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CORBYN MOVEMENT MUST SEIZE THE INITIATIVE OR FACE DEFEAT > Pages 2-3

COME TO SOCIALISM 2016

A weekend of discussion & debate

12&13 November in Central London

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SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES

> Calais eyewitness account
> Interview with an activist, recently released from a detention centre

> Pages 8-9



Gig economy exploitation can be beaten...

FIGHT FOR DECENT JOBS FOR ALL



Photo Scott Jones

Helen Pattison
Youth organiser,
Socialist Party London

Those working in the 'gig economy' will be over the moon at the recent victory of Uber drivers.

Two workers, backed by general union GMB, took the transport firm to employment tribunal to prove they were actually employed by it. Because shockingly, Uber has

been claiming its drivers are 'self-employed', meaning it has no legal responsibility to pay the minimum wage or grant decent holiday and sick leave.

This is bogus self-employment. It is one of employers' favourite tricks to avoid even the limited workers' rights the law provides.

A summer of strikes in the sector and a wave of unionisation of low-paid workers have put a lot of pressure on the bosses. Partly as a result, the judge made a scathing verbal attack on the rise in this form of exploitation, stating: "The notion that Uber in London is a mosaic of

30,000 small businesses linked by a common 'platform' is to our minds faintly ridiculous."

This ruling should give confidence to everyone working insecure jobs. But important as this ruling is, it was not a foregone conclusion. Collective workers' action helped win it, and only collective workers' action will ensure the bosses stick to it.

Strike

The Ritzy cinema workers in south London are back on their picket lines fighting for a living wage, after bosses refused to take seriously their pledge of negotiations after

the last round of strikes. Deliveroo drivers recently won a big victory against changes to their contracts which would have slashed their pay, also by striking.

These workers are some of the most exploited. But they are also finding their voice to fight back.

These industrial battles must continue, backed by unionising more low-paid, precarious and unorganised workforces to join them. Trade unions have a double role: they can ensure existing workers' rights are respected, and can fight for a better deal too.

But we also need a political voice.

Jeremy Corbyn won huge support by calling for ending zero-hour contracts, introducing a £10 an hour minimum wage, and scrapping restrictions on trade unions.

To make these demands a reality, Corbyn must lead the fight to get the Blairites out of Labour. We need a mass workers' party opposed to austerity, to fight for an end to bogus self-employment and the exploitative practices gig economy.



'New technology, the gig economy and the working class' - one of the sessions at Socialism 2016, see page 5

Corbyn movement must seize the initiative - or face defeat



What we think

This year will be remembered as a turning point in British history. The vote to exit the EU threw everything into turmoil. Capitalist politics was shaken out of its normal channels and has yet to re-establish any stability. On the contrary, the attempts of the capitalist class to try and create some order from the chaos - by pressuring the Tory party to anoint Theresa May prime minister - achieved no more than a paper-thin veneer over the cracks in the establishment.

Within weeks, the Tories are once again openly at each other's throats over the EU. May is trying to balance on a tightrope over the chasm between the 'hard Brexit' wing of the Tory party, which has wide support among its rank and file, and the desire of the majority of the capitalist class to limit the effects of Brexit. Meanwhile, Ukip's leadership is in meltdown.

Given the disarray of right-wing, pro-capitalist forces, the Jeremy Corbyn-led leadership of the Labour Party has a golden opportunity to assert the voice of the working class majority in society. Of course, the Labour Party is not a unified force either. However, the huge wave of support for Jeremy Corbyn over the summer led to a crushing defeat for the pro-capitalist forces within the Labour Party - the Blairites. If the Labour leadership acted to consolidate its victory, it would be possible to take decisive advantage of the turmoil in the capitalist class.

Imagine if Jeremy Corbyn was currently campaigning for a socialist Brexit. He could propose a different kind of Repeal Bill to that proposed by Theresa May - one that annulled all EU regulations which go against working class interests, like the rules restricting state aid and nationalisation, or the posted workers' directive which drives down wages.

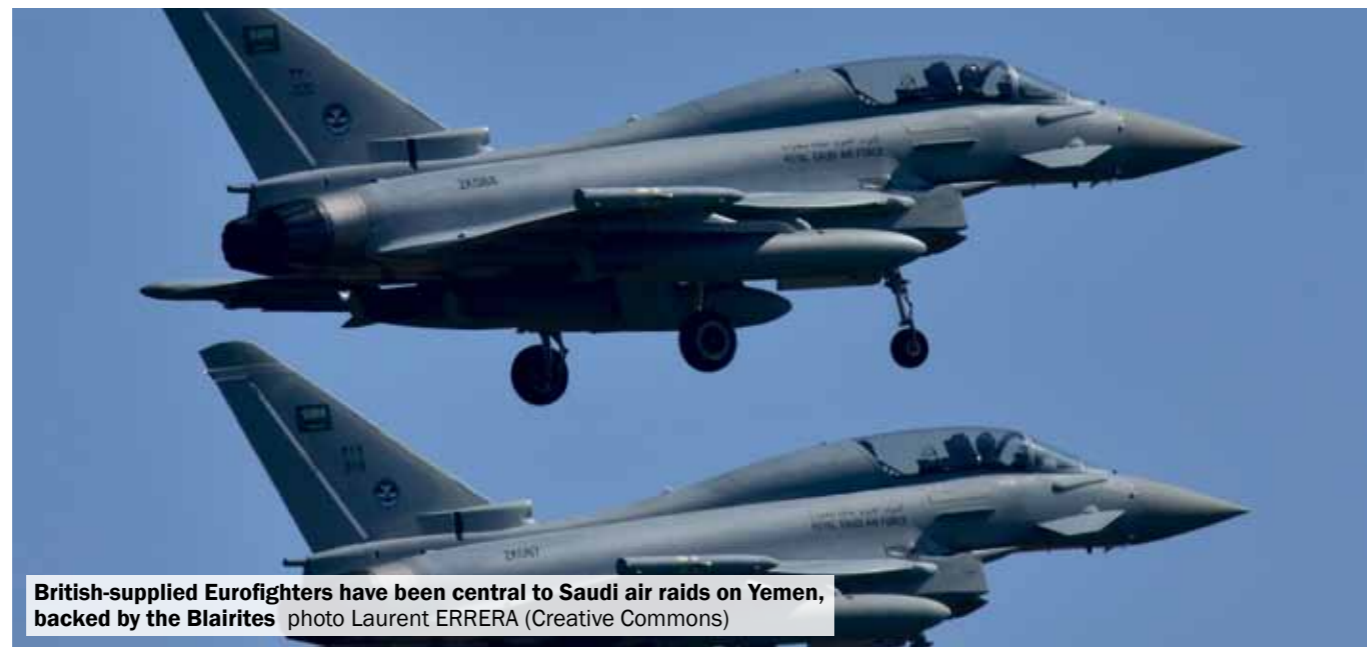
Such a bill could repeal anti-trade union legislation, including the Tories' latest Trade Union Act, and enforce collective agreements. It would mean bringing about real working class control via democratic public ownership. A campaign for Brexit on this basis could transform the political situation in Britain - with the possibility of bringing about the collapse of this very weak Tory government, and Labour winning the resulting general election.

Consolidating victory

Unfortunately, however, so far there has not been a campaign to consolidate Jeremy's overwhelming victory. There is a real danger that the possibility of creating a democratic, socialist Labour Party is squandered in a new attempt to conciliate the right. The pro-capitalist elements of the Labour Party have repeatedly demonstrated how determined they remain to isolate and defeat Corbyn. Left-wing constituency Labour Party organisations in Wallasey and Brighton remain suspended on spurious grounds.

Just last week, around 100 Labour MPs failed to turn up for (or abstained on) the Labour parliamentary motion to withdraw UK support for Saudi Arabia in protest at the war it is conducting against Yemen. As a result the motion narrowly fell, leaving British forces training the Saudi Arabian military to enable it to step up devastating airstrikes, including against Yemeni civilians. Even one anti-Corbyn Labour MP expressed disgust that fellow MPs were just "using the issue as a way of trying to beat Jeremy."

Shadow Foreign Secretary Emily Thornbury expressed her disappointment at the MPs' behaviour, but as yet



British-supplied Eurofighters have been central to Saudi air raids on Yemen, backed by the Blairites photo Laurent ERRERA (Creative Commons)



The Labour right recently defied Corbyn, allowing a motion against UK support for Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen to fall photo Almgidat Mojalli/VOA (Creative Commons)

they face no disciplinary action. Labour has overwhelmingly elected an anti-austerity, anti-war leadership, yet right-wing Labour MPs remain free to vote for war - or austerity, or privatisation - without facing any consequences. Instead, they should be clearly told that they will lose the Labour whip if they are not prepared to vote for Corbyn's key policies in parliament.

However, far from calling for this, Momentum - set up to support Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party - is not even calling for mandatory reselection of MPs, or campaigning to use the existing watered-down 'trigger ballot' system to hold them to account.

Mandatory reselection is a basic democratic procedure allowing local Labour Party organisations to choose who stands on their behalf. It was hard fought for by the left in the past, including by Jeremy Corbyn,

John McDonnell and Jon Lansman, the founder of Momentum. Its abolition by the Blairites undoubtedly made it easier for Labour MPs to vote for anti-working class policies without consequence, and, in some cases, to fiddle their expenses. Today the Labour right becomes apoplectic with rage at the idea that any MP should be made accountable to local Labour Party members; all the more reason to campaign for it to happen.

The hundreds of thousands of people who joined the Labour Party in order to defeat the coup will not automatically become active in their local Labour Party organisations. If, however, they are shown that doing so is a route to defeating the right, and creating the kind of anti-austerity Labour Party they joined hoping for, many would be prepared to do so - understanding that, while victory would not be achieved in one act, the road would



The huge enthusiasm for Corbyn's pro-worker platform could turn into demoralisation without a fightback photo Mike Hirst



photo Paul Mattsson

be opened to the creation of a mass party of the working class from the ashes of New Labour.

Few, however, will be inspired to get active by the Momentum leadership's current strategy of endless conciliation with the right. This road, if continued down, will ultimately lead to widespread demoralisation and therefore defeat.

Warnings

We warned of this when, soon after the foundation of Momentum, Peter Taafe, general secretary of the Socialist Party, and Hannah Sell, deputy general secretary, met with Jon Lansman. Even then Lansman argued against fighting for mandatory reselection, believing that many of the MPs could be won over to Corbyn, enabling him to 'cling on' until 2020. Our warnings that the right was irreconcilably opposed to Corbyn and an attempted coup was inevitable were dismissed.

The consequences of Momentum's continued strategy of 'clinging on' are currently being demonstrated in the attempts of its unelected leadership to prevent any kind of democratic Momentum conference taking place. They are terrified that a conference might embarrass them by voting to combat the Blairites.

That is why they are proposing the conference be organised on an online voting basis. While online voting can

play a useful supplementary role in some circumstances, if it is used to replace meetings and conferences it is always a means to consign the majority to the status of passive observers, whose participation is limited to the occasional click, while central decisions are taken by an unaccountable leadership.

Those who became active in Momentum in order to fight to transform the Labour Party need to draw the necessary conclusions from this miserable experience.

Matt Wrack, general secretary of the FBU, has now correctly come out in criticism of the leadership of Momentum. This is a step forward. Unfortunately, up until now he and other key supporters of Momentum - like Mark Serwotka, general secretary of the PCS - have not been prepared to clearly oppose the mistaken strategy of the Momentum leadership. This was understood, however, by delegates to the 2016 PCS conference - who voted against affiliating to Momentum, largely due to its lack of democracy. Now Matt and others need to go further.

As the Socialist Party has argued from the beginning, what is needed is an open, democratic, fighting organisation that brings together all who want to fight to transform Labour into an anti-austerity party; whether or not they are currently allowed into the Labour Party by the right-wing machine. Such a force should fight clearly for the transformation of the Labour Party; including the democratisation of its structures - mandatory reselection, restoring trade union rights, readmitting expelled and

excluded socialists (see petition at socialistparty.org.uk/issue/922/23846), and allowing socialist organisations to affiliate.

The battle against Labour's right is not simply a battle between two wings of a party. Behind them are the class interests of the different participants. The right ultimately represents the capitalist elite, which was delighted with the Blairite transformation of Labour into a party that could be relied on to act on their behalf, and is fighting to turn the wheel of history back to that situation. The surge into the Labour Party in support of Corbyn is made up of hundreds of thousands of working class and impoverished middle class people, who want to see a party that stands in their interests.

John McDonnell was right when he said that the attempted coup against Corbyn represented "the 1% telling the 99% to get back in line." The coup's defeat gave a glimpse of the power of a mass working class mobilisation to defeat the capitalist elite. If it is built on, Labour can be transformed into a party that stands clearly against austerity - including refusing to implement cuts at local level - where, in many places, Labour is already in power.

Such a party, standing for policies like renationalisation of the NHS and railways, a £10 an hour minimum wage, free education, and mass council house building, would have the potential to win widespread support from working and middle class people. MPs who cannot support such a programme should go! Better to have a Labour Party united against austerity, even if initially with fewer MPs, than the current situation where the majority of Labour MPs support it.

Such a party would also face determined opposition from the capitalist class, whose attempts to stop it from being elected - and, if elected, from implementing its programme - would put the current capitalist campaign against Corbyn into the shade. A glimpse of the intransigence and determination of the capitalist class to defend its own class interests is shown by the refusal to hold an inquiry into Orgreave (see page 12).

Syriza government

It would be very naive to imagine that the enormous pressure to capitulate and accept austerity which was exerted on the Syriza government in Greece would not be repeated in a different form if a left-led government came to power in Britain. To give in to that pressure, as the leadership of Syriza did, would be a major defeat for the working class in Britain.

It is therefore concerning that, even before facing pressure on that scale, the leadership of Labour has retreated on some issues, probably in the vain hope of pacifying Labour's right. No statement has been made against Labour councils preparing a new round of budget cuts. Nationalisation of the energy companies, put forward in Jeremy's first election campaign, has now been dropped. John McDonnell last week also suggested that the "independence" of the Bank of England is "sacrosanct." Yet it was a right-wing measure, taken under Blair, to effectively privatise the Bank of England by taking it out of government control. A socialist policy would be to nationalise not only the Bank of England, but the whole banking system under democratic control.

There was nothing automatic in the defeat of the working class in Greece. If a left government in Britain was determined, and instead of bending under the pressure of the capitalist class, mobilised a mass working class movement in defence of its policies, the elite would be unable to prevent it implementing its programme, thereby improving the lives of millions. Of course, to effectively defend the government against the inevitable sabotage of the capitalists, it would be necessary to go further - nationalisation, under democratic workers' control, of the banks and major corporations, in order to form the basis for a socialist plan of production, would be posed.

The root cause of the turmoil in politics is the profound unpopularity of all the capitalist parties - who have nothing but growing hardship to offer the majority. An opportunity now exists to build a mass party that offers an alternative to endless austerity, on the basis of socialist policies. If that opportunity is seized, it will be a major step forward for the working class. The Socialist Party will do all we can to prevent this chance being lost as a result of prevarication and retreat. We appeal to all those who agree to join the Socialist Party.

'Capitalism versus Corbynomics' - what economic barriers would a Corbyn government face? One of the discussions at Socialism 2016 - see page 5

Socialism Today
The Socialist Party's magazine

October issue includes

- Left-wing populism Corbyn insurgency is part of international left-wing wave, writes Peter Taafe
- Spain Spain's social democratic crisis and the class struggle, by Juan Ignacio Ramos

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We are all Daniel Blake

NO MORE DEATHS FROM BENEFIT CUTS

Amalia
Socialist Party disabilities group

Thousands of people have died since the implementation of 'work capability assessments'. This is what the new Ken Loach film 'I, Daniel Blake' is all about.

Iain Duncan Smith, the politician responsible for this system, who lives rent-free in a £2 million mansion, considers the film extreme. Meanwhile, he disingenuously criticises Theresa May's latest round of benefit cuts.

In 2012, then-chancellor George Osborne was booed during the London Paralympics, just a few months after his government's Welfare 'Reform' Act passed.

This brought us - among other things - the 'bedroom tax', 'personal independent payments' to replace 'disability living allowance', and benefit sanctions against sick and disabled 'employment and support allowance' claimants.

Last spring there was another massive outcry against the Tories, who wanted to further cut disability benefits, by £30 a week. Iain Duncan Smith resigned over this, totally hypocritically: £15 billion went from the welfare budget while he was work and pensions secretary.

Cuts have tragic consequences. People lose their homes, their families, their communities, their health - mental and physical - and tragically, all too often, their lives.

But the stories of suffering that have surfaced since 'I, Daniel Blake' premiered are many. Right-wing hack Toby Young denies the wealth of real evidence, saying the story didn't "ring true" - because the characters were not "scroungers"! Everything in the film "rings true"

to those who know that, at any time, they may well become Daniel Blake. Millions of workers don't know if or when we'll become sick or jobless.

The film starts with the absurdity of a work capability assessment. It's a one-size-fits-all, Catch-22 interrogation. It shows a single mother sent from London to Newcastle because of the lack of council homes. It shows someone who hasn't eaten in days opening a can of beans at the food bank and eating it there and then.

Getting angry is not enough. We also need to organise. Enough is enough with the slanders! Enough is enough with this inhumane system! Enough is enough with deaths from benefit cuts!

People in the cinema were crying. It's a film that can make you very emotional. But getting angry is not enough. We also need to organise.

Enough is enough with the slanders! Enough is enough with this inhumane system! Enough is enough with deaths from benefit cuts!

We are not scroungers. We are people who are entitled to a dignified life.

Scrap the Tories' welfare counter-reforms; abolish work capability assessments; invest in jobs, homes and services for all.

Organise and fight back!



A heart attack forces Daniel Blake onto welfare



Teachers on strike photo Paul Mattsson

ONE THIRD OF 2010'S NEW TEACHERS HAVE ALREADY QUIT

Cut workload and class sizes, not pay and conditions

Akila
Newly qualified teacher, Birmingham

Nearly a third of newly qualified teachers who started work in 2010 have already left the profession.

This figure reveals the true cost of the government's education 'reforms'. That many teachers are driven away from the profession is unsurprising.

Teachers are entering a job that is more pressured than ever. As a newly qualified teacher, I work at least ten hours a day, and often take work home at weekends.

Target-setting means that new teachers and trainees are often expected to meet unrealistically high teaching standards right at the beginning of their career.

Schools now face the threat of being closed down or made into 'academies' if they do not perform as demanded by education inspector Ofsted. This leads to management making teachers carry out unnecessary and time-consuming tasks to meet impossible expectations.

The majority of secondary schools in England - 59% - are now academies, allowing them to ignore national agreements on teachers' pay and conditions, and increase workload. I trained at an academy where recently qualified teachers were asked to mentor several newly qualified teachers at once, because the staff turnover was so high.

Teachers are held to account for pupils' results, meaning they need to spend valuable time justifying pupils' marks. This will only become more stressful, due to the 2014 National Curriculum with much tougher exams. But the government's obsession with learning by rote means exams are more a test of memory than ability.

If we want teachers to stay and teach well, we must fight to end the ban on councils building new council-run schools, and fight for investment in reduced class sizes, cuts to workload, and guaranteed decent pay and conditions.

Pay per Tiger

Good news for readers of the Socialist! A new club has opened that organises monthly meetings and social events. Bad news - only those with a minimum of \$10 million, who pay membership fees "starting at" \$30,000, need apply.

"Tiger 21" - The Investment Group for Enhanced Results in the 21st century - was launched in New York in 1999, and has now opened in the UK.

Previous activities include a "group meeting experience" on Richard Branson's private Caribbean island. Common topics of conversation apparently include how not to ruin the children by giving them too much money, and wealth preservation.

This club has 450 members and an estimated collective wealth of \$40 billion. That could provide decent education to children worldwide deprived by poverty.

Jon Dale
Mansfield Socialist Party



Student non-awards

A panel of student representatives refused to award a prize for best student accommodation experience, in protest at appalling conditions.

Trade magazine Property Week asked reps from across the UK to judge the award. Their joint letter found all the entrants lacking. As well as outrageous rents, many extort hundreds in unavoidable extra fees.

The judges concluded by calling for investment in accommodation, and end to privatisation, cheaper rents and universal living grants.



Peevish Plaid

A Plaid Cymru council leader in Wales threw a tantrum when asked about management consultants profiting from her cuts.

Journalist Jacques Peretti accused Plaid's Ellen ap Gwynn: "You think the public don't have a right to know. You're a public body." The Ceredigion council chief ordered him to leave.

Perhaps if Plaid took the same robust approach with Tory and Blairite austerity-merchants, Peretti wouldn't have had to ask.

LGBT people need militancy, not false 'allies' like David Cameron

Michael Johnson
Socialist Party LGBT group

David Cameron has won an award for being this year's best "ally" of the LGBT rights movement from website PinkNews.

Let that sink in. David Cameron. Ally.

Cameron spearheaded massive attacks on huge sections of the population, including disabled people, migrants, students and working class people. It may shock PinkNews to learn the LGBT community is part of all these groups.

Cameron, noted 'ally', presided over devastating cuts to jobs and benefits that leave people not knowing if they'll be able to afford food. But none of those million-plus people using food banks now could be LGBT; Cameron's our ally!

Specialist services, including specialist housing and HIV/Aids services are disappearing across the country. The biggest push on 'academy' schools so far gives free rein to heads to bring back Thatcher's 'Section 28' anti-LGBT education rules by the back door.

Cameron, with Theresa May, has deported countless LGBT asylum seekers - because they do not read LGBT media, have had children, or just are able to pretend to be straight.

And during our 'ally's' time as prime minister, hate crimes against LGBT people increased year on year, more than doubling between 2015 and 2016. Cameron's such an ally that more than half of those victims don't feel respected or satisfied by the police response.

Some, like PinkNews, argue Cameron can't be held responsible for



Trade union Pride marcher photo Paul Mattsson

this increase. But Cameron has done nothing to challenge oppression of LGBT people, even at the time of his lauded equal marriage vote, within his own party - let alone in society at large.

Let that sink in. David Cameron. 'Ally'

David Cameron might not be beating up LGBT people himself. But too often I've been worried to hold a boyfriend's hand in public, be 'out' at work, or even wear clothes that might be 'too gay' for fear of verbal abuse at best. I've been beaten up at school for being pegged as gay, and have been at actual risk of physical assault for my sexuality today.

I know this isn't because some people just decide to attack LGBT people out of nowhere. It's because of the real divisions in society,

which Cameron and his ilk maintain from the top.

Cameron has also expressed his 'ally' credentials by voting against same-sex adoption, against repealing Section 28, and against lesbian couples accessing 'IVF' pregnancy assistance. He even appointed MPs who had voted against pro-LGBT legislation as equality ministers - Theresa May, Maria Miller and Nicky Morgan. Their awards are probably next year.

An 'ally'. Because during his time as prime minister, marriage equality became a thing. Never mind the real impact of his party. David Cameron and the Tories gain false credibility from PinkNews's award while LGBT people suffer their actual policies.

The LGBT community doesn't need 'ally' awards, it needs to rebuild a militant LGBT movement, with trade unions and other campaigning groups. We need a mass workers' party, to build real political representation, to fight against cuts and capitalism, for equality and genuine liberation for all.

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WORKSHOPS ON 'CAPITALISM V CORBYNOMICS', 'BUILDING NEW MASS WORKERS' PARTIES', 'IS TUSC STILL NECESSARY?' AND MUCH, MUCH MORE



DARLETTA SCRUGGS, BLM & SOCIALIST ACTIVIST FROM CHICAGO

WORKSHOPS ON 'BLACK LIVES MATTER - BUILDING A MOVEMENT TO END RACISM', 'TRUMP V CLINTON - HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?', 'DEFENDING REFUGEES, FIGHTING DEPORTATIONS' AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

Darletta, Peter and Juan Ignacio will speak at the main Saturday night rally, 6.30-8.30pm at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way WC1H 0AL

AFTER #HUELGA260 Spanish student strike
JUAN IGNACIO RAMOS
Izquierda Revolucionaria general secretary



Workplace

Newsquest strike

"It's impossible to do our jobs"

Rob Williams
NSSN national chair

NUJ members working for Newsquest in South London were out on strike again on 25 October after voting to extend their strike by another five days.



in 12 reporters covering news, sport and leisure across eleven newspapers and eight websites under a single content editor.

The striking journalists outside the company's Sutton HQ said: "We aren't out here for more pay or better perks but because we have been cut to the extent that it's impossible to

do our jobs. Our office has basically halved since March. We aren't able to do proper quality journalism and we were stretched before March! They don't care that the quality will suffer. "I heard somewhere that between 2003 and 2014 their profits have increased by 25% but by reducing staff by 50%. But once they do it here, they will roll it out throughout the country. They are refusing to talk to us - we just want them to negotiate properly with us."

The initial action started on 13 October until 19 October and which has been followed by an indefinite work to rule.

To send messages of support and donations to the hardship fund, email Bernard Roche at bernardr@nuj.org.uk noting the amount and send the money to account number 20143387, sort code 608301

SOLID SOUTHERN STRIKE CONTINUES AGAINST BRITAIN'S 'WORST' TRAIN COMPANY

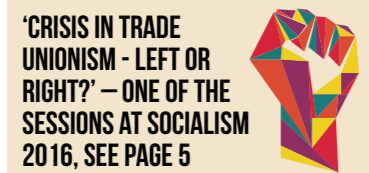
Portsmouth Socialist Party members

Workers have turned out in large numbers at the Southern Rail offices in Barnham, West Sussex, determined to win their dispute.

A train driver at Southern Rail also told us of their willingness to join the strike and their anger at the obstacles being put in their way by

the courts and the anti-trade union legislation.

As the strike continues, fury among commuters is reaching boiling point. They see the company as woefully inefficient and are increasingly sympathetic to the arguments of the RMT over safety.



400 very noisy TAs (teaching assistants) staged a protest outside Durham County Hall.

Across the north east there is growing anger against Durham's Labour-controlled council which is planning to sack 2,700 TAs, then hire them on 23% less pay.

voted in favour of strike action. Commenting on this vote Jan Clymo said: "I've worked for the county for 27 years. I don't want to strike, but I feel we've been pushed into a corner where we don't have any choice."

Megan Charlton, secretary of County Durham TAs activist committee, told us: "Durham TAs are among the lowest paid in the country - even before this pay cut." The

last TA meeting was organised by Unison but TAs commented that it "felt like a hostile takeover bid". Unlike previous meetings, which were organised by the TAs, Unison gave no time for questions from the floor. Also, Unison does not recognise the TAs' organising committee.

Elaine Brunskill See longer version of this article at socialistparty.org.uk



photo Alistair Tice

More workers join Sheffield bin dispute after workers reject rubbish offer

Alastair Tice Yorkshire Socialist Party

Despite Veolia bringing in scabs and agency workers from all around the country, thousands of Sheffield's rubbish bins have not been emptied because of the city's bin workers' industrial action.

Around 150 GMB union members have now taken two full-day and two half-day strikes in pursuit of their pay claim.

Work to rule

But it is the "work to management instruction" that is really causing the backlog.

On the picket line on 27 October, Michael explained: "Yesterday, one crew only achieved 56% collection because if you work to management rules, then you can't walk over grass verges, you can't 'ding' (put a bag from one bin into another), you can only tip one bin at once (rather than two) and no running!"

Another striker added: "We 'dropped' (didn't collect) 800 bins yesterday, another wagon left 700."

The mood on the picket line is noticeably up, boosted by a two-to-one

vote to reject Veolia's latest pathetic offer and a few more workers joining the strike

GMB officers Lee Parkinson and Pete Davies explained that the dispute is part of a bigger picture as the Labour council, in implementing Tory government cuts, wants to cut what it pays Veolia. They want to "sweat the assets" which means get less staff to do longer hours, start earlier and work later.

If the bin workers win a victory over pay, they will be more confident to resist future attacks on terms and conditions. In fact, the GMB and workers are increasingly demanding that the council strip Veolia of the whole waste management contract and bring the service back in-house but with the union and workers having control over the process.

As Michael said: "I used to love this job when it was council because you could take that extra bag, give folk a hand, even stop for a cuppa with customers on the way round. That's because it was a public service. Now I hate it because all Veolia are interested in is the litrage and we end up just running behind wagons."

Join the fightback! Join the Socialists! socialistparty.org.uk/join 020 8988 8777 @socialist_party text 07761 815 206 /CWISocialistParty

HEATHROW EXPANSION EXPOSES TORY DIVISIONS

For an integrated, environmentally sound, socialist transport system

Chis Newby London Socialist Party

The recent decision by the cabinet to go ahead with building a third runway at Heathrow has enormous implications for workers at Heathrow and for the local communities.

The local community and trade unions have not been properly consulted on this at all. There should have been a proper trade union and community-led inquiry over the full implications.

Reports

The decision is based on a report commissioned by David Cameron in 2012 and headed up by economist Howard Davies to look at the possibilities for airport expansion in Britain.

The report argued that - as airport capacity is close to the limit - if airports in south east England do not expand, airlines will look to other European airports and the British economy will lose out in tourism and trade.

Davies' report states that the third runway would generate £147 billion to the economy over 60 years - the DoT report says £61 billion. And of course, the vast majority of this would go to the pockets of big business.

Davies suggests it would create 78,000 new jobs - DoT says nearer 39,000.

The decision has big implications for the Tory party, further exposing the splits in its frontbenches. It has led to the resignation of Zac Goldsmith as Tory MP.

There are clearly big business interests at the centre of this, with the private airport owners and airlines eyeing up the potential extra profits. In 2014 Heathrow Airport Holdings Ltd, which owns Heathrow Airport, made profits of £839 million.

But this is contrasted with concerns of Tory MP's looking to keep their seats and seeing the level of local opposition to the plans.

Socialists must stand back from the arguments of the different wings of the capitalist class and look at what is in the best interests of the working class as a whole and the local community around Heathrow.

The area around Heathrow airport already suffers from high levels of air pollution - breaching EU rules. This comes from both air and road traffic around the airport. A 50% increase in flights would have a dramatic effect, even with so-called cleaner flights. Already, 9,500 people

in London die every year because of air pollution-related illnesses.

Noise pollution, as well as having a bad effect on people's hearing, can also increase stress and lead to sleep loss - with potential serious health complications like heart disease.

Expansion would also create big upheavals for the local community. There will be at least 750 homes demolished - including the whole of Longford village and parts of Harmondsworth and Sipson.

We understand that workers looking at the promise of new jobs may welcome expansion. But what sort of jobs will these be? Willie Walsh, CEO of IAG (the conglomerate made up of Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia and Vueling), is determined to drive down the wages and conditions of airport workers - as are all other airlines.

Just remember the long battle of the BA cabin crew and the current attempts to attack the jobs and conditions of the BA IT staff. We will continue to support airport workers struggling to maintain jobs and conditions.

We support new jobs coming into the area but why do they have to be dependent on a new runway being built at Heathrow? It's a bit rich for this government to be talking about new

jobs and apprenticeships when their policies have seen the loss of 600,000 jobs in local government since 2010.

Why can't we have more building workers being employed to build the tens of thousands of new council homes needed in the area? Why can't we have more workers employed on the buses and tubes and in the tube station ticket offices? Why not employ more staff in overstretched schools and hospitals?

To do all this we need a party in government and on local councils committed to defending and improving public services. The movement around Jeremy Corbyn has shown the hunger for anti-austerity, job-creating policies. But to enact them requires a decisive fight against the pro-capitalist, pro-austerity Blairite wing of the Labour Party.

Are we opposed to airport expansion? Not necessarily in every case, but each case has to be weighed up on its own merits and disadvantages. A third runway at Heathrow doesn't appear to be the best option, which is why we oppose this plan.

There are other options of disused airfields or underused airfields. While Heathrow is working at 98% capacity,

some airports around the country are only operating at 40%.

There could be the opportunity to develop these airfields and link them up with big investment into the rail network. Rail, alongside the airports, airlines and buses should be brought back into public ownership. Measures to create cheap and efficient train services could encourage reduced use of cars and planes.

Socialism We campaign for a fully integrated, public-owned, democratically-run transport system that is genuinely affordable and where workers are on good wages and conditions. If a Corbyn-led Labour Party were brought to power, it would be an opportunity to fight to make these policies a reality now.

We also support massive investment into research for more environmentally friendly transport of all forms. This could only be fully achieved under a democratic socialist society but we will support all struggles along the way that will genuinely improve transport for both passengers and workers.



Heathrow airport owners made £839m in profit in 2014

At least 750 homes will be demolished

9,500 people in London die every year because of air pollution-related illnesses

SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES

Paula Mitchell

Many people in Britain watched in horror as French authorities cleared the refugee camp in Calais, leaving hundreds, including many children, sleeping rough and herded by riot police as the camp was destroyed around them.

The refugee crisis in Europe is one of many examples of the brutal, cruel character of Theresa May's Tory government and the profit-driven capitalist system they represent.

Western governments wage wars, drop bombs and supply arms to merciless conflicts around the world, such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen. Yet when people flee, these same governments turn their backs and leave people to rot.

The hypocrisy won't be lost on many people, that this comes at the same time as western intervention in Mosul in Iraq could displace a million residents, and as the Tories - scandalously aided by over 100 Blairite Labour MPs - blocked a parliamentary vote to stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia that are used in Yemen.

This couldn't contrast more with the outpouring of human sympathy last year after the body of Syrian toddler Aylan Kurdi washed up on a beach, when an estimated third of the population did something in support of refugees - donating money and goods, signing petitions, and going on demonstrations.

A million

In 2015 a million people tried to cross the Mediterranean, but only 14,000 were granted asylum in the UK. This is dwarfed in relation to the number of refugees in the world - over 60 million, over 80% of which stay in extremely poor, war-torn countries in their home area.

The right to asylum is a fundamental human right which must be defended. The use of repressive measures such as detention centres and brutal deportations must end.

Years of austerity, forcing working class people to pay for the economic crisis while the super-rich increased their wealth, have created the conditions for social revolt. Mass, united working class action can challenge this vicious government and take on the interests of the rich. Knowing this, the Tories set out to divide us, playing on the fears many working class

people have about the impact of immigration.

A third of people who voted for Brexit in June say they did so because of immigration. But as the Socialist Party has explained, for the vast majority this vote was an expression of rage and rejection of the establishment politicians. Contained in the fears about immigration are the reality of lost jobs, pay and benefits, a housing crisis, an NHS crisis, library closures and so much more.

So it is essential that support for refugees is linked to the fight against austerity - for homes, jobs and services for all. We campaign for a mass council house building programme, for rent controls, for empty speculative property to be taken over and used for social housing, for a £10 an hour minimum wage, for an end to the cuts and privatisation in the NHS.

Massive cuts

Councils have had massive cuts over the last five years, and now some say they have no money to look after refugees. The resources should be provided by the government to support refugees properly - and we must fight to stop cuts and for all council services to be fully funded.

The Socialist Party has campaigned for Labour councils to refuse to make the Tories' cuts and to fight to defend jobs and services for all instead. A bold stand, starting by using reserves and borrowing to buy time to build up a mass community and trade union campaign, would defend jobs, homes and services. This could allow councils to engage their communities in democratically drawing up budgets that would serve the needs of their boroughs and towns.

Several trade union struggles have recently shown how the race to the bottom can be fought, bringing migrant workers into the unions and fighting for the rate for the job for all. For example, cleaners organised by Unite and the RMT, lively struggles of workers in small independent unions such as the IWGB; domestic and portering staff at Whipps Cross hospital; oil refinery workers at Fawley and many more.

Vital to building a mass campaign against Tory austerity and racism is the battle for a mass anti-austerity socialist party, a key part of which means organising to clear the Blairites out of the Labour Party. Such a party would cut across the risk of the far right capitalist on this crisis.

A socialist government would nationalise the banks and the

tops of the economy so that the vast wealth that is currently held in the hands of the few can be owned, controlled and planned democratically.

The fight for a socialist alternative is the fight for the future of humanity, so that we can bring an end to the wars, poverty and persecution that force people to flee, and can create a world in which people can move, live and work in decency and with dignity.

'Socialists and the EU free movement debate' - one of the sessions at Socialism 2016, see page 5



photo Paul Mattsson

Demolition of Calais 'Jungle' camp - eyewitness report

Cecilia Fasciani
 Eyewitness at Calais 'Jungle' camp

What is going on in Calais right now should be regarded as one of the darkest moments in the European Union's history.

10,000 people, including at least 1,000 unaccompanied children, do not know what is going to happen to them. After miles and miles on the road, fleeing from wars and violence, they now see the gate of the European fortress closed.

Seeing that big wall made of barbed wire, which goes from the Jungle all the way through the port, and behind it hundreds of police in riot gear, was intense and unbelievable. Nobody knew where the French government would bring them, and when this would happen.

"People are going to fight here. We have not been walking through countries or crossing the Mediterranean Sea on a boat just to be blocked here and then deported somewhere else, or even back to our countries. We are not going to give it up." This was a young Kurdish man.

"They say that my country is safe, that I can go back there. Because in their view, even if there is a war right now in Iraq, there are still zones untouched by violence."

When I asked him about his family, he answered that they are still in their little village near Mosul. "They couldn't leave with me. Today they told me that there's going to be a fight tomorrow, right in Mosul. I pray to Allah that they will all be safe."

The European Union, with its 510 million inhabitants, and GDP of £12.8 trillion, is apparently not

able to take care of 10,000 refugees. Lebanon, with six million inhabitants, and a GDP of £54.1 billion, hosts approximately 1.1 million refugees.

And here we have the Conservative MPs who called for dental age tests on children in the camp. David Davies, MP for Monmouth, said: "These don't look like 'children' to me. I hope British hospitality is not being abused." 'British hospitality' is an oxymoron under the heartless capitalists.

Dream

A 16-year-old Afghan boy offered me a cup of tea, speaking about his journey with very good English. He walked all the way through the Middle East and then Europe, but his dream was getting to the UK.

"I tried to go to London, but they saw me. I think I will never try to do it again; I will stay here in France. The police are getting worse. If they catch you they beat you, they put their fingers into your eyes."

"And even if they don't see you, during the night it's hard to get to the port. A boy who I used to know died on the highway some time ago, knocked down by a car. He was just 14."

When I arrived and started working, seeing all those people, their solidarity and their will to be there and help, it made me feel some kind of hope.

I could see another Europe over there. A Europe made of solidarity among peoples, of helping each other, of fighting together from the ground up for a better future, free from poverty and war.

See a longer version of this article at socialistparty.org.uk

My time in a detention centre "I WAS ENCOURAGED TO WORK - FOR £1 AN HOUR"



Tamil Solidarity march against detention centres in September 2016 photo Senan

Tamil Solidarity activist **Nandan**, who recently spent several weeks in a Home Office detention centre, spoke to the Socialist about his experience of organising against the exploitation of inmates and the campaign to fight for refugee rights.

I came to the UK to study in 2011. But in 2012 my previous political activity, campaigning for the rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka and organising students, caused me problems. The then Sri Lankan government of warmonger Mahinda Rajapaksa made accusations against me and the financial support I relied on stopped. I claimed asylum and changed to studying part time.

Because of a lack of understanding and problems with translation, my case was refused. I appealed. Until then I had avoided politics in Britain, fearing it could cause me problems. But problems came anyway and so I started attending meetings. At a book launch in East Ham I met Tamil Solidarity. They stood out as a group because they said the only way to win our rights is to fight for them and because they were democratic.

I was arrested. I had committed no

crime but I was held in custody for one day as there was no transport to take me to the detention centre. They said it wasn't a prison but it felt like one. They said I could do whatever I wanted but we went through six or seven locked doors to get to the box I was locked in until 8am.

I could have a phone - but not if it had a camera on it. There were books to read - but nothing interesting and definitely nothing political. I could have 50 minutes internet - but no access to social media. I could watch news - BBC, but not Al Jazeera.

Friends were not allowed to bring me food or toiletries. There was plenty of food but portions were limited. I was so hungry. They said I could buy more but I had no money. They told me to work. Outside I was banned from working but inside I was encouraged to work - for £1 an hour. We could clean, garden, cook, launder, work in the library.

Hopeless

Initially when I was detained I felt hopeless - that this was the law and there was nothing I could do.

But my experience helped me realise that this system is not for us, that it's true we have to fight for everything, for our rights - not only in my country but here too.

While I was there I saw at least two people a day brought in and it made me think that there's payment per detainee for the private company running the place. Not only is this unjust, it is also profiteering.

So I started to discuss with some of the others about our right to earn the minimum wage. It was difficult to organise a campaign - there's CCTV everywhere and if you gather in groups they ask what you're talking about. So a few of us chatted with people during work about a strike.

Me and the other four leading activists in this struggle were released before the strike could be fully organised. But I continue to build the struggle for refugee rights - raising the demands for the right to work for refugees and the closure of the detention prisons.

The Refugees Rights Campaign is an umbrella organisation, involving Tamil Solidarity and others. It demands that refugees be allowed to work and an end to deportations. Speakers from the campaign will lead a workshop forum at Socialism 2016 (see page 5)



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GLENFIELD HEART UNIT PROTEST: "THE UNIT DIDN'T SAVE OUR HEARTS JUST SO NHS ENGLAND COULD BREAK THEM"



Demo to save Glenfield heart unit photo Steve Score

Charles Wheeler
Leicester Socialist Party

"The Glenfield unit didn't save our hearts just so NHS England could break them" said lifelong Glenfield patient Ria Pahwa speaking at the protest against the proposed ending of children's heart surgery there.

Over 1,000 people marched through Leicester on 29 October. The people of Leicester and the East Midlands saved it from closure three years ago and are determined to do so again. Alongside others in the campaign, Socialist Party members played a key role in its organisation.

The unit, which serves large parts of the east of England is under threat despite being on course to actually meet arbitrary targets set by NHS England. Its world-renowned Ecmo (Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation) unit is also at risk. Despite NHS England's protestation that it isn't about money, the context is the Tories' £22 billion of NHS cuts.

For almost an hour before the march left Victoria Park, hundreds of protesters gathered, hearing speeches from Socialist Party member Tom Barker, Leicester South MP and Labour's Shadow Health Secretary Jon Ashworth and dedi-

cated Glenfield campaigner Shirley Barnes.

By the time the march set off, the crowd was well into four figures, and filled the city's main roads with noise and colour, backed by honks of support from traffic and applause from shoppers.

After a well-organised and passionate march the more than 1,000-strong crowd gathered on Jubilee Square, where more speakers were heard from a stage and PA provided by Unite Health.

Socialist Party member Steve Score, whose son is a former patient of the unit, led the speeches, describing Glenfield's care as "excellent", and expressing solidarity with other NHS services under threat of cuts, particularly sending support to the simultaneous protest over the closure of Grantham A&E.

Other speakers included consultant Aidan Bolger, who highlighted the scope and quality of care that would be lost should the unit close and lose its services to Birmingham or further afield.

The protesters were united behind one message - Glenfield must be saved, and the brutal cuts to our NHS must be stopped.

Leicester Socialist Party sold 70 copies of the Socialist at the protest and will host a public meeting on 3 November at the Barley Mow, Granby St, 7.30pm, to discuss next steps for the movement.

Massive demo against A&E closure in Grantham

Geraint Thomas
Nottingham Socialist Party

Around 6,000 people marched through the centre of Grantham, east Midlands, in defence of their A&E unit on 29 October. The "temporary" night time closure has people rightly up in arms as it has been extended already.

The trust claims that the reasons for doing so are health and safety related, due to there not being enough doctors.

Gary Freeman, Chair of Unison South Derbyshire Healthcare branch and health service group executive member, gave his support and solidarity to the campaign. He and others pointed out at the rally that it is hardly a coincidence that this decision was made with the so-called 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs)' looming in the background. STPs will mean more NHS cuts.

Gary called for opposition to all cuts and said he would be

Thousands march in Grantham photo Jean Thorpe



campaigning to support the national demo in March 2017 and would call for Unison's health service group executive to support the demo. Leaflets calling for a linking up of the campaigns across the country were well received and a public

meeting is being held in Grantham by the Socialist Party on how to widen the struggle.

'The NHS, the trade unions and the fightback' - one of the sessions at Socialism 2016, see page 5



There was a lively picket line of ambulance workers outside St George's hospital in Tooting, south London on 1 November. The GMB members are in dispute with their employer G4S (who run the outsourced service) because their pay and conditions are now inferior to other NHS workers. Scandalously, two of the union reps have been suspended by the company. It is apt that the first strike was on the very day that the trust was placed in 'special measures'. Email messages of support to info@gmb.org.uk and post donations to GMB Southern Region - GMB Southern: Cooper House, 205 Hook Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1EA photo Rob Williams

Campaigners call on Greenwich council to oppose the Housing Act

Paul Callanan
Greenwich Socialist Party

We Won't Move campaigners, along with Socialist Party and local Unite activists, lobbied Greenwich council on 27 October against the tenant tax 'pay to stay' and the council's lack of action in opposing the Housing Act. The lobby of the full council meeting was also joined by local NHS campaigners protesting against the proposed privatisation of services in Greenwich.

Beforehand it emerged that council residents in the borough had received notices from Savills, the estate agent, informing them that their council properties were to be surveyed by this less than reputable firm.

'Impact'

The campaign had applied before the meeting to ask questions in the chamber. These pushed the council on whether they would implement Labour Party policy and pause in carrying out the act to 'consider the impact on council residents'. We also called on the council to follow the example of their counterparts in Islington.

In the north London borough, rather than a letter threatening rent increases council residents received a letter from the council inviting them to a public meeting informing residents that they would do what



Housing and NHS campaigners unite to lobby Greenwich council photo Paul Callanan

they could to not implement aspects of the act.

In the chamber I asked the council about the letters from Savills and why these surveys were not being carried out by council staff as they were in the past. On this point Averil Lekau, the councillor responsible for housing, point blank refused to answer.

In light of the unsatisfactory written answers we asked whether the council would call a meeting to actually organise opposition to the act. I said that a fight was needed with the council alongside its local residents to stop the Tories' destruction of council housing. This got a big applause from others in the public gallery.

The campaign has clearly had some effect. Councillors in the

chamber were on the defensive. The leader of the council has written personally to a member of the campaign asking what steps we think they should take. We will continue to fight to make the council stand up to the Tories and this act.

Next year the Labour Party will be selecting its local election candidates for 2018. We call on the movement around Jeremy Corbyn to do everything it can to get candidates selected who will fight for his anti-austerity policies. This includes opposing the housing act and building new council homes to end the housing crisis.

'We're not moving - resisting the housing crisis' - one of the sessions at Socialism 2016, see page 5

Glasgow School of Arts students "let us learn" revolt

Glasgow Socialist Students

Several hundred students boycotted classes and organised a mass picket right in the middle of an open day at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) on 27 October. They were motivated by anger against cuts and demanding more facilities to "let us learn".

A fire in 2014 destroyed a large part of the campus and management have failed to invest and respond to the reduced space for students effectively. Placards and chants highlighted that many students are paying high fees of "£50 a day".

One student, Euan, spoke to the Socialist: "GSA are saying they will bring in 25% more students but we are already 'hot-desking', there is no space. We have tried every form of dialogue and this was the only option left, the turnout today shows them we are serious. We want change."

Other students explained that they couldn't get access to material or technicians despite the college's renowned reputation.

GSA management, reflecting their panicked embarrassment at their

open day being overshadowed by the creative protest powers of their own students, screamed at picketers to stay off the roads in front of the media cameras and tried to stop students being interviewed. As the protest grew they put up steel barriers around the picket, students responded by chanting "Glasgow School of Barriers!"

Mass meetings should be called of the GSA student body to discuss and debate the next course of mass action. The class boycott was an important tactic that should be repeated to achieve the widest possible participation of students. Occupation should also be seriously considered. Building links with trade unions on campus is also vital.

Socialist Students in Glasgow mobilised support from the wider trade union movement. On the same day we were involved in a protest with Glasgow City Unison at the grand lavish opening of the new Glasgow City College campus. These struggles should be brought together.

Socialist Students offers these ideas from our experience of participation of student struggles and hopes to be part of a discussion with GSA students about the way for-

ward. We raised solidarity with the GSA protest through our links to the Sindicato de Estudiantes, the Spanish students union which organised a general student strike of 2 million the day before (see pages 14-15) and with the outsourcing/fees must fall movement in South Africa.

GSA students should be commended for organising the largest campus student demonstrations in Scotland since protests in 2011. What they have done should be an example - if a fighting lead is shown then students will fight to improve their conditions.

Yorkshire Socialist Students

Students from six universities and a sixth-form college attended the Yorkshire regional conference of Socialist Students at Leeds Beckett University 22 October. Claire Laker-Mansfield, Socialist Students national organiser, introduced the main discussion looking at struggles around the world, before workshops covering topics such as 'who was Leon Trotsky?' Conference discussed plans for building for the 19 November National Union of Students (NUS) demo and strengthening Socialist Students across Yorkshire.

HARINGEY CARE SERVICES FACE RUTHLESS CUTS AND PRIVATISATION

Paul Kershaw
Haringey and Enfield Socialist Party

Campaigners are demanding that Haringey's Labour council halts its programme of privatisation and cuts. After the cuts, the Ermine Road day centre will be the only council-run day centre for adults with learning disabilities left in the borough and the council plans to privatise it.

The council leadership sing the praises of 'alternative providers' but are currently facing legal action by local government union Unison because a company contracted to provide care on behalf of the council stands accused of paying care staff less than the national minimum wage. This represents outrageous exploitation of the workforce and potentially undermines care to some of the most vulnerable people in the borough.

The local Socialist Party has been campaigning and collecting signatures calling for a halt to all privatisation plans.

A Socialist Party member and Haringey care worker says: "Jeremy Corbyn has attracted enthusiastic support by opposing austerity and privatisation - people want an alternative. Haringey council undermines this movement with ruthless cuts and further privatisations."

Highest needs

Half of the current service users, mainly those in residential homes and 'supported living' accommodation - who tend to have the highest needs - will lose their council day centre places. Staff from their homes will be expected to provide their day service and their access into the community. Haringey council regard this as an expansion of day service provision!

Earlier in the year the council leadership disciplined councillor Gideon Bull for speaking out (see socialistparty.org.uk/issue/887/22160). It's time for the local Labour movement to speak out and stop the council leadership ramming through the most brutal austerity measures.

Why I joined the Socialist Party

"Our problems cannot be solved by capitalist politics"

Tom Costello
Lancashire Socialist Party

Capitalism is fundamentally flawed. The wellbeing of workers in Britain and across the world is being destroyed through savage cuts and austerity.

Imperialist states are waging war across the globe in the name of profit, there is a severe housing crisis with no end in sight and all of this is happening on the back of a major financial crisis that we still haven't yet 'recovered' from.

These problems are capitalist problems. They are caused by capi-

talism and they cannot be solved by capitalist politics. This is because of the ruthless nature of this economic system that will always prioritise profit over human need. And no amount of reforms can solve this. What we need is a full transformation of society to socialism, run democratically by the workers and for the workers.

We should not just oppose capitalism with words, but with action. We ought to be actively campaigning against the latest actions of the capitalist state, regardless of whether or not there are Tories or Blairites in government. That is why I have joined the Socialist Party.

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 on 020 8988 8777 or socialistparty.org.uk/donate
- cheques payable to 'Socialist Party', PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Socialist Party Fighting Fund

	£ received	£ target	October to December 2016	Deadline 4 January 2017
Northern	1,077	750		144%
North West	1,094	2,100		
Wales	849	2,300	37%	
South West	432	1,800	24%	
Yorkshire	785	3,300	24%	
West Midlands	598	2,600	23%	
East Midlands	423	1,850	23%	
Southern	285	1,600	18%	
London	1,066	6,100	17%	
South East	87	750	12%	
Eastern	97	1,200	8%	
Other	2,003	5,650	35%	
TOTAL	8,802	30,000	29%	

WILL WORKERS ON COMPANY BOARDS MAKE BOSSES ACCOUNTABLE?

Bill Mullins

In her Tory party conference speech on 5 October, Theresa May sought to reposition the 'nasty party' more to the centre and away from the legacy of Thatcher.

Claiming the Tories to be the "party of workers", May said there will be consumers and workers represented on company boards, while employment rights will be protected and enhanced.

Given that the Tories have introduced more anti-trade union laws since they won the 2015 general election these 'promises' look highly unlikely to say the least.

The reference to workers' representatives on company boards also has many dangers.



An attempt to "marry the irreconcilable interests of the capitalist class and the working class".

The bosses have from time to time played with this idea - not to give more say to their workers but to try and ensnare the workforce. The idea is to make workers responsible for the state of the company, without giving them any real say.

The Tories recognise that the growing discontent of the mass of working people with the way the economy is developing - not for them but for the small super-rich minority - is leading to a ground-

swell of opposition to their rule.

This has manifested itself around the Corbyn movement in the political sphere, but in the future it will begin to also develop in opposition to the bosses in the workplace (see The Gig Economy, Socialism Today, October 2016).

The idea that workers' representatives on the boards of companies will make any difference is a complete myth. The only real way that workers will have an effective say in what is going on is through strong trade union organisation.

Jeremy Corbyn recognised this in his Labour conference speech: "We will strengthen working people's representation at work and the ability of trade unions to organise so that working people have a real voice at work."

In the 1970s, when trade union membership was twice the size it is now (13 million peak in 1979 compared to today's 6.5 million), the capitalist class was desperate to curtail the strength of the unions at work. One idea they came up with was also having workers' representatives on the management boards of the big companies.

The 1977 Bullock report (named after Lord Bullock, the chairman of the committee charged by the Labour government to introduce so-called 'workers' democracy') proposed a system of a single tier company board made up of shareholders and union members with equal representation and another tier chosen by the first two parts (the so called 2X+Y group).

Militant, forerunner of the Socialist, explained that this was an attempt to "marry the irreconcilable interests of the capitalist class and the working class".

As long as the economy is in pri-



Only strong trade union organisation is effective in improving workers' pay and conditions photo Paul Mattsson

ivate ownership and subject to the periodic crises of capitalism, then the system proposed by Bullock (backed up by the trade union leaders on the committee) would mean the workers and their trade unions taking responsibility for carrying through mass sackings and plant closures to make the companies profitable against their competitors!

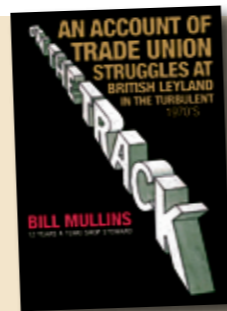
This was the system developed in Germany in the post-war period known as 'co-determination' - with workers on supervisory boards but with no right to strike, rubber stamping the business decisions of the directors.

One worker representative after experiencing this process said what they wanted instead was "a shop

stewards system similar to the one in Britain".

In the 1970s at British Leyland (the former UK car manufacturer) the commercial crisis in the company led to the independence of the shop stewards committees being undermined by what was called a "participation committees system" (see On The Track for details - ad right).

Only strong trade union organisation in the workplace, not the myth of workers on the boards of big companies, is effective in improving workers' pay and conditions. Real workers' management can only be achieved by implementing socialist policies - nationalising major industry under democratic workers' control and management.



On The Track

An account of trade union struggles at British Leyland in the turbulent 1970s, by Bill Mullins (shop steward for 12 years) £6 including postage. Available from Left Books, www.leftbooks.co.uk

EU-CANADA TRADE DEAL BATTLE POINTS TO CORBYN'S BREXIT OPPORTUNITY



photo Edda Dietrich/creative commons

Clive Heemskerk

Socialist Party executive committee

The saga of the on-off-and-on again trade agreement between Canada and the European Union (EU) holds important lessons for how Jeremy Corbyn and his supporters could use the Brexit negotiations to build a European-wide workers' opposition to the EU bosses' club.

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the EU has now been signed, at a hastily re-arranged ceremony for the Canadian premier, Justin Trudeau. But this was only possible after the federal government of Belgium, the only EU member state yet to approve CETA, was forced to agree a last-minute four-page 'interpretation' of the treaty with the country's regional parliaments.

Opposition to CETA had come in particular from the self-governing parliament of Wallonia, with a government coalition led by the Socialist Party (PS), one of Labour's sister parties in the European parliament.

Betwixt reflecting workers' concerns, the PS Wallonia premier Paul Magnette criticised the CETA 'Investor-State Dispute Settlement' plan which will allow corporations

to sue states for losses if their business interests were 'infringed' by government action.

Like the proposed EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the US, CETA threatens consumer safety, environmental protections and workers' rights, and generally enhances the power of big business over democratically-elected governments.

In the event the Walloon government backed down for what are minor concessions, with Belgium now able to seek a European Court of Justice ruling on whether the new investor courts system is compatible with EU law. But the fact that negotiations inaugurated in 2004 came so close to being derailed is very significant for the Brexit debate.

No unity

The first lesson is that the capitalist politicians of the different EU member states are not united, reflecting the character of the EU as, at bottom, a series of agreements between the competing national capitalist classes of Europe.

The EU Commission is approaching the coming Brexit negotiations with the intention of 'punishing Britain', as 'an example to others'. In reality, however, there will be no such thing as 'an EU position' but the different positions of 27 capitalist nation states - and the working

class in each of those states.

In times of economic growth it has been possible to achieve unity among the 'capitalist thieves'. But smoothing over the problems caused when one or another section of the capitalist class in a particular country have not had their interests met in treaty negotiations, is more difficult in an era of stagnation.

The Wallonia government especially objected to the impact of CETA on Belgian farmers. Such disputes will be as nothing compared to the inter-capitalist divisions that will emerge in the Brexit negotiations.

More important, however, is how the saga shows that the capitalist politicians are also subject to the pressure of the working class, with their interests against austerity, privatisation and the neoliberal policies of the EU.

The Wallonia PS had to at least appear to make a 'left' stand against CETA because, as the Guardian noted (29 October), it was "under pressure" from the left-wing Workers' Party of Belgium (PTB/PvdA), "which is making inroads into Wallonia, a region of above-average unemployment".

The PTB broke through into the Walloon parliament in May 2014, but it only has two seats out of 75. Imagine then the impact Labour under Jeremy Corbyn could have on

EU debates!

It is the working class, with no permanent interest in capitalism, which has the greatest possibility of reaching a common position - on socialist terms for trade arrangements with Canada or on Brexit - if a bold lead is given.

A Labour Party thoroughly transformed into a socialist, anti-austerity workers' party, committed to democratic public ownership of the economy and defiance of the pro-market, anti-worker and austerity-driving EU institutions, could play a pivotal role in building such unity.

Socialist alliance?

After the recent EU summit Jeremy Corbyn was reported to be "inviting left-wing leaders from across Europe to an alternative meeting on Brexit in London" (the Guardian, 21 October).

A bold stand by Corbyn against the anti-working class treaties and policies of the EU would electrify the debate across Europe.

CETA has only been signed into force on a temporary basis, subject to final approval by 38 national and regional assemblies.

Why not propose its scrapping as a negotiation 'red line' for a new relationship with the EU? And the abandonment of TTIP talks with the US, the end of the austerity-driving European Fiscal Compact,



The saga shows that the capitalist politicians are also subject to the pressure of the working class

the write-off of the Eurozone debts, etc?

But who could Jeremy appeal to in order to fight for such a programme? The Belgian PS, which ultimately went along with CETA, or the PTB? The Irish Anti Austerity Alliance-Socialist Party TDs (members of the Irish parliament) being persecuted for opposing water charges, or their persecutors, the Irish Labour Party, who faithfully implemented the EU's austerity dictates?

The battle over CETA shows how the Brexit negotiations could be used to build a fighting socialist alliance on a continental scale, a vital preparation for creating a new, socialist, Europe. The opportunity must be seized.

■ 'Were socialists right to say no to the EU?' - one of the sessions at Socialism 2016, see page 5

Battle of Orgreave: Establishment cover up continues

Tory Home Secretary Amber Rudd has ruled out an inquiry into the violent police assault on striking miners picketing Orgreave coking plant, South Yorkshire, in June 1984.

Rudd - clearly seeking to protect from exposure the political establishment's role in conspiring to break the miners' strike (1984-85) - justified blocking an inquiry on the grounds that "ultimately there were no deaths or wrongful convictions".

The fact that there were no deaths given the repeated baton charges by mounted police was purely fortuitous. Nonetheless, hundreds of miners were seriously injured on that day. That alone should merit an inquiry.

Moreover, there were no "wrongful convictions" only because 95 miners facing charges of unlawful assembly had their cases dropped after six weeks on trial because po-

lice evidence was deemed 'unreliable'.

Last year - despite evidence of assaulting striking miners and subsequently perverting the course of justice and committing perjury - the so-called Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) said it would not pursue a criminal investigation into the actions of South Yorkshire police on that day "because of the passage of time".

The Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign has long campaigned for a full and independent public inquiry into the 'Battle of Orgreave', which would include looking into whether the "actions of the police at Orgreave were influenced by political pressure from within the highest ranks of the government of the day."

The battle for truth and justice over the miners' strike will continue. Dave Carr



A Civil War Without Guns

The Lessons of the 1984-85 Miners' Strike by Ken Smith £8 including postage Available from Left Books. www.leftbooks.co.uk

MASS STUDENT STRIKE ROCKS SPANISH STATE



Further mass action planned to pressure PP government

photo ES

A tidal wave of protest swept through the streets and squares of Spain on 26 October. Two million, mainly school students, took part in a strike organised by Sindicato de Estudiantes (ES - students union). **Claire Laker-Mansfield**, national organiser of Socialist Students (England and Wales), was invited to participate by Izquierda Revolucionaria which plays a leading role in ES. Here is her report.

The strike was solid - with over 90% participation. But students did not simply stay at home. More than 200,000 young people joined the demonstrations that had been organised in over 60 towns and cities. This was a mighty day of resistance.

In Madrid alone, 60,000 students swept through the streets. The mood on the protest was an infectious mix of anger, determination and empowerment. For thousands of those taking part, this was their first major demonstration - a first experience of taking collective action. So, as well as anger, there was also

joy and optimism. There was renewed confidence that austerity was not just a fact of life, that it could be fought and defeated.

The strike's most prominent demand was to abolish the 'revalidas' that are being introduced by the government. These first existed under the dictator General Franco and are a series of compulsory exams that students are forced to take at different stages of their schooling.

Lowering expectations

Under the plans, students who fail to pass the tests will be prevented from progressing to the next stage in their academic study. What's more, qualifications they have already obtained will not be valid.

If rolled out in the way the government intends, these exams will prevent thousands of students, especially those from working class backgrounds, from accessing university. Worse still, thousands more could be forced to leave education early, with almost no formal qualifications. In reality, the intention is to brand young people as 'failures' and to lower their sights and expectations.

But it is capitalism that is the real failure. Spanish youth

unemployment currently stands at a staggeringly high 45%. So the student strike was also, in part, a protest against the dire prospects young people are faced with and the doors that are being slammed in their faces.

As well as demanding an end to the Francoist 'revalidas', the strike was also against the 'LOMCE' - a government decree which includes swingeing cuts to education.

One of the chants which rang out most often was 'Si Se Puede' - yes we can. This was the slogan used by the anti- eviction housing movement that has swept Spain. It showed the way the school students taking part in the strike saw themselves as participants in an overall movement against austerity and its effects.

One of the warmest receptions for speakers addressing the crowd was for a striking Coca-Cola worker. "Workers and students unite" was repeatedly chanted as the march went on.

In Madrid, teachers were also on strike that day. Their trade unions had supported and called for a demonstration to take place in the evening. But this was not repeated elsewhere.

The isolated nature of the teach-

ers strike in Madrid was not due to a lack of anger or willingness to take action among education workers. Instead, it was the fear by the trade union leaders of what might be unleashed. So, like in Britain, the right-wing trade union leaderships are attempting to block the development of mass struggle.

Parents

But despite the inadequacies of the trade union leaders, tens of thousands of workers joined the demonstration that had been called in Madrid that evening. One of the factors in the huge success of the strike was the support of the national parents association (CEAPA). As well as taking part and jointly calling the evening march, CEAPA also helped organise for thousands of parents to keep their young children off school during the strike day.

This was the first action of its scale for a number of years. And it broke the dam, setting loose the enormous discontent and anger which exists within Spanish society. Just a few days later a mass protest took place in Madrid against the formation of the right-wing Partido Popular (PP) government.

One word that protesters



ES general secretary Ana Garcia (left) and Socialist Students national organiser Claire Laker-Mansfield (centre) speak to the media photo ES

repeatedly chanted was 'traitors'. They were referring to the rotten capitulation of the so-called Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) leaders. A majority of PSOE MPs abstained in a parliamentary vote to elect the prime minister.

The result of this abstention was to hand power to the right-wing PP, despite their failure to win a majority in the election. So on 26 October, the anger at this impending historic betrayal was enormous.

Anger

More mass protests have taken place opposing the formation of an unelected PP government. The ES has declared that, unless the government meets its demands, in particular by scrapping the 'revalidas', a further student strike will take place in November. Given the anger that is boiling over, there is every possibility that this could be as big, or even bigger, than the first one.

Throughout the day, the leaders of the ES, including Ana Garcia the general secretary, were interviewed by the main television channels, newspapers and other media. Ana was able to express the intense anger and determination of her members.

This stood in contrast to the leaders of the major trade unions. But Ana was also able to raise the need for a generalised fightback - helping to apply pressure to the tops of the trade unions to do their jobs.

The international solidarity that was organised by socialists and trade unionists around the world played a big part in boosting the confidence and determination of students and workers.

On the demonstration, I was able to mention only a small number of the solidarity actions that had been organised by the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI). But every example I gave generated huge cheers.

The action organised by the CWI in Hong Kong - in which Spain's consul general physically assaulted and attacked a protester - served to demonstrate the establishment's fear of movements like these, as well as the dangerous conditions which socialists work in in many parts of the world.

This action made a particular impression and has since been reported in two major national newspapers in Spain. But it was also the scale and scope the solidarity effort which helped buoy people. There were protests in more than 20 countries worldwide.

The strike that took place on 26 October has given workers and young people in Spain a fresh taste of struggle. It has broken any fragile

social peace that had existed and paved the way for a new phase in the fight against austerity and the capitalist system which demands it.

And this determination to fight will not stop at the borders of Spain. Around the world, on the basis of capitalism, the next generation faces a bleak future.

Some of the biggest cheers at the rallies in Madrid came when speakers raised the need for socialist change. That is a foretaste of the huge movements that are to come, movements that will fight for an end to the rotten capitalist system and fight for a socialist society in the interests of the 99%.



It was not just in Madrid where thousands of students joined protests. These are a few examples of the fantastic protests that took place all over the Spanish state.

In the Basque country, more than 10,000 marched in Bilbao, 5,000 in Donostia and thousands more in Vitoria/Gasteiz and Iruña.

In Catalonia, more than 50,000 filled the streets of Barcelona, with thousands more in Tarragona and Girona and dozens of other towns. Almost 10,000 marched in Valencia, with thousands more in Alicante. In Galicia: 5,000 in A Coruña, 3,000 in Ferrol and thousands more in other towns. 5,000 in Zaragoza.

In Andalucia it was spectacular: 15,000 in Granada, 10,000 in Sevilla, 7,000 in Malaga, 2,000 in Cadiz and over 1,000 in Almeria and Huelva... Thousands also marched in Extremadura, the Canary Islands, and the Balearic Islands, in Murcia, Castilla y León, Castilla La Mancha, and Cantabria.



International solidarity protests



Spanish students showed solidarity with water charges protesters on trial in Ireland photo ES

Crisis in Spain, Podemos, socialist struggle, with Barbara Areal from Izquierda Revolucionaria (IR), Spain, one of the sessions at Socialism 2016 AND Juan Ignacio Ramos, IR general secretary and activist against austerity and capitalism, will speak on the platform of the Saturday rally > see page 5

What we stand for

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

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

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

Our demands include:

PUBLIC SERVICES

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

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.

MASS WORKERS' PARTY

- For a mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

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

Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

www.socialistparty.org.uk 02089888777
@Socialist_party Text 07761 818206 /CWiSocialistParty

Remember, remember the 5th of November...

FIGHT THE 'BURNING' OF OUR MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES!



photo Paul Mattsson

A Unite organiser

It's the national demo that library and museum campaigners have been demanding for years - and on 5 November trade unions and community campaigns from across the country will finally march together, united in our demand to save our libraries and museums.

Hundreds of libraries and many museums have closed nationwide since the 2010 Tory-Lib Dem coalition government. But there are magnificent community campaigns taking place in towns and cities fighting the cuts and closures. What's been missing is a trade union-led movement that brings campaigners together as part of a national mobilisation.

Museum and gallery workers play a vital role, yet they face low pay, cuts to funding, attacks on job contracts and pensions, as well as privatisation.

Local authorities have closed and privatised libraries - in some cases keeping them open using volunteers instead of paid, professional staff.

But there has been a fightback, with significant victories along the way. Strike action and campaigning at the National Gallery, Tate, National Museums Scotland and National Museums Wales show the potential to win.

The long running campaign in Bromley, south east London, shows what can be done against a Tory majority council, where the intention is to privatise the whole library service.

First, the campaign won the PR battle when over 80% of respondents to the council's own consultation exercise rejected privatisation.

Then the campaign won a victory when a proposal to replace staff with volunteers was scrapped after the volunteer organisation dropped out due to pressure from the campaign.

The hat-trick of humiliation for the council came when the Tories running neighbouring Bexley council decided that Bromley was toxic and dropped out of the joint privatisation tendering project for the library service.

In Greenwich, victorious campaigns led by Socialist Party members in key union positions have protected staff pay, conditions, stopped library closures and halted casualisation, while winning permanent jobs.

The campaign is now fighting to preserve a library service for schools after the Labour council scrapped the mobile library service, which issued 30,000 books to children each year.

There is no time to lose - our cultural services are under the gravest threat ever.

This march will be a big step toward uniting those fantastic local campaigns into a national movement to save our museums and libraries.

Since 2010:

- 8,000 paid and trained library jobs axed
- 343 libraries (600-plus including ones handed to volunteers) closed
- One in five regional museums at least partially closed
- Libraries' and museums' opening hours cut
- Budgets, education programmes and mobile/housebound/specialist services slashed
- An escalation in commercialisation and privatisation
- A 93% increase in the use of volunteers in libraries
- Income generation become the priority for almost 80% of museums

National libraries museums & galleries demonstration

Called by Unite, PCS and Barnet Unison

Saturday 5 November

Assemble: 12noon at British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB -

March to rally outside National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, WC2N 5DN

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