

Liverpool council 'does its best' for the bankers

Tony Mulhearn

In rejecting the option to stand up and fight for Liverpool's hard-pressed working families, council leader Joe Anderson, at Liverpool council's Question Time public consultation on 27 October, claimed that he was doing his best for the people of the city.

He asked how to make £51 million in spending cuts next year. This is an outrage when bankers are trousering billions in bonuses, when CEOs' pay increased by 50% this year, when an estimated £150 billion of fat cats' tax is uncollected and when it is revealed that the senior tax collector Mike Clasper, after being wined and dined, has cut a deal with billionaires which allows them to avoid paying much needed mega-loads of tax.

The meeting was an exercise in

obfuscation and misinformation.

Joe, responding to robust criticism for his lack of leadership, claimed he was building thousands of homes and creating thousands of apprenticeships.

A peculiar claim when the city council has no house-building programme and is currently shedding hundreds of jobs.

And what type of apprenticeships are these? Are they for engineers, joiners, bricklayers, who will then have full-time jobs building the houses, schools and hospitals we need? Joe's answer should be interesting.

The fact is that they are not real apprenticeships and the house building is being carried out by agencies other than the council.

In response to demands to set a 'needs budget', he retorted that he was not prepared to go illegal nor was he prepared to 'martyr the city'.

But he is prepared to martyr those in need of council services and jobs which are being demolished.

He boasted that the 67% of the vote Labour received in the last elections was an endorsement of his cuts policy. No Joe. That vote was a clear signal from the workers of the city telling Labour to protect them from the Tory/Liberal onslaught.

Joe's stance confirms that the Labour Party has morphed into a party which is no different to the other two main parties.

That underlines the desperate need to intensify the campaign to defeat the Con-Dem government by joining the industrial action on 30 November and to link that movement to establishing a new mass party of the working class.

• See www.socialistparty.org.uk for more on Liverpool council's consultation sham

Bradford joins the 'Occupy' movement

Iain Dalton

Youth Fight for Jobs Yorkshire organiser

Following Occupy London Stock Exchange (LSX), and similar protests in Glasgow, Nottingham, Bristol and Newcastle, among others, a group has established Occupy Bradford outside the city hall on Centenary Square.

One supporter of the camp had been to Occupy Wall Street in the US. Several people brought donations of food. One person turned up to argue with the occupiers but went away supportive, saying he would come back to discuss further the following day!

I left leaflets advertising the 5 November Jarrow demo in London (see pages 5 and 12), which was amongst a number of other events they discussed supporting and sending people along to.

But more than anything, the campers want to discuss with people how to break the monopoly of the top 1% over political and financial decision making and create a society that would benefit the 99%.

Supporters of the English Defence League attacked Occupy Newcastle campers early in the morning of 30 October. This followed a daytime demonstration by the racist group on 29 October which harassed the camp. We, the 99%, need to unite to fight for jobs, homes and services, and defeat the EDL which wants to spread racist division.

St Pauls

An Occupy LSX camper spoke to the Socialist about the threat by St Paul's Cathedral and the City of London



Outside St Paul's cathedral photo Paul Mattsson

Corporation to evict the occupation.

"The protesters have been cooperating with the cathedral managers; the crisis among them is of their own making, they know they will be seen in a very bad light if they help with eviction orders.

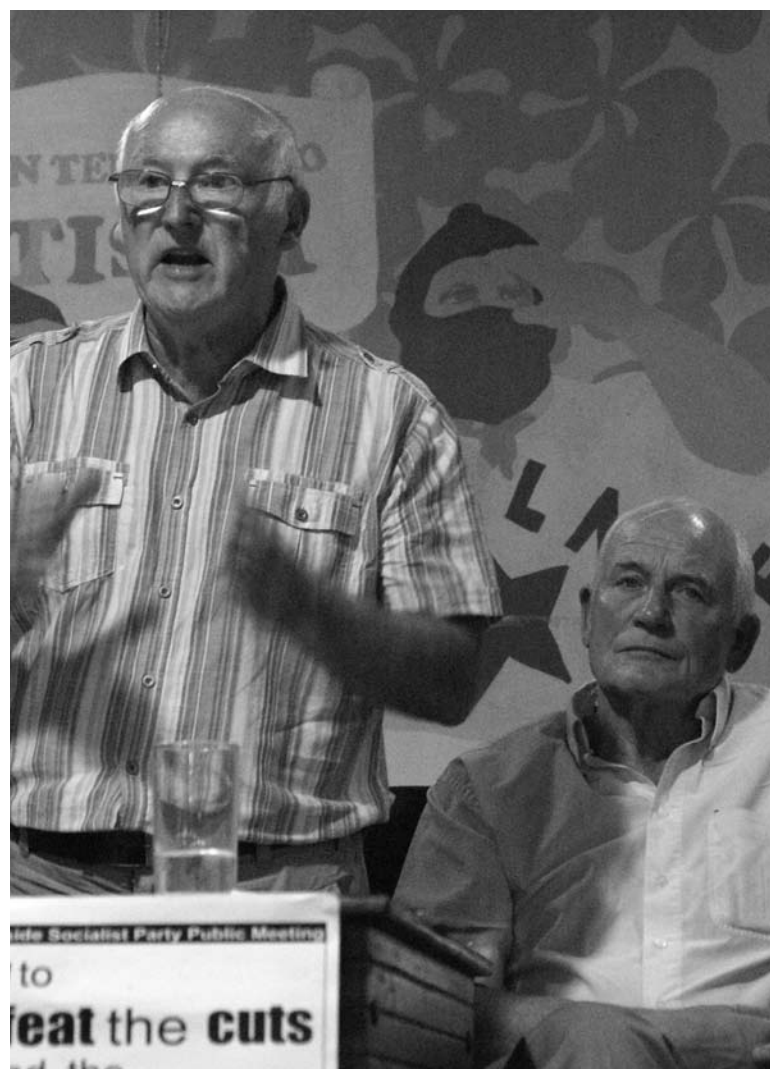
The City of London Corporation has led the way in seeking to evict us and has applied pressure on the cathedral, but the Corporation may now have to go it alone.

We are still defiant and determined to continue, and have now occupied a third site - Northampton Square. We need to make sure that the publicity over the problems of St Pauls doesn't prevent our anti-cap-

italist message getting out. Despite the wide range of differing political views at the camp, the 'Capitalism is Crisis' banner raised at the start of the occupation encompasses very many voices here.

The outreach working group needs to continue its work making strong links with the student unions, unions and anti-cuts organisations and we need to democratically debate our demands to move back to other crucial issues like capital finance and its effects on the 99%.

We urge new supporters to come and join us - everybody is welcome. We are in the 'belly of the beast' here, and every extra person will help with our impact."



Socialist Party general secretary Peter Taaffe speaks at a Socialist Party meeting against the cuts photo Liverpool SP

Obituary

Dave Frost a comrade and friend

Stoke Socialist Party member Dave Frost passed away in October 2011. He will be sadly missed by all those who knew him.

Behind Dave's tough exterior there was a heart of gold, a cheeky sense of humour and an unshakable understanding of who his class enemies were.

Dave worked in the building trade and later at Creda for 21 years. The first time I saw him he was walking towards our anti-poll tax stall in Longton looking angry. At the time I thought he was just angry about the poll tax, but quickly came to realise that he was always angry!

Dave didn't learn his class hatred of the bosses and the capitalist system by studying books but through his experience in the workplace. After joining the Socialist Party though he became an avid reader of the struggles of workers. He was also very active with the campaigning work of the party.

Despite his health deteriorating over the last ten years or so, in 2006 he stood as the Socialist Party candidate in the Abbey ward and got a

creditable 3% of the vote. This laid the basis for increasing our vote in that ward to 17% two years later which played a key role in cutting across support for the racist British National Party.

In his final years Dave was not able to be so active. But despite having to live off meagre benefits, he always made sure that he paid his monthly subs to help build our party.

The last discussion I had with him was about the book I had loaned him for the second time, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, which he thought was brilliant. Both of us having worked in the building trade, we shared many a laugh about this book.

Dave was a shining example to Socialist Party members, other socialists and the workers and youth who will join in the future. Why? Because he did what he could to build the Socialist Party and the struggle for socialism.

In celebration of Dave's memory I would urge all Socialist Party members to redouble our efforts to build our party that Dave sacrificed so much for.

Andy Bentley

Southampton Israel/Palestine debate

Forty people attended a joint meeting of Southampton Socialist Party and Socialist Students on Israel/Palestine on Thursday 20 October.

Two-thirds of the participants were students, keen to discuss and ask questions on the prospects for peace in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the effect of the Arab Spring on the Palestinians' struggle, the impact of the recent 'tent cities' in Israel, and numerous other issues.

Many who spoke were rightly drawing attention to the dire conditions endured by Palestinians in the Gaza strip and elsewhere. People

listened attentively to the Socialist Party's reasons for calling for a socialist Palestinian state alongside a socialist Israel, and the route to achieving this.

A few of those attending were supportive of the stance of the Israeli regime. But perhaps for the first time they were hearing a class analysis of Israeli society, condemning the brutal occupation and anti-working class measures of the Israeli capitalist class, but supporting the strikes and community struggles of Israeli workers.

Judy Beishon

Equity members back GLA anti-cuts challenge

"We, the undersigned, support the call for trade unionist and socialist candidates to stand in the Greater London Assembly elections in 2012, committed to opposing all cuts, privatisation and PFI."

This week a number of Equity members have signed the appeal, in a personal capacity:

Shenagh Govan, Yvonne Bonnamy, John Gregor, Billy Gregor, Ben Bozell, Lisa Klevemark,

Frances Amey, William Maxwell, Kate Bancroft

To add your name to the statement go to www.tusc.org.uk or email jjpreidie@yahoo.co.uk