf. His ideas were continued in small groups “in the back alleys of France” until they were expressed on a large-scale in the 1830 and 1848 revolutions. Despite their undeveloped, even primitive, programme, they represented a vital historical thread that in turn led to the development of the working class movement, which did not exist at the time of the French Revolution. This, in time, led the movement to embrace the ideas of scientific socialism of Marx and Engels. Fred Bower, as this book reveals, embodied a similar process in the British working class, and particularly in Liverpool, with the gradual embracing of socialism, although it came later here than in France.

Liverpool beginnings
Bower was born in Boston, USA in 1871, but was brought up in Liverpool. In 1904 he, together with “his pal” the famous Jim Larkin, who was to play a key role in Ireland later, placed a letter in the foundations of the imposing Liverpool Anglican cathedral that they had worked on. The letter was from “the wage slaves employed on the erection of this cathedral dedicated to an unemployed Jewish carpenter”. Three weeks later King Edward VII laid the foundation stone over it, where it remains to this day! But the activities of Fred Bower went beyond displays of cheeky irreverence towards the bosses and their representatives. He was not only active in Liverpool.

He travelled, including to the US, where he met and collaborated with the great figures of the US labour movement. This included the socialist writer Upton Sinclair and also Jack London, the brilliant voice of the US working class through his speeches and writings, but particularly his great novels. He paints an intriguing portrait of them and the titanic Eugene Debs, tribune of the US working class, who got almost a million votes in the presidential elections of 1912, the equivalent of probably 6 million today. However, he spent most of his life as a stonemason in Liverpool, being converted to socialism through the bitter experience of capitalism there and in other cities. Liverpool was then “the second city of the mightiest empire the world has ever seen”. Alongside “immense wealth” there was also “abysmal poverty”. **Deindustrialisation** The subsequent catastrophic decline of British capitalism was exemplified by the massive deindustrialisation of Merseyside in the 1970s, reinforced by Thatcher in the 80s. This resulted in the mass revolt of the Liverpool working-class between 1983 and 1987, led by the magnificent Liverpool City Councillors and in which Militant, now the Socialist Party, played a key role. These events could be traced back to those like Fred Bower and hundreds and thousands of other self-sacrificing socialist pioneers in the city who heroically laboured, without fanfare, to literally lay the foundation stones of the workers’ movement in the city. We today stand on their doughty shoulders. **Sectarianism** And theirs was no easy task, as Fred Bower recounts; facing constant threats of eviction from his home, persistent harassment from the bosses for advocating and organising trade unions and, not least, the religious sectarianism which was constantly used to divide the working class.

“The book’s merit is that it gives us an invaluable insight into how the socialist pioneers raised upon their shoulders the modern workers’ movement



Bower recounts: “Liverpool then was divided into two camps, Orangemen – Protestants – and Catholics... Each believed the only way to get to heaven was to send the other fellow to hell.” It should be remembered that due to big population movements and other factors, religious sectarianism was pushed into the background in the post-1945 economic upswing. Nevertheless, Liverpool still had 10 ‘Protestant Party’ councillors up to the 1960s. Bower worked together with James Larkin and others to cement class unity. He writes about the way strikes were broken with the bosses playing off Catholics against Protestants.

Larkin was sent to Ireland to form branches of the dockers’ union there: “When the Dublin men struck for better conditions, the boats were sent on to Belfast, to be reloaded by the Orange dockers of Belfast. When the Belfast workers kicked over the traces, the boats were sent to Dublin to be worked on by the Dublin Catholic dockers... Larkin stopped all of that.” Later Larkin and James Connolly successfully organised successful strikes and demonstrations of Protestant and Catholic workers in Belfast in 1907. Bower emphasises the widespread effect this had, which was brought home to him when he went to his Belfast boarding house one day. The landlady said to him, “Are you a Protestant?” He

answered, “Yes, I was brought up so.” At which the landlady said: “A month ago I would have cut your throat before I would have let you enter my house. But Mr Larkin has changed all that.” This is not just of historical interest, but shows that unity in action, as the Socialist Party in Northern Ireland have consistently shown on numerous occasions, can overcome generations of suspicion and religious sectarianism. On the other hand, an incorrect approach, even in Liverpool, could resurrect sectarianism, even where it seems to have disappeared. **Adding to our knowledge** Much of what passes for ‘labour history’ is usually made up of dry, pompous, academic tracts without any attempt to feel the pulse beat of the workers’ movement. This could not be said of this book which readers should buy. Its merit is that it gives us an invaluable insight into how the socialist pioneers raised upon their shoulders the modern workers’ movement. The publishers Merlin deserve our thanks, as do Ron Noon and Sam Davies for their informative introduction, for rescuing and reprinting this valuable book and adding to our knowledge of the history of the workers’ movement. ■ Rolling Stonemason: An Autobiography by Fred Bower, Merlin Press ISBN 9780850366242 £12.99

Subscribe to the Socialist
12 issues £15 □ 6 months £28 □ 1 year £50 □
Direct debit £4 a month or £6 a month including
Socialism Today magazine
International rates also available

Phone 0208 988 8777 or visit www.socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe to pay by card, or to arrange a direct debit or post cheques (made payable to Socialist Publications Ltd) to PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Unison national conference Prentis pushed to talk up action



Unison members are ready to fight
photo Paul Mattsson

Angie Waller
Unison local government service group executive (personal capacity)

Delegates to public sector union Unison's national conference on 16 to 19 June underlined the need for a fighting strategy. General secretary Dave Prentis was pushed by members' anger to talk about more action this year.

The leadership has traditionally relied on Labour to come to the rescue. Delegates had no patience left for this approach.



The leadership has been caught in the headlights by an unexpected Tory victory, and has no strategy to fight back

In the union's preceding local government conference on 14 and 15 June, many speeches had called for strikes, to loud applause. Striking Glasgow homelessness caseworkers received a standing ovation. Delegates were incensed by Unison's lack of leadership in the face of Tory onslaught.

At national conference, Prentis was pushed to promise support for all branch struggles and make sure

victimised members are reinstated. Robert O'Donnell, a Unison rep sacked by the Glasgow venue conference was taking place in, addressed delegates and was promised support.

In his opening speech, Prentis said the union would "fight the attack on facility time, doubling our legal funds, challenging and campaigning. And if we fail we will take this vicious, vindictive government to the highest court in Europe to defend our right to strike."

Not enough

But legal action is not enough. Socialist Party speakers said the Trades Union Congress (TUC) needs to convene a council of war. All unions must mount a campaign of coordinated industrial action - with a 24-hour general strike as the next major step.

Our ideas were well received. The leadership has been caught in the headlights by an unexpected Tory victory, and has no strategy to fight back.

Prentis said the Labour leadership election is not the union's top priority. Neither is waiting for the next Labour government. Stopping well short of calling for a general strike, he was nonetheless forced to promise more militant leadership. He said the TUC should call a mass demonstration against austerity. If it doesn't, he even suggested Unison could organise it.

Conference was adjourned early on 18 June. Delegates converged on Glasgow's George Square in support of Robert O'Donnell and the homelessness caseworkers. This excellent gesture of solidarity buoyed up conference's spirit.

The rally was opened by Brian Smith, secretary of Glasgow Unison. Brian is a member of our Scottish sister party, Socialist Party Scotland. He said: "We are absolutely clear that Robert was victimised for trying to build the union by an employer that is hostile to the trade union movement."

Brian reminded the rally that the venue is 91% owned by Glasgow's Labour council. To loud agreement from the crowd, Brian declared: "They should hang their heads in shame!"

Journalists striking in south London against redundancies. Newsquest employees walked out on 22 and 23 June against job losses, low staffing and poor pay photo Neil Cafferky



Members of Socialist Party Scotland have been crucial in the homelessness caseworkers' struggle and Robert's reinstatement campaign. They have raised thousands in support funds, and linked the disputes with hundreds of other branches.

Many Socialist Party members spoke in debates. Speaking for the first time was Danny Wilkinson from Lincoln, a young member who introduced the fight against zero-hour contracts and for a £10 an hour minimum wage.

Brian Debus, chair of Hackney Unison, spoke several times. He was described by one speaker as the "great white shark of the union" for his record fighting council attacks and campaigning for socialism. 19 June marked eight years since four Socialist Party members, including Brian, were victimised by the Unison leadership for standing up to the union's bureaucracy.

Bromley Unison's Glen Kelly, another of the four, was prevented from attending conference by his employer's attacks on facility time. Laurie Pocock, secretary of Croydon Unison, paid tribute to Glenn's work - not only for his Bromley members, but helping neighbouring Croydon.



I came into this job wiping people's backsides. Now I seem to spend most of my time covering other people's backsides!

Many delegates expressed frustration at the scapegoating of frontline public sector workers for the failings caused by privatisation, cuts and top-heavy management. This was neatly summed up by Nottingham care worker Sara Huntingford, who said: "I came into this job wiping people's backsides. Now I seem to spend most of my time covering other people's backsides!"

A Socialist Party fringe meeting had 65 there, and 160 copies of the Socialist were sold during the conference.

Regulator eyes Royal Mail for profit



photo Paul Mattsson

Carl Harper
CWU Eastern 5 branch

Communications regulator Ofcom has announced a "fundamental review" of Royal Mail. This could be the next step in turning the former state postal service, privatised in 2013, into a for-profit business.

Ofcom claims the review will "ensure regulation remains appropriate and sufficient to secure the universal postal service." However, the regulator will do this by reviewing Royal Mail's "performance." This is a coded expression for driving down working conditions.

The regulator has refused to act on complaints by the Communication Workers Union (CWU) about unfair competition - and the 'race to the bottom' in terms and conditions it creates. But now the collapse of private delivery firms City Link and Whistl means attacks can begin on Royal Mail, so Ofcom has sprung into life!

Royal Mail will face the same drive for profit over service which

ruined City Link and Whistl. This will be disguised as a demand for greater 'efficiency'. As well as postal workers, it will undoubtedly have a negative effect on the public.

Expensive

Gas, electricity, water, rail and post were once publicly owned. They are now in private hands, and 'regulated' accordingly. The first four of those services are now among the most expensive in Europe, making fat profits. Royal Mail remains one of the cheapest - so it is no surprise this bosses' government has sent its regulator in.

The CWU missed the opportunity to call strikes against Royal Mail privatisation, despite strong indications members were willing. Labour opposition was non-existent.

Now it is imperative the membership is mobilised to fight attacks on our terms and conditions, and the quality and cost of the service. The National Shop Stewards Network conference on 4 July will be an ideal opportunity to discuss this (see page 1).

Strike to save tutors for vulnerable kids

Alec Thraves

Teachers who work outside schools struck in Swansea from 15 to 17 June against Labour's £670,000 budget cuts. Education workers could have their numbers reduced by 50% if proposals go through.

Members of teachers' unions NUT and NASUWT took the three-day action to protect 'education other than at school' (EOTAS) for vulnerable children. EOTAS serves those excluded from mainstream education - often for medical or social reasons - who rely on home

tuition.

Swansea Labour council is in the process of implementing £81 million of Tory cuts, with the education budget particularly hard hit.

Strikers are determined. Not just to fight for their jobs, but to protect an educational service vital to some of Swansea's most disadvantaged children.

On their third day of action, pickets lobbied the Welsh local government conference in Swansea. Their message to Tory-compliant Labour council leaders was: fight the cuts, and defend all our jobs and services! If Labour won't, the workers will.

Outsourced workers' pay strike

Workers employed by outsourcing giant Capita in Salford, Greater Manchester, took a second day of strike action on 19 June against measly pay offers. Their employer is also attacking working conditions.

The workforce was transferred to Capita from couriers DHL. Capita took the contract to supply services for none other than... DHL.

After the transfer, managers got new job titles. Their pay increased - often by thousands - to match equivalents elsewhere in Capita.

Workers, however, were offered a mere 0.5% increase! Following union rejection, bosses made a further offer: 0.75% with performance-related strings attached. When that was rejected too, they made a 'final' offer of 1%.

Members of general union GMB rejected that, and strikes for 2% are now taking place.

Capita's agenda is to drive down pay, with various attacks made or promised. Scrapping various pay-related conditions previously enjoyed by DHL workers. Applying impossible targets. Moving to a multi-tier workforce - where pay is levelled down over time to match the newest, bottom tiers. Even scrimping on basic work equipment: different shifts sharing headsets, offered just a sponge to wipe them clean before use!

The two all-day strikes were solidly supported by GMB members. They have the Socialist Party's continuing backing in whatever they do next. **Hugh Caffrey**



Bromley council workers organised by general union Unite completed ten days of rolling strike action on 20 June. The south London Tory council wants to reduce in-house staff by more than 90%. Socialist Party members are involved in the struggle. Pictured, 300 council workers and service users marching against the privatisation plans photo TUSC



[News in brief]



photo Paul Mattsson

Seven colleges strike

Lecturers at seven London colleges struck against job cuts on 23 June. The University and College Union called the action to fight compulsory redundancies. As well as job losses, colleges face campus closures and reduced adult education places.

Teachers walk out

Teachers in east London struck for three days on 23 to 25 June against plans to turn their school into an academy. Members of the National Union of Teachers at Sarah Bonnell secondary school in Newham are concerned their conditions will be undermined and the school will become unaccountable to the community. Two other Newham schools also face academisation. The union plans further strikes. **Dave Carr**

Colliery closure

One of Britain's last deep coal mines is set to shut this year, at a cost of 700 jobs. Workers at Kellingley Colliery in Yorkshire have not been offered alternative employment. Britain currently relies on coal for 31% of its electricity. The Socialist Party calls for public ownership of fossil fuels to allow a swift and orderly transition to green energy with no loss of jobs. **Malik J Rofidi**

Gallery stoppage

Staff at central London's National Gallery started their latest ten-day walkout on 20 June. Members of public sector union PCS are continuing action against privatisation, and victimisation of rep Candy Udwin.

Read more online at socialistparty.org.uk

YOUTH FIGHT AUSTERITY!

Ryan Aldred
Plymouth Socialist Party

Under Cameron's previous Con-Dem coalition government, young people bore much of the brunt of Tory inflicted austerity. But Tories such as chancellor George Osborne are not content with tripling tuition fees or closing down youth services and facilities.

This new all-Tory government aren't satisfied with exploitative zero-hour contracts, eye-watering rents and poverty wages, or with massive increases in mental health issues caused by austerity.

On 8 July, Osborne will announce further budget cutbacks which will again hit young people hardest.

The axe will most likely fall on housing benefit and in-work benefits. Young people will certainly feel this as many rely on in-work benefits to top up poverty wages. It's a way to (just about) scrape by.

Along with further cuts to housing benefit and the expected removal of housing benefits for 18-21 year olds, the effects will be disastrous.

Already, homelessness is rising. As many young people don't have the option to move back in with their parents, this housing benefit cut will force many young people onto the streets.

No mandate

Backed by only 24% of the electorate, the Tories have no mandate for inflicting more austerity on the poorest and most vulnerable.

Remember that hundreds of billions of pounds were spent bailing out the banks while £120 billion is lost every year in avoided, evaded and uncollected taxes.

If we are to beat back this austerity we must keep pressure on the government by maintaining the momentum built since May's election.

The 20 June demonstration in London showed the anger at continuing Tory austerity, with a huge turnout from young people who have simply had enough.

Budget day protests

Youth Fight Austerity has called a day of action on 8 July in defiance of the proposed cutbacks. Across the country there will be meetings, rallies, stalls and demonstrations to show that young people will not take these attacks lying down.

We will be building our campaign for a £10 an hour minimum wage, and demanding rent caps rather than benefit caps.

We will be leafletting workplaces, asking young workers to join us in expressing their anger and building a movement which can guarantee a future for us.

By linking action on the streets with workers taking strike action, we can develop a force to defeat austerity.

Take a look at youthfightforjobs.com for details of budget day protests on 8 July in your area. If you can't see a protest taking place near you, why not organise one yourself?

Drop us an email at youthfightforjobs@gmail.com or call 0208 558 7947 - and we'll help you out!

Youth Fight Austerity demands:

- End austerity - no to five more years of cuts to jobs, education and public services
 - Stop welfare cuts - no compulsory workfare for 18-21 year olds, defend housing benefit
 - Fight poverty pay - raise the minimum wage to £10 now, scrap zero-hour contracts
 - Defend education - no to cuts and tuition fees
 - Democratic rights - stop attacks on the right to strike, protest and other civil liberties.
- For votes at 16



Young anti-austerity
protestors on the 20 June
People's Assembly demo
photo Paul Mattsson



ISSN 1366-9621



9 771366 962103