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National Shop Stewards Network conference
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Chilcot report release - put Blair in the dock
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#KEEPCORBYN

STAND FIRM AGAINST THE BLAIRITE COUP

For a party that represents the 99%

- Demand a labour movement conference open to all left organisations and Corbyn supporters
- Prepare for a general election with a clear anti-austerity, anti-racist programme - opposition to all cuts, for a £10 an hour minimum wage, mass council house building and renationalisation

■ See editorial and reports pages 2-3

Mobilising to #KeepCorbyn

Merseyside

In response to the Blairites' vicious campaign, a mood of mass support for Jeremy Corbyn's embattled leadership is developing on Merseyside. 4,000 people marched through Liverpool on 2 July under the slogan "Keep Corbyn, build our movement." This was just 24 hours after over 1,000 rallied under the same slogan in Manchester.

The idea of building a mass movement to keep Jeremy Corbyn and drive out the Blairites as part of preparing to fight and win a general election is widely accepted among rank-and-file Corbyn supporters. Despite our exclusion from Momentum and the Labour Party, Socialist Party members and supporters have been steadfast in arguing for a non-sectarian way forward: for Jeremy Corbyn to lead a mass struggle on a clear anti-austerity basis and democratise the Labour Party.

These are the conclusions already drawn by many who have been following our campaign for these policies and agree with it completely. Over 100 copies of the Socialist were bought, with hundreds of leaflets taken and a number of 'join the Socialist Party' cards completed. The demonstration follows a meeting held earlier in the week by Liverpool Socialist Party - attended by 40 people, a majority of them at their first Socialist Party meeting - that discussed the post-referendum situation and the way forward for a socialist struggle.

Elsewhere on the same night, Liverpool Momentum also met with a significantly increased turnout, which led to Saturday's demonstration.

Hugh Caffrey

Leeds

■ Around 250 people gathered at short notice to demonstrate their support for Jeremy Corbyn in Leeds. The demonstration was called by Momentum after discussion with the Socialist Party and others from trade unions and campaigning groups around Leeds. It showed the clear popularity of Corbyn and indeed his electability, despite what those on the right of the Parliamentary Labour Party have argued.

The demonstration listened to speakers from Momentum, youth campaigners and trade unionists. It is regrettable that the Socialist Party was not permitted a speaker at the demonstration despite our support and help initiating it.

People packed a meeting room in the council chambers - not everyone could fit in. So a second meeting was called at a nearby pub. Many also stayed for some time after the demonstration to talk to Socialist Party members about the situation.

■ Continued on page 3

STAND FIRM AND ORGANISE AGAINST THE BLAIRITE COUP



What we think

Four thousand in Liverpool, 1,000 in Manchester, 800 in Leeds, thousands in London. Across the country people have taken to the streets to show their support for Jeremy Corbyn and their anger with the 172 traitor MPs who are waging a war to try to force Jeremy Corbyn to resign. No matter to them that he was democratically elected leader by a landslide just nine months ago; they are determined to get rid of him by any means necessary. The vote of no confidence has been followed by Chuka Ummuna MP and others using a parliamentary select committee to smear Corbyn with false charges of anti-Semitism.

There have been open calls by several Blairites, including by author Robert Harris in the Tory Times, to "join Labour now to topple Corbyn". Despite their efforts, however, the majority of the 60,000 who are reported to have joined the Labour Party in just one week have done so in order to try and stop the coup, not to back it. As we have commented previously, the problem for the Labour right is their lack of a social base - what is their rallying cry, 'say no to free education, don't build council housing, bomb more countries'?

Instead they are reduced to claiming, with no evidence, that a more right-wing leader would be more likely to win a general election. In reality, however, it is not because Jeremy Corbyn is unelectable but because they fear he could win a general election. Blair himself said that Jeremy Corbyn as prime minister would "be a very dangerous experiment"; an experiment his acolytes are determined to prevent. Jeremy Corbyn was thrust into power by an uprising against austerity. If he was to win a general election the 1% are terrified that the hopes of millions of working class people would be raised and, as a result, that government would be pressurised to take radical measures which would threaten their system and gargantuan profits. That is the fundamental reason why the Blairites, the representatives of the 1% in the Labour Party, are determined to remove Corbyn no matter what the costs. In addition they hoped to get him out the way before the publication of the long-delayed Chilcot Report, which will further damage not only Blair, but all those Labour MPs - including leadership contender Angela Eagle - who backed the war in Iraq.

Now that war has been declared by the Parliamentary Labour Party, the worst possible response would be to capitulate. It is much to Jeremy Corbyn's credit that he has so far stood firm. Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite, the biggest affiliated union, has made welcome clear statements of support for Corbyn. But he has then gone on to suggest that the trade unions could broker a deal that breaches the chasm between Corbyn and his supporters and the 172 MPs trying to knife him. However, there is no principled compromise possible with MPs that shown they are prepared to split the Labour Party in order to oust Corbyn.

Over the last nine months attempts to compromise

with the right have resulted in a number of retreats, including not calling for deselection of Blairite MPs and refusing to make a clear call for Labour councils to stop carrying out cuts in public services. The attempt to compromise with the right also led to Momentum - the organisation set up to support Corbyn - excluding the Socialist Party and others.

But it is now clear that the strategy of compromise cannot work. Instead it is necessary to stand firm and to build on the popular movement which thrust Jeremy Corbyn into the Labour leadership and is now coming out on the streets to defend him. What is needed is an urgent labour movement conference, which should be convened now, involving all those who support Corbyn: the trade unions (affiliated and unaffiliated), Labour Party branches and all left and socialist organisations inside and outside the Labour Party.



photo Paul Mattsson

f For regular updates and videos, like Socialist Party on Facebook

left in Spain.

Such a reformed Labour Party would need an open, democratic federal structure, along the lines of the Labour Party's structure in its earliest days, allowing the participation of all anti-austerity forces, including the Socialist Party, anti-austerity Greens and others. It would need to launch a fight against austerity, with the programme which Jeremy Corbyn stood for Labour leader on as its starting point. This should include making clear that he opposes austerity whoever it is implemented by: Brussels, Westminster or local councils.

Such a stand - including a £10 an hour minimum wage, nationalisation of the rail and energy companies, and mass council housebuilding - would be able to enthuse millions, including many of those who showed their anger at the existing order by voting for exit in the EU referendum. In essence it would mean the formation of a new radical workers' party, able to attract all those workers and youth wanting to fight back against capitalism.

Mobilising to #KeepCorbyn

■ Continued from page 2

The meeting was opened by Councillor Kevin Ritchie, one of a few councillors on Leeds City Council who support Corbyn. Unfortunately Kevin felt that it was not appropriate for members of other organisations to be present or directly involved in the campaign. But it is only with the broadest and strongest movement from all sections of the labour and trade union movement that we will be able to fully defend Corbyn. For instance, the RMT and the PCS have pledged their full support despite not being officially affiliated to the Labour Party.

Ben Mayor

■ A further demo was later called in the heart of Hilary Benn's constituency. 800 people turned out in a determined stand to defend Corbyn and his policies. Disappointingly, Momentum once again refused to allow Socialist Party members to speak, including one of our members speaking on behalf of Leeds TUC who had recently passed a motion in support of Corbyn.

Immediately afterwards was a demonstration in support of migrants, which was even larger than the pro-Corbyn demo. People who had voted both Leave and Remain in the EU referendum gathered to say refugees are welcome in Leeds and to condemn the racist scapegoating that many politicians are guilty of.

Tanis Belsham-Wray & Iain Dalton

Stoke-on-Trent

Socialist Party, Green Party and Labour Party members attended an excellent public meeting hosted by Stoke Socialist Party, along with union reps from the Communication Workers Union, Unison and other trade unionists from Unite, the Na-

tional Union of Teachers and Usdaw. The main speaker was Socialist Party West Midlands regional secretary Dave Griffiths who explained how the vote to leave the EU had sent shock waves through the capitalist establishment and the political parties that represent it.

Dave pointed out: "What big business and the establishment parties fear above all is a Corbyn-led government committed to an anti-austerity programme and supported by millions of workers. This is why they are prepared to discredit Jeremy Corbyn in any way they can. And we will fight to defend Corbyn in any way we can."

This meeting was a call to action to fight to get rid of all the establishment politicians, whether they are blue or red Tories, and replace them with an independent mass political party with a socialist programme to represent the working class millions. At the end of the meeting two people signed up to join the Socialist Party.

Andy Bentley

Stevenage

Stevenage Momentum called a meeting to support Jeremy and over 30 people turned up. For many it was their first meeting since joining the Labour Party to vote for Corbyn last year.

I spoke as a Socialist Party member and called for the convening of a conference of the movement both nationally and locally, which received big support. I explained that I was expelled from Labour in 1987 for being a socialist and am therefore unable to be a member. It is important that any such conference be open to all the left who want to support Jeremy, not just Labour Party members.

Steve Glennon



Mick Barry, Ruth Coppinger and Paul Murphy - Anti Austerity Alliance TDs (members of the Irish Parliament) and Socialist Party (CWI Ireland) members - show their support for Jeremy Corbyn photo Socialist Party

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

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

Editor: Sarah Wrack
News/letters: James Ivens

International: Dave Carr
Workplace/campaigns: Scott Jones

Circulation: Alison Hill
Sales/layout: Ian Pattison

Photographer: Paul Mattsson
Website: Judy Beishon

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Brexit fallout latest

Cameron resigns ...
24 June 2016

84%

Majority of the public which wants EU migrants to be allowed to stay, according to a new ICM poll

... Johnson withdraws ...
30 June 2016

77%

Majority of Leave voters who want EU migrants to be allowed to stay (same poll) - hardly a victory for the far right

... Farage resigns
4 July 2016



This rebellion wasn't caused by racism or a paroxysm of infantile anger. It was considered. The workers spied an opportunity to take the elite that despises them down a peg or two - and they seized it

— Right-wing bosses' mag the Spectator catches up with what the Socialist has been saying for months



The big business-owned media's 'awakening' about racism has class motives and is temporary. They want to turn this against all Brexit voters. We say, stop demonising the working class. It is working class struggle that has challenged racist divisions

— Last issue of the Socialist, 'United working class resistance can cut across racism' - read more at socialistparty.org.uk

Socialist Party members campaigning against the occupation of Iraq photo Alison Hill



AFTER CHILCOT: PUT BLAIR IN THE DOCK

Rough sleeper death sparks calls for action

Chas Berry
North Kent Socialist Party

The death of a homeless man, sleeping rough in the centre of Chatham for over a year, has brought calls for action over the spiralling housing crisis in Kent's Medway towns.

Samson Paine's body was discovered in a tent very near council offices where over 1,000 homeless applications have been received in the last year alone. Many people are asking why nothing more is being done to support some of the most vulnerable in our society, and how such tragedies can be prevented in future.

A new campaign, 'Medway Justice for Homeless People', is drawing together many who are angry and want change. At a meeting called by local activist Guy Jordan there was unanimous support for an enquiry into Samson's death - but also recognition that this single tragedy highlights a bigger problem.

"Being homeless is a situation any

of us could be just two steps away from," said Guy, "and cuts to local authorities have exacerbated the situation. The people we elected have got to carry the can collectively."

Guy's comments go to the heart of the problem. Over many years, Medway's Tory council has outsourced its homeless accommodation provision to private landlords and ignored its responsibilities to those most in need. Labour in opposition has been tame in holding it to account for its wilful neglect. Now the chickens are coming home to roost.

Continued austerity is literally killing people. The campaign already has the support of Medway Trade Union Council, and general union Unite's Kent 'community' branch. Reverse all cuts - for mass building of council homes. No more deaths on our streets.

■ Please send messages of support to Guy at medwayjustice4homeless@gmail.com



Osborne photo FCO/
Creative Commons

OSBORNE PLANS TO CUT CORPORATION TAX AGAIN

Zoë Brunswick

George Osborne announced on 4 July that he would cut corporation tax by a quarter, bringing it from 20% down to just 15%. This new rate will be among the lowest in Europe, pushing forward Osborne's plan to make the UK a global tax haven.

This shocking move contradicts Osborne's pre-Brexit threats of tax hikes. Once again, it shows the Tories' true objectives: to hand money to the rich at the expense of the poor.

Tax cuts for big businesses will result in further cuts in public spending, hitting the poorest hardest. Meanwhile, CEOs will award themselves fatter pay packets from their increased profits. The trade union leaders must respond to any attempt by the government to make workers pay for the bosses' crisis with coordinated strikes.

Tax breaks for the rich and big

businesses are exactly the type of elite handout that both Leavers and many Remainers voted against in the EU referendum last month. Brexit was an enormous protest against the handing of money and power over to big business, and yet the Tories continue to do it.

Avoidance

Some of the largest corporations avoid paying most or all of their taxes anyway. The Socialist Party calls for the nationalisation of the top 150 corporations, and all corporate tax avoiders, under democratic working class control. Then workers could run the economy for the benefit of all, not the 1%.

The Brexit vote has left the Tories in chaos. Cuts to corporation tax will further alienate the public that voted decisively against big business. We must fight for a general election now, to oust this weak and divided government.

Simon Carter

After seven and a half years, and costing millions of pounds, the Chilcot inquiry into the Blair government's pre-invasion, invasion and occupation of Iraq is due to be published as the Socialist goes to press.

Most pundits are expecting only mild criticism of Tony Blair, if not a political whitewash - especially as he and others were shown the findings for comment prior to publication. Certainly there won't be an invitation to prosecute the warmonger.

Much of the war correspondence between former US president George W Bush and Tony Blair has been redacted. During the inquiry proceedings it was pointed out that one panel member, the late Sir John Gilbert, had publicly supported the Iraq war!

Blair and his inner Labour acolytes, including Gordon Brown and former foreign secretary Jack Straw, should be in the dock for war crimes.

Their legacy is a bloody, sectarian Iraq, weakly governed by a corrupt clique, while much of the country today is ruled by the brutal jihadists of Isis. The recent suicide bombings in Baghdad in which hundreds died are a bloody and timely reminder of the consequences of Blair's imperialist ambitions.

This is not some unfortunate consequence of 'liberating' Iraq as Blair continues to bleat. It was something clearly predictable at the time of the invasion in 2003, as the Socialist repeatedly warned.

By toppling the dictator Saddam Hussain - who the West had supported and bankrolled during the 1980s Iran-Iraq war - in the absence of a mass, united, working class Iraqi opposition, the inevitable result



Millions of poor Iraqis have died, been injured and driven into exile as a result of the Iraq war. Blair and his cohorts have blood on their hands. Let's put them on trial for their crimes

was a sectarian bloodbath, mass unemployment and crippling poverty.

This lesson was not learnt by Western governments. Instead they repeated it in Libya and Syria. These military interventions in turn contributed to the current refugee crisis, and exacerbated the capitalist political crisis in Europe.

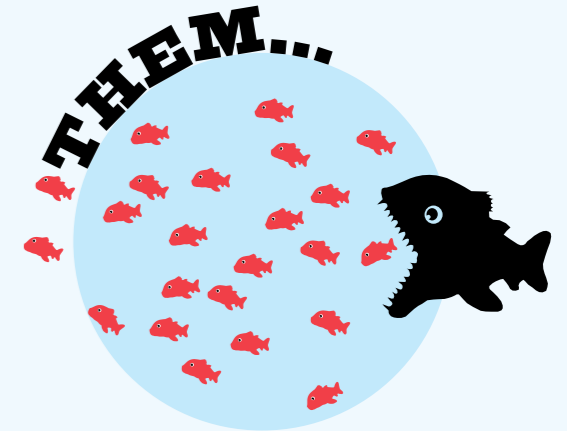
And much of the billions of dollars of post-invasion investment to rebuild the country was siphoned off by profit-hungry Western contractors and corrupt Iraqi officials.

Millions of poor Iraqis have died, been injured and driven into exile as a result of the Iraq war. Blair and his cohorts have blood on their hands. Let's put them on trial for their crimes.

■ A fuller analysis of the Chilcot report will be published in a coming issue of the Socialist. For a comprehensive analysis of Iraq, and anti-war reports from the time, see socialistparty.org.uk



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Super-rich supercars

The property developer son of a Tory MP has finally received justice for an accidental scratch to one of his many luxury cars. A tractor driver bumped him after hitting a pothole. The driver's insurer has had to pay out almost £46,000 in repair and legal costs.

Charles Gow's McLaren 12C supercar received cosmetic damage in the accident. The poor soul was reduced to hiring a Mercedes coupé because a temporary Ferrari was not available.

Apparently the Aston Martin Vanquish, Aston Martin DB7 and BMW M5 he also owns are all too 'common' to actually be seen out in.



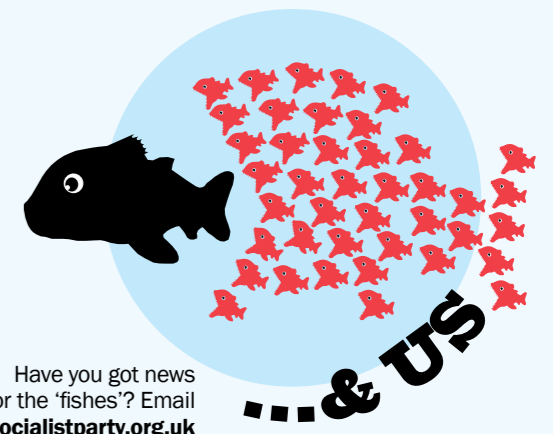
I've spent the past ten days speaking to business leaders, employers and entrepreneurs to reassure them

— London's Blairite mayor Sadiq Khan gets his priorities straight following the Brexit vote (Evening Standard, 4 July)



If you have nothing, why would you vote to keep things as they are?

— Spoof news reporter Jonathan Pie (actor and comedian Tom Walker) shows more insight than many politicians on the Brexit vote



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



[News in brief]

■ Firefighters fight cuts

Greater Manchester Fire Authority is planning to cut 280 firefighter jobs and 26 fire engines. Fire Brigades Union (FBU) members have been protesting these plans, including a huge lobby of the fire authority meeting which approved the cuts. To make up for the loss in staff, the firefighters that remain will be forced to work longer hours. An FBU member in Greater Manchester told the Socialist: "The current situation is the authority is imposing a 12-hour shift with a start and finish time of 10.30. This will not only have huge ramifications for the quality of life for firefighters, but also the quality of life for their families. Not only are public service workers being asked to pay for governmental failings with their terms and conditions, but our families are being asked to pay also. Industrial relations, morale, staffing and safety of both the public and firefighters are at an all-time low. Our members will stand shoulder to shoulder to fight for the protection of the public, protection of our family lives and protection of our terms and conditions that have been hard won and fought for by our comrades throughout the years."

Becci Heagney

■ Bus drivers' dispute

Weymouth and Bridport bus drivers are entering their third week of strikes as bosses demonstrate no intention to change their position in the poor relations pay dispute. With more than 110 drivers of First Hampshire & Dorset Ltd joining the strike, and nearly 90% of drivers voting in favour of strike action, it is clear important issues are on the line. Unite the Union has been negotiating improvements to pay and conditions since December 2015. First group is an extremely profitable UK company which boasts a profit of £52 million in its bus division. The company can afford to reward its Bristol drivers with a 13% pay increase, but for its employees in Weymouth and Bridport the deal on the table is only 2.3%. Weymouth and Bridport drivers earn around £8.80 an hour while First Group drivers in Yeovil are on £9.50 an hour. Unite regional officer, Bob Lanning, explained how their members have become fed up with the "unfair and unequal treatment being meted out by the bosses' year in, year out."

Izaak Collins

■ More in a coming issue

ANGRY AND DEFIANT TEACHERS' STRIKE



30,000 on the London strike rally photo Martin Powell-Davies

Socialist Party teachers

Enough is enough: that was the message from National Union of Teachers (NUT) members in the recent strike ballot, with an emphatic 91.7% Yes vote. The strike on 5 July represents a backlash against continued attacks on teachers and education as a whole. 30,000 marched in London with thousands more marching and striking around the country.

A Brent NUT rep said: "For the first time in years our school was fully closed with over 65 teachers taking action. It shows the strength of feeling; teachers have had enough. Chants of "teachers and doctors unite and strike" rang out after the news that the junior doctors contract had been rejected (see backpage). We need to coordinate the strikes and get this government out."

Workload, micro management and performance related pay are forcing record numbers out of the profession and fuelling a teacher shortage crisis. The bruising testing regime in all key stages has led to extreme stress and anxiety among students. But the tide can be turned.



photo Steve Score

The Tories are in complete disarray after the EU referendum but were a weak government already; Nicky Morgan has u-turned on baseline testing and zig-zagged on forcing all schools to become academies. And now, post referendum, Policy Exchange, the Tories' favourite think-tank, predicts the White Paper is 'a goner'.

We know that if we are to beat the Tories, one strike day will not be enough. It is imperative that NUT members and the government know that we're fighting to win this time.

That means we must go into the summer holidays with more dates for strike action announced for the autumn term, as agreed by NUT conference. This will give confidence to Unison and GMB members to turn their conferences' decisions to turn industrial action into a reality.

The NUT should convene a meeting between the leaderships of all the education unions to discuss how to link up the disputes in the autumn term. This should be organised as a matter of urgency. The call should go out for members' meetings at local and workplace level between the unions to prepare for coordinated action.

Reports from around the country

Leicester

Leicester teachers were emotional, angry and defiant. Emotional because teachers know that children are being hurt by the cuts and you can't do your job properly because of the workload. Angry because speakers explained how money was going; and defiant because they can't take any more. The NUT was supported by the UCU lecturers' union who chose to strike on same day. Unison and bakers' union members also joined the march, and the trades council.

Heather Rawling

Prior to the strike in Leicester, Socialist Students member Tilly Wheatley issued a statement supporting the strike on behalf of college students in the city: "We are among the people being affected by the drastic changes being forced onto the education system. We stand with you, in solidarity. We feel that the academy system is incredibly detrimental, for the pupils, for the teachers, and for schools as institutions. It is privatisation of the education system across England. Action taken to oppose this would be supported whole-heartedly by the majority of students, both in Leicester, and across the country."

East London

A pupil at Connaught school in Leytonstone, east London, pointed at the badge in support of the strike and said "well done". NUT members here were part of the national action; there is also an ongoing local strike at the school against increased workload. We visited the picket to support the strikers, and I took along a Socialist Party petition to build support for the calling of a labour movement conference in defence of Jeremy Corbyn. The Socialist Party also brought support and solidarity to teachers striking at Holy Family Catholic School in Walthamstow, east London and was warmly received, including with offers of biscuits and balloon games! New rep Sara spoke to the Socialist from the picket line: "We're striking because of the cuts to education and the threatened forced academisation which is pretty much still on the Tories' agenda. Other issues include class sizes and the marginalisation of arts subjects. I've got Teddy, my five year old, here with me and I worry about what it's going to be like for him in school."

Ian Pattison and Sarah Sachs-Eldridge

Durham

Hundreds of striking teachers converged in Durham for a march and rally to the city's centre. This is a young workforce who feel they have no option but to take on a government attacking both themselves and children who are being, "tested to death." Teachers at the rally spoke of their love of teaching, but also how they constantly felt, "knackered" at the long hours they work. Teachers also expressed solidarity with Durham's teaching assistants who are facing being sacked by Durham's Labour controlled county council, then being re-instated on worse terms and conditions.

Elaine Brunskill

■ For more see socialistparty.org.uk/articles/23172

RMT conference takes fighting position on urgent political questions

Socialist Party members in RMT

The 2016 annual general meeting (conference) of the Rail Maritime and Transport Workers Union (RMT) took place 26-30 June against a backdrop of heightened conflict in both the industrial and political arenas.

RMT's battle against down-skilling and the removal of safety critical guards on Southern rail services threatens to become the most bitter dispute the union has fought for some time.

With the new anti-union bill about to take force RMT, like other trade unions, has to consider how to combat the anti-democratic demands of new ballot procedures and further restrictions of picketing.

The conference took a clear position on the anti-union legislation. It repeated RMT's call to the TUC for general strike action should the new act be used to prosecute any TUC affiliated union and further agreed that RMT will seek agreements with other trade unions to support each other should the new powers be used against us.

Two of the most hotly debated decisions related to the new political situation after the EU referendum. The conference called on Labour

leader Jeremy Corbyn to campaign for an early general election to dump the Tory government. RMT has issued a statement of support for Corbyn's leadership and delegates wanted to see Labour setting the agenda for exit from the EU on the basis of a fight against austerity and privatisation.

TUSC

Related to this was a further debate on the union's political strategy. The conference overwhelmingly agreed to continue participating in the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC). A TUSC fringe meeting attracted half of the delegates.

They committed to support Corbyn but felt that, at this time, it was essential to maintain an electoral alternative to Labour that was 100% anti-austerity.

Delegates, a number who have stood as TUSC candidates, were clear that we will not give blanket support to Labour councillors who cut jobs and services or MPs who vote for austerity and war.

RMT members and activists are rightly proud of the militant industrial and political stance of our union. The 2016 conference shows that those traditions are continuing to shape our union's policies and actions.



RMT picket in Brighton 21 June photo Neil Cafferky

Southern Trains: "We have got to break them"

The boss of Govia Thameslink Railway, who operate Southern Trains, insists he will force through plans to get rid of conductors from services despite a summer of strike action by the RMT. The union said chief executive Charles Horton declared "war on the workforce, jobs and passengers." The RMT has also accused the government of supporting the company in the dispute with Peter Wilkinson, a senior Department for Transport official, reportedly saying "we have got to break them" referring to Southern Rail workers. The dispute is still live with further strike action possible.

Unite policy conference 2016 UNION COULD PLACE ITSELF AT THE CENTRE OF ANTI-AUSTERITY FIGHT

Socialist Party members in Unite

The biennial policy conference of Unite the Union in Brighton 11-15 July takes place against the backdrop of a political crisis unprecedented since 1945.

Despite Unite having called for a Remain vote in the referendum, it could place itself at the centre of political developments and bolster Jeremy Corbyn and the anti-austerity left by backing and putting into effect campaigning resolutions at this conference.

Key votes at the conference should help to decide the future direction of Labour as Jeremy Corbyn faces down an attempted Blairite coup.

Unite supported Jeremy when he first stood for the leadership and has continued to back him against the attacks of the right-wing Parliamentary Labour Party. They should use their resources to ensure his re-election in any leadership contest.

General Secretary Len McCluskey has been quoted as saying that a "peace deal" can be brokered by the union leaders over Corbyn, while saying that Jeremy will not be forced out.

But there must be no confusion - the only deal that the tens of thousands who have demonstrated over the last two weeks want is the one that maintains Jeremy as an anti-austerity Labour leader.

It would be a mistake to try and conciliate with the Blairites. But

maintaining him as leader is only the start. There must be a reconstituted Labour Party open to all socialists and anti-cuts campaigners. To ensure democratic accountability to Labour's membership, delegates should back the resolution from LE1228 Branch asking Unite to support mandatory reselection of Labour MPs.

Conference will also debate the question of Trident. The union says it is opposed to nuclear weapons but has always put a multilateral position because of the threat to jobs. This time, there are resolutions calling for alternative employment and retraining.

In this, we see a return to the spirit of the Lucas Aerospace Alternative Plan of the 1970s, when union-backed studies showed what could be produced that people needed rather than military weaponry.

We understand that Unite's executive council may produce a statement along the lines of current policy, which if passed would prevent votes on composites for scrapping Trident. But the Socialist Party would back such composites if put to the vote and, if passed, this too would strengthen Corbyn's hand.

There is also a motion from the

Greenwich council workers' branch calling on conference to back the decision of the Local Authorities National Industrial Sector Committee. It calls for a fight against the cuts and for Labour councillors to propose legal, no-cuts budgets by using reserves and other measures as a stop gap while a campaign against this weak and split Tory government is built.

A composite from LE1111, the London Housing Branch, in composite with the London Print Branch, should be backed as a way forward to build a campaign against the recently passed Housing and Planning Act and deal with the chronic housing crisis facing working class people.

There will also be a composite backed by the Bart's Health and Nottinghamshire NHS branches which calls for action to defend the NHS against cuts and privatisation. It also supports the junior doctors, who have recently been in action and have rejected the government's latest offer.

If these and other campaigning and left motions are passed, Unite will be able to go forward by strengthening the fight against austerity, which will hopefully see this hated Tory government thrown out of office early.

Socialist Party fringe meeting: After the referendum, get rid of the Tories!
Tuesday 12 July at 6pm
Napoleon Room, Grand Hotel (next to Conference Centre), King's Road, Brighton
Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Socialist Party general secretary, Suzanne Muna, Unite EC (personal capacity)

The long-running 'battle of the books' in Greenwich opened a new chapter on 5 July when library workers took 48-hours strike action to save the borough's mobile library service from closure. Unite has called for its 84 library members to strike as Greenwich councillors plough ahead with plans to close the mobile service which delivers 33,000 books a year to children. The union said that what is at stake is children's literacy - the gateway to future employment - which is being jeopardised for a comparatively small annual saving of £126,000; although the council has £320 million stashed away in reserves. Unite regional officer Onay Kasab said: "Councillors have ignored the result of their own consultation exercise and they have ignored the 1,000-strong petition handed into council. They appear to believe that they know better than the experts and have failed to listen to people with decades of experience in this field. They will be depriving the inquiring minds of children of 33,000 books." photo Greenwich Unite



Why I joined: I want my generation and others to have a better future

João Felix

I joined the Socialist Party because I could no longer stand on the side-lines. I am from Portugal and started university in 2008, the year of the big financial crisis. Me, my friends and our entire generation felt the effects and implications of the capitalist system we live in and the failed promises it made us.

Austerity

We started to see tuition prices rising, friends dropping out of university, colleagues graduating and spending years looking for a job, whole families losing their salaries and being deprived of a living. It only got worse in 2011, when Portugal got a so-called 'bailout' from the Troika (European Union, International Monetary Fund and European Central Bank) with even more brutal austerity measures that drove hundreds of thousands to poverty.

The only chance I saw of getting a better education and decent job prospects was to migrate, so I decided to come to Britain to do a masters degree and find work. Shortly after I arrived in Portsmouth, I met Socialist Party members at the fresher's fair and

joined, taking a much more active role since moving to Cardiff.

I became a member of the Socialist Party because I want my generation and others to have a better future. That is only achieved by being active and organised, with a clear programme based on the international experience of the working class.

For me, the Socialist Party puts forward the clearest analysis and methods to achieve a fair and equal society, that provides for the needs and aspirations of the many and not the whims of the few. Not just in words, but in deeds, with members constantly amazing me with all the hard work and tirelessness they show in the daily struggle.

The Socialist Party is internationalist, affiliated to the Committee for a Workers International (CWI), present and active in more than 40 countries. For me, as socialist but also as a migrant, that is especially important.

I want to be part of the struggle for a better world and the Socialist Party is the organisation with the best programme to stand against austerity and to build a socialist future, with a close sense of comradeship and friendship. But don't take it from me, come to a meeting or say hello at a stall and find out what we stand for!



The Socialist Party is internationalist with a close sense of comradeship and friendship. But don't take it from me, come to a meeting or say hello at a stall and find out what we stand for!



photo Helen Pattison

JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY TO FIGHT FOR CHANGE - SOCIALIST CHANGE

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge
Socialist Party national organiser

Everywhere you look there is proof that our world is afflicted by enormous inequality - on our side there is austerity, poverty and war and on the other side for the super-rich 1% there is enormous wealth. Watching TV last night provided ample evidence of the need for change, socialist change.

On the eve of the publication of the Chilcot Inquiry which investigated Britain's involvement in the 2003 Iraq War a documentary called the 'Blair Rich project' caught my eye.

During the Iraq war former Prime Minister Tony Blair was known as George Bush's poodle for his obedience to the warmongering demands of the US president to invade and bomb Iraq. The Socialist Party, which played a leading role in the anti-war movement, explained that Blair was also a poodle to big business, which gained from his Thatcherite policies of privatisation and cuts.

Since leaving office Blair has revealed more fully that he was always more of a running dog of capitalism. He is paid millions to 'advise' dictators. The documentary showed footage of striking oil workers being shot down and massacred by state forces under the Nazarbayev regime in Kazakhstan, one of Blair's clients.

Blair has seized every bit of media



Café Nero said that the cost of the National Living Wage demanded "operational changes" and they withdrew the sandwich staff had been receiving at lunch time

coverage he can to attack Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party - it is a threat to his transformation of Labour into a second Tory Party. The Socialist Party is calling for the active defence of Corbyn by the working class and labour movement and a fight against austerity.

Later a Channel 4 Dispatches programme investigated the impact of the Tories' so-called National Living Wage (NLW) on low-paid workers. It revealed that some of Britain's biggest companies, including Tesco and B&Q, make stealth attacks when they switch to the NLW.

Café Nero said that the cost of the NLW, still lower than the actual living wage, demanded "operational changes" and they withdrew the sandwich staff had been receiving at lunch time.

The documentary also showed the scam of 'self-employment' with workers classed as 'independent contractors' so companies can avoid paying even the NLW and the benefits that come with proper employment.

We need a £10 an hour minimum wage for all with no exemptions. This would start to address these scandals of poverty pay and gross inequality.

The Socialist Party along with others, including the bakers' union, have popularised this demand which has now been adopted by the TUC.

In the US city of Seattle the election of socialist Kshama Sawant in 2013 to the city council was crucial to the victory of the campaign for a \$15 an hour minimum wage which shows what's possible when we have a determined movement and a political voice for the working class.

Voice

Jeremy Corbyn's call last summer for £10 an hour inspired thousands to vote for him. But most Labour MPs and councillors oppose him. While the right wing has controlled Labour, working class people have had no political voice.

It is vital for Jeremy Corbyn to mobilise his anti-austerity supporters both in the Labour Party and outside to fight the Tories and kick out the traitors. This means building a party that fights in the interests of workers and young people - not the bosses. That means a socialist programme.

Seattle is rich in lessons. For a start, it represents a \$3 billion transfer

of wealth from the bosses to the poorest workers. It shows that when workers organise and fight back, we can win. It shows that only parties that are unapologetically committed to fighting for the working class can be relied on to defend workers. And it shows that, as Kshama explains: "you don't have to be a socialist to fight back - but it helps!"

The working class is the majority in society, with enormous potential power, capable not only of defending our pay and fighting austerity, but also of changing the world.

Socialists fight for a dignified life for all - and that means building a mass struggle for wages we can live on. Capitalism, a short-sighted and crisis-ridden system, only offers us crumbs off the plates of the super-rich 1%.

Socialism would be completely different - it would mean using the vast resources in society to meet the needs of all. A socialist government would take into public ownership the top 150 companies and banks that dominate the economy and run them under democratic working class control and management. Compensation would be paid only on the basis of proven need.

Democratic planning of production would allow humanity to build a world without exploitation, inequality and hunger - while also protecting the environment.

If you think this is the kind of change you want to see, then join us today!



History at school didn't make much sense to me. My real history lessons began with Marxist discussion groups on the Russian, Chinese and Spanish Revolutions

Why I joined: My real education started when I became a Militant supporter

Heather Rawling

Rebellion was in the air in the 1960s. Aged 12 and a pacifist, I joined the Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament after the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs invasion. But when my sister just hit me more and harder when I refused to fight back, I had to admit that pacifism probably wasn't going to work!

The Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia with tanks to put down a revolt in 1968 and I had a picture of Alexander Dubcek, Czech leader of the Prague Spring on my bedroom wall next to the Beatles.

I watched Ken Loach's powerful TV drama, Cathy Come Home about homelessness and wept. The hopelessness of a young family, destroyed by the system, burned into my soul. This was in the post war boom years. Maybe we needed something different. My parents were socialists, militants, but I didn't understand what that meant yet.

I tried volunteering and realised Wallsend on Tyneside, my home town, knew unemployment and deprivation. Shipbuilding dominated. Launches were bitter sweet celebrations. The workers were proud of the ocean liners and oil tankers towering over the terraced streets where they lived. But layoffs would follow the day after until the next shipbuilding order. More orders were going to South East Asia where labour was cheap. Shipbuilding on the Tyne went into decline.

My dad's cafe depended on shipyard workers for its trade. He often had to get a second job to supplement our income.

I tried volunteering and realised

it wouldn't solve anything. So I joined the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS), aged 17. I was one of the first 18 year olds to have the vote and voted Labour. But Ted Heath and the Tories got in so I started reading the Militant.

Only the Militant could explain to me why the Soviet Union had degenerated from its ideals of 1917. It had a programme to fight poverty around the world. Under the leadership of Militant supporters, the LPYS brought out a 'Charter for Young Workers' - a brilliant tool to fight for proper apprenticeships and better wages. I became a Militant supporter and a member of the Socialist Party when it was formed.

I left the Labour Party when my dad was threatened with expulsion for donating £5 at a Militant Readers Meeting.

History at school didn't make much sense to me. My real history lessons began with Marxist discussion groups organised by Militant supporters on the Russian, Chinese and Spanish Revolutions.

I am now rereading Trotsky's brilliant History of the Russian Revolution and marvelling at the courage and audacity of the Russian working class who took centre stage. I have learnt though, that the workers' movement will test many leaders and many will not live up to their historical task.

The working class around the world are once again stepping onto the stage of history and I'm confident that the Socialist Party and Committee for a Workers International will win workers to its banner and together we will overthrow the system that has caused so much poverty, misery and wars.

I want to finish the job my parents started.



João (left) gives international solidarity from Socialist Party Wales to Lisbon dockers on strike in Portugal

Who are the Socialist Party?

- How the Iron Lady was reduced to iron filings
- When organised mass action defeated the Tories - Liverpool city council's historic victory over the Thatcher government
- How we defeated Thatcher's poll tax
- How mass campaigning closed BNP HQ

Read these article and more online at socialistparty.org.uk

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photo Helen Pattison

National Shop Stewards Network conference

“UNITED AND IMPLACABLE IN OPPOSITION TO AUSTERITY”

Tessa Warrington

One year ago in the self-same hall, at the 9th annual conference of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN), the burning question was also of a referendum. It was ahead of the referendum on EU austerity in Greece, to which the Greek working class voted a resounding ‘Oxi!’ - ‘No!’ The mood was jubilant and defiant.

This year, set amid the tumultuous events following our own EU referendum, the mood was determined and serious.

The urgent discussion needed across the trade union movement - how we defend Jeremy Corbyn, how we cut across growth of the right wing and defeat austerity - came out in the many contributions from the floor and top table.

This conference marked over a decade of the NSSN supporting workers’ struggle and organising among the rank and file. Suzanne Muna from the Unite LE1111 housing branch thanked the NSSN for its backing in their recent dispute. As an organised branch with wider support they won after just one day of action.

Dave Smith from the Blacklist Support Group also wrote to praise the NSSN. He said blacklisted workers could not have won their victories without the whole movement.

The morning session was titled ‘Organise to take on the Tories - link the strikes’. Fighting general secretaries Matt Wrack of the Fire Brigades Union, Steve Gillan of the Prison Officers Association and Ronnie Draper of the bakers’ union BFAWU spoke alongside Janice Godrich, president of the civil servants’ union PCS, of the desperate need for a general strike against austerity.

Matt Wrack reflected the fear that Brexit will lead to a strengthening of the right wing and criticised the Socialist Party’s anti-austerity Leave position. Speaking later, former Unison NEC member Glenn Kelly took him up for departing the conference as soon as he’d spoken without listening to the debate. He said: “It is

the tradition of our movement to have fraternal, at times sharp, debate. It has never been a tradition to walk out before any opposition has chance to comment”.

Glenn went on to explain that racism had been stoked not by anti-EU workers but by both Tory-led official campaigns. The Leave vote has in fact undermined the Tory Party, unleashing the demand for a general election and posing a Corbyn-led government - a real prospect to take on the Tories!

Blairite attacks

NSSN chair Rob Williams urged the trade union movement to rally behind Corbyn in the face of the Blairite attacks, as did Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition chair and former Labour MP Dave Nellist. They called on Corbyn to open up Labour Party structures to anti-austerity forces outside the party to defend his leadership.

Chris Baugh, PCS deputy general secretary, reaffirmed his union’s support for Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell and pressed the need for a mass conference of the left to discuss a way forward.

There were contributions from sacked activists, including two migrant cleaners from United Voices of the World and CWU rep Clive Walder. Samworth Brothers worker and BFAWU activist Kumaran Bose spoke about his victimisation for standing up against attacks on terms and wages.

Addressing the multi-millionaire owners he said: “You don’t work on Christmas day; you enjoy nice food and wine with your families. Why should we be forced to work?” Despite his dismissal, Kumaran is refusing to give up, and was met with a standing ovation when he said: “You can take everything from me - my wages, my job, my house, but you cannot take away the self-confidence I have. I will continue to fight because I know it is wrong”.

Welsh Museums PCS striker Geraint Parfitt announced the significant victory of their three year dispute with the Welsh Assembly. They have secured permanent bank holiday payments and massively reduced weekend working. Geraint said he had not come to brag about



Sean Hoyle railed against the anti-trade union act and threw down the gauntlet in opposing its attacks on democratic trade union rights



Sacked Samworth Brothers worker and bakers’ union activist Kumaran Bose addressed the conference. Samworth Brothers cut bank holiday, overtime and Sunday premiums for its 9,500 workers following the introduction of the National Living Wage. Kumaran said: “Why have I been dismissed? For fighting for the rights of people on the shop floor. I didn’t accept the cuts to premiums, my colleagues were angry, crying and someone needed to stand up. I recruited people to the union and now nearly 50% of workers there are in a union. But the company refused to recognise the union and sacked me. I will fight until the end.” Messages of protest can be sent to Samworth Brothers: paul.davey@bradgate-bakery.co.uk and Tesco: kris.comerford@uk.tesco.com

their victory but said: “If we can do this in a branch with just over 200 members, imagine what we could accomplish all together. It’s time for a general strike!”

Speaking on the EU referendum, Oktay Sahbaz, an activist from Turkish and Kurdish community group Day-Mer, said: “I don’t believe 17

million people in this country are racist. I do believe 17 million people are fed up with austerity and expressed that anger.” Both he and Unite member Nancy Taafe spoke about the politicisation of migrant workers through the referendum campaign and the massive opportunities and need to unionise.

Many others shared their experiences in the workshops on housing, education, organising migrant and young workers. Important contributions came from the Butterfields housing campaign and Angelika Teweleit, a German shop steward who described the backlash against EU austerity in her country.

In the final session, French striker Yann Vernier of the CGT union spoke of the massive ongoing social upheavals in France. A year ago he couldn’t have predicted this movement but since the start of the year

strikes have doubled with each passing month! He explained the intense anger that has been building against the attacks of the Hollande government but that while struggles remained isolated this found no unified expression.

Now, in response to the proposed imposition of a super-exploitative labour law, a united mass movement has been unleashed. Struggle has been raging on a continuous basis for over four months with workers rediscovering the old methods of road blocks and occupation of the bosses’ organisations. Yann even described how workers had stormed Hollande’s and need to unionise.

The conference was closed by RMT president Sean Hoyle, who railed against the anti-trade union act and threw down the gauntlet in opposing its attacks on democratic trade union rights, saying “When freedom is outlawed, only outlaws will be free”.

That summed up the gritty determination of the conference; to face the many challenges that lie ahead, united and implacable in our opposition to austerity and the ravages of the capitalist system.



There were contributions from sacked activists, including two migrant cleaners from United Voices of the World and CWU rep Clive Walder

Education fightback



Jane Nellist (above), a teacher and member of the executive council of teaching union the NUT, addressed the conference days before their day of action to “demonstrate anger at the attacks on terms and conditions and the consequences for children”. Jane pointed out that “The attacks are the worst cuts for a generation and are hitting schools in deprived

areas the worst, leading to misery. In a survey in Coventry, 81% of teachers said their workload wasn’t manageable and 97% said the workload was having consequences on their personal life.

But the junior doctors who we have marched alongside have set a great example and teachers have confidence in fighting these attacks.”



NSSN chair Rob Williams called on Corbyn to open up Labour Party structures to anti-austerity forces outside the party to defend his leadership

photos Paul Mattsson

France: Fighting the pro-bosses labour law



French striker Yann Vernier (above) of the CGT union spoke of the massive ongoing social upheavals in France (see main article)

Welsh strikers score victory

Welsh strikers have been making headlines this summer and Geraint Parfitt, PCS rep at National Museum Wales site St Fagans, addressed the conference saying: “Wales have won in the football and we’ve also won our dispute at National Museum Wales”.

Clog maker and strike leader Geraint rousing explained: “Our dispute was the longest running one since the formation of the Welsh As-

sembly government. We raised tens of thousands of pounds, took indefinite strike action and secured bank holiday payments and other important terms and conditions.

There is one word we can use - no. We said no, you are not taking our pay off us.” The NSSN played its part in the dispute, including raising £420 along with Socialist Party members in just three collections outside Cardiff stations.

Now Cameron has gone:
Organise to take on the Tories
* Link up the strikes
* And get ALL the Tories OUT!



NSSN chair Rob Williams

Matt Wrack, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, used his platform speech at the NSSN conference to raise a number of differences with the Socialist Party. He has every right to do so; comradesly discussion and debate on the way forward is to be welcomed.

Regrettably, however, he also made unfounded criticisms of the Socialist Party and the Socialist newspaper. As the main report of the conference explains, he unfortunately did not stay to hear our response.

Matt said that the Socialist published an article by Unison NEC member Roger Bannister (writing in a personal capacity) saying that Matt “had

not lifted a little finger to fight the trade union bill”. This is completely untrue.

On the contrary, while we have had differences with Matt, we have always recognised his role as one of the minority of trade union general secretaries that have trenchantly defended workers’ interests. This was even indicated by the way the chair of the conference, Socialist Party member and NSSN secretary Linda Taafe, introduced Matt by praising his role in campaign-

ing to demand the TUC take action in support of the junior doctors’ dispute and on other issues.

The article in question, published on 9 June, originally contained the sentence, “The trade union leaders’ support for the EU on the spurious grounds of defending workers’ rights ironically comes soon after they failed to lift a finger to stop the Tory government ripping up the right to strike of millions of British workers with the Trade Union Act.”

This reference was not intended to include left union leaders such as Matt Wrack.

Nonetheless, when Matt complained about it to Socialist Party members via Twitter, we immediately changed the online version so that it read: “the TUC and most trade union leaders failed to lift a finger to stop the Tory government ripping up the right to strike of millions of British workers with the Trade Union Act.”

We wrote to Matt on 10 June to clarify and to explain how the article had been reworded. Given this, it was highly misleading of Matt to tell the NSSN conference that we had attacked him for not lifting a finger on the anti-trade union bill.



Matt Wrack



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

Emerging class unity

A discussion with my work colleagues on a tea break demonstrated an emerging class unity that I have not witnessed before.

We all agreed that out was the correct referendum vote for vastly different reasons. We now find ourselves in agreement again as it is clear to all of us that the political class has no respect for the judgement of our class.

This has been nakedly and grotesquely displayed by the Parliamentary Labour Party's attacks on Corbyn who has done nothing more than be unenthusiastic in delivering working class votes to the Remain campaign. They must blame someone for the fact they could not collectively convince us to give them the result they wanted.

Corbyn now stands taller in the eyes of people who would not have dreamed of voting Labour before. We want him to stay.

Energy worker and trade unionist Essex

'Every little helps'

There is an old saying: the last capitalist on earth will sell you the rope to hang the second-to-last.

Food banks are a stark indictment of capitalism. Yet Tesco makes a good profit out of the local food bank. People give out lists outside the store and shoppers buy their donations in-store. "Every little helps," as they say.

Derek McMillan Worthing

Keep Corbyn!

I was a member of the Labour Party for 30 years who left because Tony Blair was turning it into another Tory party. The NHS is facing bankruptcy as a result of former Labour governments' imposition of 'PFI' sell-offs.

The EU referendum showed a deeply divided nation. Only a Labour Party with anti-Tory, anti-austerity policies can heal these wounds. It's counter-productive calling the 52% who decided that leaving the EU would be better than staying 'racists'. It only strengthens the far right.

The Labour Party needs to convince those who voted Leave, as well as those who voted Remain. I believe that Jeremy Corbyn is saying the right things to achieve this.

Politicians have got the reputation of

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

the Tories were claiming that they cannot deal with just five families resettling here each year until 2020.

However, after the deal was 'agreed' Holdich had an audacious change in rhetoric, stating that: "This city has a long and proud history of welcoming those that need our help and we will be working with groups from across our community that have already offered their assistance." He was forced to admit "I have been speaking with government and we have now come to an agreement. The government has confirmed that we will receive appropriate levels of funding for these families... to cover all the health, social and educational costs... in addition to them being able to access all benefits such as housing."

This development should give confidence to those fighting for international working class solidarity, and acts as proof that the government can be forced to make financial concessions under pressure from councils.

Let's exert that pressure on the government and fight for funds to protect all jobs and services!

Carl Harper Peterborough

Heavyweight hero

Muhammad Ali, RIP. What many, including me, most associate with him was his outspoken and courageous stand against racism and injustice.

This was exemplified by his very public refusal to fight in Vietnam. For this action he was vilified, persecuted, stripped of his world title and banned from the ring. This was at a time when he was at the height of his boxing skills.

It took a number of years for this to be overturned. When he returned to the ring arguably he was a different boxer - he was older and slower. He adapted his original style - based on movement and hand speed, "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee" - to one more reliant on his ability to soak up punishment.

His trainer Angelo Dundee commented



Muhammad Ali photo Foremost Poets/Creative Commons

on this "Due to his beliefs, he was robbed of the best years of his life - that's a subject that we must not forget, ever." The cumulative damage he sustained then has been linked to the Parkinson's syndrome condition which he developed, and which he lived with for the rest of his days.

As any human being he had flaws. For example, some of his 'trash talk' - of which he was a pioneer - was funny; some crossed the line and left a bad taste. Nevertheless, he will be most known for his charisma, his courage, his spirit, and his humanity.

"Legend" is an often over-used epitaph but in his case it seems apt.

Bill Gordon Waltham Forest, east London

Tory racism

The Tories have been stoking the flames of racial hatred for too long. David Cameron slashes spending on public services,

refuses to build cheap affordable housing, and then gives tax breaks to his millionaire chums.

Cameron and his Tory buddies then lay the blame for all of society's ills upon benefit claimants and immigrants, when the real problems are the corporate scroungers who refuse to pay their way, who have their tax-free riches migrate overseas at our expense.

With Cameron's divisive so-called 'counterterrorism' strategies like 'Prevent' clearly working to demonise Muslims, it is little wonder that 2015 saw a reported 326% increase in anti-Muslim hate crimes over those committed in 2014.

Mike Barker Leicester



photo Ian Pattison

HUNDREDS PROTEST TO DEMAND VOTES AT 16

Marlon Fernandez School student and Lambeth socialist

A demonstration on 3 July started in Trafalgar Square with a gathering of around 70 marching towards Parliament to demand votes for 16 and 17 year olds. As we marched, the crowd increased and by the time we reached

Parliament Square there were hundreds chanting and marching.

At the rally many of these stood up and gave their thoughts on not only how 16 and 17 year olds should have been able to vote in the EU referendum but also the fact that vicious Tory cuts are deeply affecting the young, with libraries and youth centres up and down the country being forced to shut down.

Some people brought protest EU signs and placards. But the

event was neutral on the referendum outcome. The Socialist Party discussed with protesters the anti-austerity and anti-racist case for leaving the EU. The demonstration was small but effective and many people (including myself) were able to speak their mind on why the voting age should be reduced to 16.

50 people signed up to find out more about joining the Socialist Party.

DEFIANT BUTTERFIELDS TENANTS VISIT LANDLORD'S HOUSE

In these times of big profits for landlords in the rental sector, it's not uncommon for landlords to harass tenants. A letter demanding increased rent is usually enough to send the tenants packing. But not Butterfields tenants!

Tenants and supporters of the Butterfields Won't Budge campaign from a small estate in Walthamstow, east London, turned the tables on 3 July.

One family in particular has been harassed by their new landlords who want them out so they can sell the flat, along with others, and make an instant profit. The harassment of the tenants took place on a Sunday, in fact on

Fathers' Day! So a number of tenants facing eviction decided to pay the landlord a visit on a Sunday to see how they like it. They were supported by socialists and trade unionists from Waltham Forest Trades Council.

The landlords' family were at home in their huge house in upmarket Chigwell. They listened incredulously to the tenants' complaints. In the end they accepted two letters of protest from the Tenants and Residents' Association.

The tenants are determined to resist harassment and eviction. They intend to resist at every stage, even if the landlords decide to use the courts.



photo Mike Cleverley

SOUTHAMPTON RALLIES TO COUNTER FASCIST THREAT

Southampton Socialist Party members

In response to a threat from fascist group South Coast Resistance to march under the slogan 'Refugees not Welcome Here', over a thousand counter demonstrators arrived at the assembly point by the Bargate in Southampton on 2 July, without a fascist in sight.

Mobilised at short notice by a coalition of Southampton trade unions, anti-fascists, anti-austerity and refugee organisations, it was an excellent demonstration of the general mood to oppose the racism whipped up by the right-wing Remain and Leave EU referendum campaigns.

As protesters assembled, speakers opposed the threat of racism and fascists in the city and called for a united campaign to end austerity and to kick out the Tories.

Southampton has seen growing poverty from austerity policies with over 25% of children in poverty and 10,000 people on the council housing waiting list. It is these conditions which are the dangerous breeding ground for racist division.

It makes it more important than ever for Labour councils like Southampton to stand up to the Tory cuts and join the anti-austerity battle that Southampton anti-cuts councillors Keith Morrell and Don Thomas have built support for in the city. Both joined the rally at the Bargate. Having seen off the fascists from their assembly point, we marched through the city to celebrate and promote our message - racists not welcome here!

The turnout is a reflection of the political turmoil post EU referendum, our stall was inundated with interest and discussion and many expressed an interest in attending our 'Tories Out' public meeting.

Fighting fund target smashed!

Thanks to all the branches who helped us smash through the quarterly fighting fund target, raising £34,878! The Socialist Party is entirely funded by our members and supporters. Donate now, or start planning how to help us raise £30,000 between now and the end of September. Every penny will help us produce more material to explain socialist ideas, and build a movement that can defeat austerity.

Socialist Party Fighting Fund

	£ received	£ target	April to June 2016	Final chart
North West	4,742	1,800		263%
Northern	1,031	600		172%
Yorkshire	4,568	2,900		158%
East Midlands	2,407	1,600		150%
West Midlands	2,722	2,100		130%
Eastern	1,552	1,200		129%
Wales	2,916	2,300		127%
South West	1,524	1,400		109%
London	6,511	6,100		107%
Southern	1,209	1,200		101%
South East	327	750	44%	
Other	5,369	3,050		176%
TOTAL	34,878	25,000		140%

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



photo Paul Mattsson

Turkey: Deadly terrorist attack at Istanbul airport

NO TO WAR AND TERROR! YES TO WORKERS' UNITY AND SOLIDARITY!

Ahmet Küçük
Sosyalist Alternatif (CWI Turkey)

A terrorist attack, presumed to have been carried out by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (Isis), killed at least 43 people and injured 239 others at the Istanbul Atatürk airport on 28 June. Three suicide bombers opened fire at passengers and security personnel before blowing themselves up at the security control at the airport building entrance. The modus operandi and the time of the attack, taking place when Isis is facing important military setbacks in the region, suggests that the infamous jihadist organisation is seeking to display its continuing operational destructive capacity. The Istanbul Atatürk Airport has relatively high security standards when compared with other European airports, and also has security checks at the entrance of the airport building. Yet these measures did not provide for a 'security island' or 'terrorist-free zone'. It shows the limits of an approach based exclusively on reinforcing an ever-increasing security apparatus while not dealing with the

underlying causes of terrorism. How to fight against terror has become a question of the utmost importance in a country shaken by ten terror bombings against civilians in the last eleven months, in which more than 250 civilians died. Sosyalist Alternatif completely opposes terror attacks, whatever the ideology of the organisation carrying them out. Every one of the recent terrorist attacks has been used to clamp down on democratic rights and to reinforce the powers of President Erdogan and the state machine. **Hypocrisy** Following the attack, the government temporarily blocked social media, as it did after every such incident, and any investigative media reporting has been prevented or censored. Importantly, we need to examine and fight the political atmosphere which has created the ground for such terror attacks. The AKP government in Turkey declared a day of national mourning after the Istanbul airport attack, but this is outright hypocrisy. Indeed, Isis attacking Turkish targets is like the dog biting the hand that fed it in the first place. The AKP (Justice and Development



Trade unionists in Turkey express solidarity with victims of a terrorist attack in 2015 photo Mike Cleverley

Party) government supported supposedly 'moderate' armed opposition rebels in Syria for years. In practice, Turkey has become a 'jihadist highway' and a support area for Isis behind the frontlines. Ironically, the Istanbul Atatürk Airport is an airport through which a considerable number of jihadist fighters and Isis foreign recruits have transited through in their journey to the so-called Isis Caliphate. It is only recently that measures have been tightened to prevent this flow of jihadists, probably one of the reasons Isis has started to turn against the Turkish state. But it is overwhelmingly ordinary people who are paying the price for this cynical game. In the last couple of years, radical Islamist terror groups developed a network of terror cells throughout Turkey. The instability caused by the Iraq and Syrian wars and the imperialist and regional powers' supply of weaponry into these countries, Turkish targets is like the dog biting the hand that fed it in the first place. The growth of terrorism in Turkey is in large part a blowback of the



The Istanbul Atatürk Airport has relatively high security standards. Yet these measures did not provide for a 'security island' or 'terrorist-free zone'

The AKP government's repression against political opponents, including against the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP), along with the destruction of Kurdish cities and the massacre of civilians in the name of "military operations against the PKK", nourished political instability and growing polarisation in society, creating a more fertile ground for terrorism. The growth of terrorism in Turkey is in large part a blowback of the

Turkish government's policy. It is obvious that a government responsible for unleashing state terror cannot be trusted to address our security concerns. To begin with, an independent investigation should be conducted into the 28 June events, engaging the trade unions and representatives of the workers of the airport, many of whom perished in the attack. But more fundamentally, there is a need for radical political and economic change in Turkey, which will not come from above. The trade union movement, the HDP and the left need to come together and mobilise for a mass united struggle of workers and young people against terror, for social justice and political rights and against the state-sponsored military devastation which is taking place against the Kurds in south east Turkey. Out of such a struggle an independent, socialist political alternative for the working class can be forged, linked to an agenda of socialist transformation across the Middle East.

Mexico: Teachers continue strike despite extreme repression

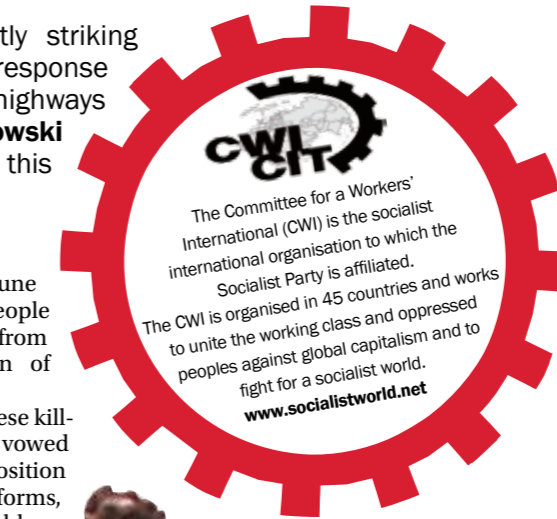
Struggle against government's neoliberal agenda needed

Mexican police shot dead ten people, mostly striking teachers, in the southern state of Oaxaca. In response to this brutal repression teachers have blocked highways leading to fuel and other shortages. Adam Ziemkowski of Socialist Alternative (CWI, USA) reports on this bitter class struggle.

Tens of thousands of teachers in Mexico have been on strike since 16 May, led by the National Education Workers Coordinating Committee (CNTE), in opposition to an education reform law that would open the door to mass firings of teachers, weaken public sector unions, and pave the way for the privatisation of public education.

Ten killed The neoliberal government of president Enrique Peña Nieto took a hardline approach towards the teachers' strike from the start, refusing to negotiate with the CNTE, firing more than 4,000 teachers for striking, and arresting key CNTE leaders on trumped up charges. The repression took a

violent turn on 19 June when at least ten people were killed, most from the Oaxacan town of Nochixtlan. In the wake of these killings, the CNTE has vowed to continue its opposition to the education reforms, receiving considerable community support. In Mexico City, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and the National Revolutionary Movement (Morena) party held an enormous rally with as many as



250,000 people by some estimates in support of the teachers. There has also been a tremendous amount of international support. Seattle City councillor Kshama Sawant expressed solidarity with the striking CNTE teachers on behalf of Socialist Alternative and the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), in a letter and video. The Peña Nieto government, for its part, has refused to back down and

Education Minister Aurelio Nuño reiterated plans to implement the counter-reforms. The CNTE opposes the 'reform' law because it would allow the government to administer standardised tests and use them to evaluate teachers, opening them up to arbitrary attacks. It would also reduce unions' control over the hiring of teachers and limit the number of unionised workers that the state can employ. Overall, the law would be a step towards privatising public education in Mexico.

Neoliberalism

But this struggle is about more than the education reforms. Teachers and public sector unions have been at the forefront of the opposition to the neoliberal agenda of the Mexican ruling class, and the Peña Nieto government hopes to weaken that opposition. The government's inability to achieve this goal, in spite of how severely it has repressed the CNTE and teachers, reveals the fundamental weakness of the Mexican ruling class. Capitalism has been an utter failure for ordinary people in Mexico. It cannot guarantee jobs with decent wages and living standards to most people, nor ensure basic safety. Nearly 50% of the Mexican population lives in poverty, including 40 million children, while super-wealthy individuals like Carlos Slim, whose personal wealth is more than \$75 billion, accumulate tremendous fortunes. Capitalism in Mexico, however, will not fall on its own. More working people will need to follow the lead of the CNTE teachers and wage an organised struggle against the education reform law as well as other attempts by the government to impose its neoliberal agenda. Workers also urgently need a political force capable of providing an alternative vision to the bankrupt system of capitalism.

Socialism Today

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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.

ENVIRONMENT

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

RIGHTS

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, 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

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £10 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards a real living wage. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.
- Reject 'workfare'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

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!
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JUNIOR DOCTORS RENEW BATTLE OVER CONTRACTS

- Unions must coordinate industrial action
- Defend the NHS against Tory government attacks

Concerned about their future and that of the National Health Service (NHS), junior doctors in England have voted by 58% to 42% to reject the terms of their proposed new working contract.

With teachers, college lecturers and many other groups of workers having to take strike action against this austerity-driven Tory government and greedy employers, junior doctors should now approach the TUC and coordinate further industrial action.

The only reason health minister Jeremy Hunt backed down from imposing an earlier rotten contract and reopened negotiations was a series of determined strikes of the junior doctors, with overwhelming public support.

Any new threat by Hunt to impose this contract again must be met by strike action.

Junior doctors felt that negotiators had conceded too much and the compromise deal has now been thrown out. Clearly a majority of junior doctors believe that their loss of earnings and a lack of proper oversight on working excessive hours in an increasingly fragmented NHS were unacceptable.

In the wake of the vote Johann Malawana immediately resigned as chair of the BMA union's junior doctor committee. He accused the Tories of undermining the NHS and driving it "headlong into a wider crisis".

Yannis Gourtsoyannis of the BMA junior doctors' committee spoke at the recent National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) conference. To rousing applause he said: "Building links between our unions is vital as we fight for a society in which workers can determine

their rights and flourish inside and outside of the workplace."

Anticipating the vote Yannis continued: "I think a 'no' vote is likely and necessary as the contract is not good enough. If we vote no we then need to escalate the action as the government is on its knees."

The Socialist Party has mobilised public support for the junior doctors' previous pickets and demonstrations. Once again we will be on the streets drumming up support for any further action to secure a just deal and workable contract.

But we will also be demanding that the trade union movement concretely acts to coordinate industrial action and put into effect the demand for a 24-hour general strike against the austerity agenda of this weakened Tory government. We also demand that Labour MPs stop attacking Jeremy Corbyn and start supporting the junior doctors and other workers.

>NSSN conference report, pages 10-11

**Lobby the TUC
NSSN rally at TUC
conference**

**'Cameron gone - get the rest of
the Tories out'**

**11 September, 1pm at Grand
Hotel, Brighton BN1 2FW**



photo Paul Mattsson

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