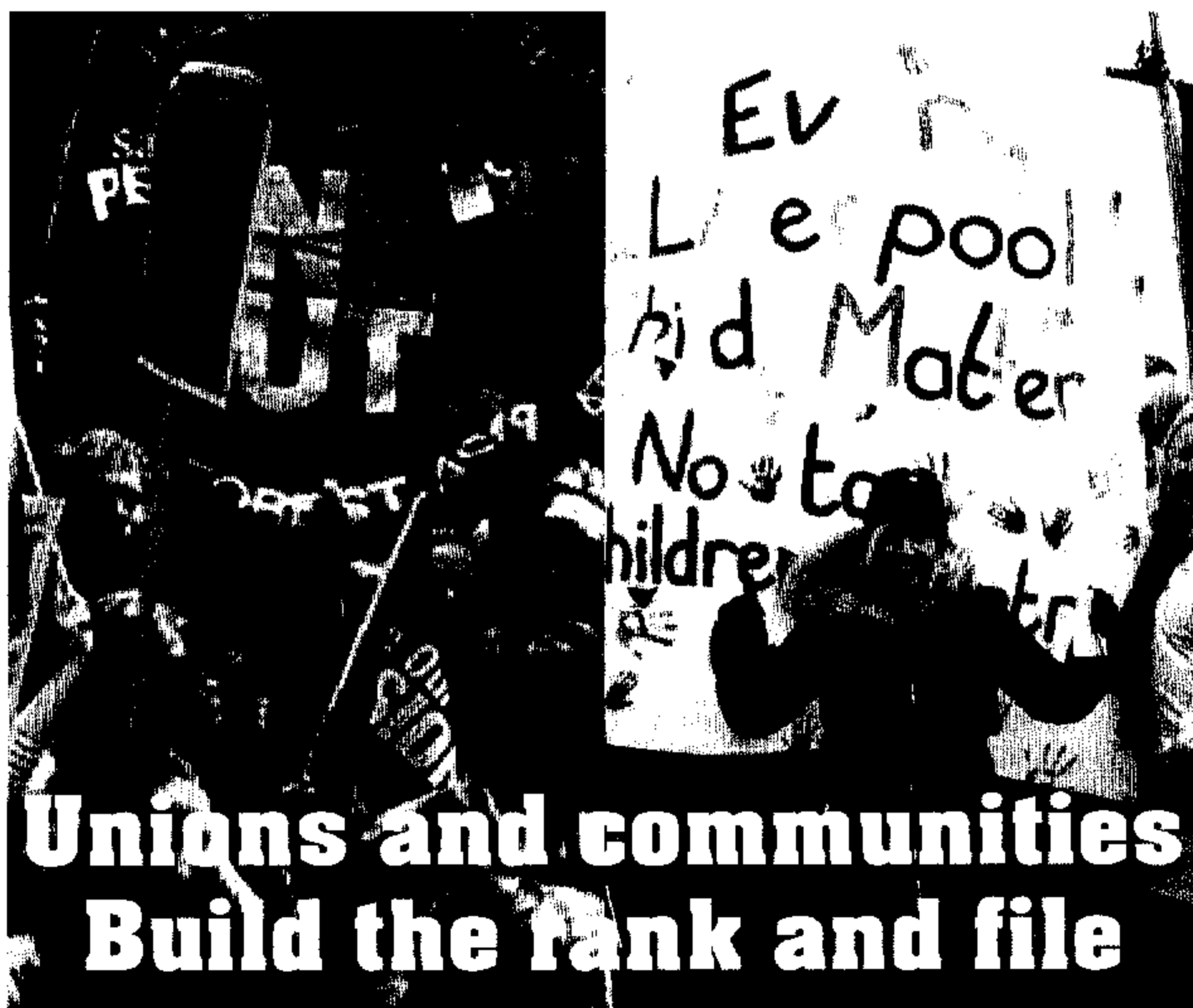


SocialistVoice

Nº 15 APRIL/MAY 2014 JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE, BRITISH SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS LEAGUE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

£ 1



**VOTE
FOR
CLASS
STRUGGLE
CANDIDATES
22 MAY**



Osborne declares a recovery. But as the recent budget shows it is a recovery for the rich, and an even deeper crisis for the working class.

This government is driving towards ending welfare support to unemployed people, disabled people, young people, the low paid, the ill and the elderly. This has led to the impoverishment and demonisation of people on benefits.

At the same time councils and the public sector are slashing services and jobs and creating huge workloads for those still in work.

The benefit safety net is rapidly disappearing extremely-high levels of food and fuel poverty are growing, and over 600,000 people are already being pauperised into using "food-banks" (since April 2013).

Our communities are gradually disintegrating and Cameron justifies his so called "austerity" policies of attacking the working class under the pretext that "Britain was almost bankrupt".

What is clear is that there will be money to be made from services being stripped bare and removed from public ownership, but the money to be made will be diverted into the hands of big

business and private profiteers.

That is nothing new, many will say, as this is a Tory government who will always look after the rich and look down on the poor.

Labour and union leaderships betray

Millions are suffering, especially the most vulnerable working class families in way that has not been seen since the 1930s.

Since the beginning of the massive cuts programme in 2011 anger in the working class has grown. However, a national movement of opposition has not even begun to be built by any of the existing Labour, trade union or political organisations.

The trade union leaderships are failing to lead a real fight back.

Labour has already declared their hand and promised that "austerity" and draconian welfare regimes will continue under their watch.

Workers cannot wait to fight the cuts, and neither can they hope for anything from a Labour government.

Unison, with 1.4 million public sector workers, a majority of whom are

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IWL XI CONGRESS

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ISL AND REGROUPMENT

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UKRAINE

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THE STRUGGLE OF YOUTH IN SPAIN AND TURKEY

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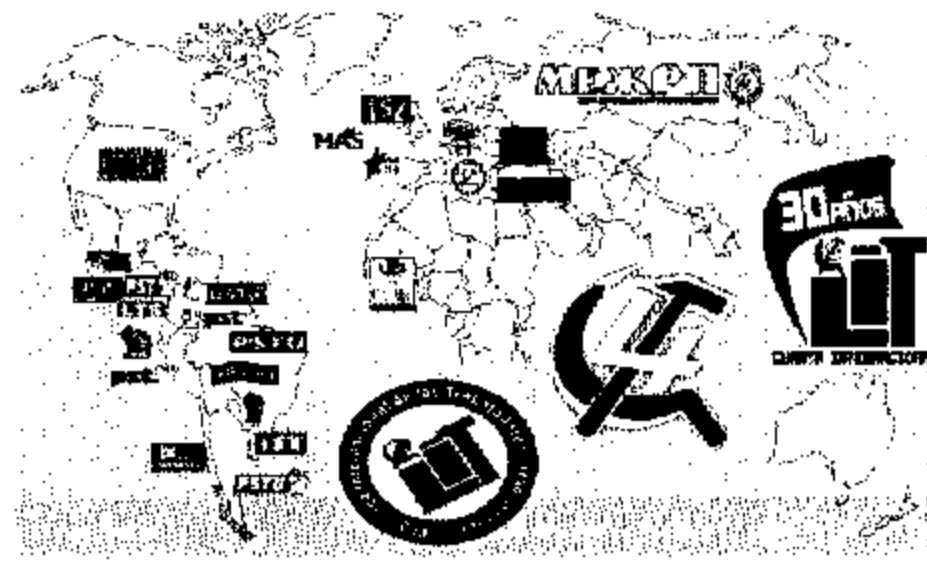
Towards the International Workers' League' XI Congress

The XI World Congress of the Workers International League-Fourth International (IWL-FI) will take place in early April, 32 years after it was founded. IWL sections from 25 countries will attend.

Just over five years ago the capitalist crisis exploded worldwide. Workers and popular sectors fiercely resisted the brutal attacks on their living conditions perpetrated by capitalist governments. It opened a period of great political instability.

Reality has shown the lack of an alternative revolutionary leadership with powerful mass influence that could show the path to a working and popular solution of the crisis, which could lead the workers and the people to the seizure of power in any country in the world.

Despite our weaknesses, the IWL has grown since the last congress. From Turkey to the Spanish State, in Europe, in the revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East, and the new processes in Latin American, the IWL sections fight battle after battle to give a revolutionary answer to this new reality. This is also expressed



World map of the IWL

through the growth of its parties, both quantity and quality, and through the political influence in its interventions.

Our European sections, particularly in Italy, Spain or Portugal, the places demonstrating the greatest interventions, are in the vanguard of clashes against imperialist plans

The "emphasis on building in Europe" motion, passed at the previous World Congress, was achieved and in this congress it is expected it will be consolidated, to go forward with the construction of a political program for the entire European continent.

For the first time in its history, the IWL is taking its first steps in North Africa and the Middle East. The revolutions in Tunisia just over three years ago changed the whole political map.

What has been occurring in Egypt and in the Syrian revolution – where IWL has been progressing its construction – are central issues for this Congress.

It is also important to highlight that the IWL managed to start in the Africa, after the Popular Senegalese League (LPS) joined as a sympathising section. Their participation in the next Congress will be a milestone in the history of our International.

We also have a challenge in understanding fully the changes to the political situation in Latin America, where the IWL has a greater tradition and more forces. We are witnessing the beginning of a regional uprising, marked by the beginning of the break of mass sectors from "popular front" governments. This process has encouraged a political and trade union reorganisation, causing disruptions on the Left, as with the emergence of IPT in Bolivia, the historic vote for the Left and Workers Front (FIT) in Argentina and the growth of the PSTU and CSP-Conlutas in Brazil.

A core discussion for the this Congress will be to deepen further out analysis and programme for Brazil. Unlike the previous period, the Latin American giant awakened in June 2013 with mass mobilisations, and nothing will ever be as before.

There is the real potential to develop an alternative revolutionary leadership with influence amongst the working class, and to fight for the seizure of power during this new stage.

These are the challenges the working class movement and revolutionaries face. We invite you to join us on this journey. So that this time the crisis will be paid for by those who caused it, and not the workers and people of our countries.

Support the ISL by buying one of our T-shirts, and help us in our struggle for a revolutionary party in Britain.

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Also available in red with yellow lettering

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Unions and communities Build the rank and file

women, have not built any real defence for workers, they meekly call for “a fair distribution of council cuts”.

Councils have recently announced a fourth year of massive cuts which will worsen in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

With the betrayals of union leaderships like the Communication Workers Union (CWU), Unite and University and College Union (UCU) workers are learning that they will only try to suppress any real fight back.

Most union leaderships do everything they can to stop the fight against austerity.

They allow demonstrations under their control while selling out one struggle after another as they wait for a Labour government.



Workers want to fight, but most union leaders don't want to

But workers cannot wait and neither should they hope for anything from Labour, they do nothing but condemn those who dare to stand up for their communities.

Now in the fourth year of cuts, Labour councils refuse to oppose the cuts or build a fight back against the cuts.

Yet at the same time they are expecting the working class to re-elect those same supine councillors, who will continue to support the cuts, and like the union leaders, tell the working class to wait for the election of a Labour government.

The exploitation of the working class is intensifying and the suffering of the most vulnerable is deepening in order to maximise private profits, but the rich increase their wealth.

According to Oxfam the top five families in Britain now own more wealth than the poorest 20 per cent of the population.

2014 - Welcome to the year of the horse



Support class struggle candidates in the elections

MARTIN RALPH INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The council union leaderships in Liverpool, Unison and GMB, have made a deal with the council not to fight. It means hundreds of their members will lose their jobs. On 5 March when Liverpool TUC and Liverpool Against The Cuts organised a protest outside the council's budget meeting, no speakers representing Unison, GMB or Unite spoke on behalf of council union members. But rank and file members were on the well attended lobby of 200.

On 15 March Unison and Unite organised an “anti-cuts” demonstration and rally. The GMB union did not bother to attend. Not one speaker called for strike action! The bureaucracy also refused community groups permission to display their banners on the platform during the rally and no service user was asked to speak from the communities.

The Liverpool Mayor, Joe Anderson, keeps saying that things must be done “differently”, But what does he mean? In reality he means privatise and use unpaid labour. He also says that Liverpool City Council must prioritise its “priorities.” Those priorities should be our communities, our vulnerable, our young people, our jobs, and our services.

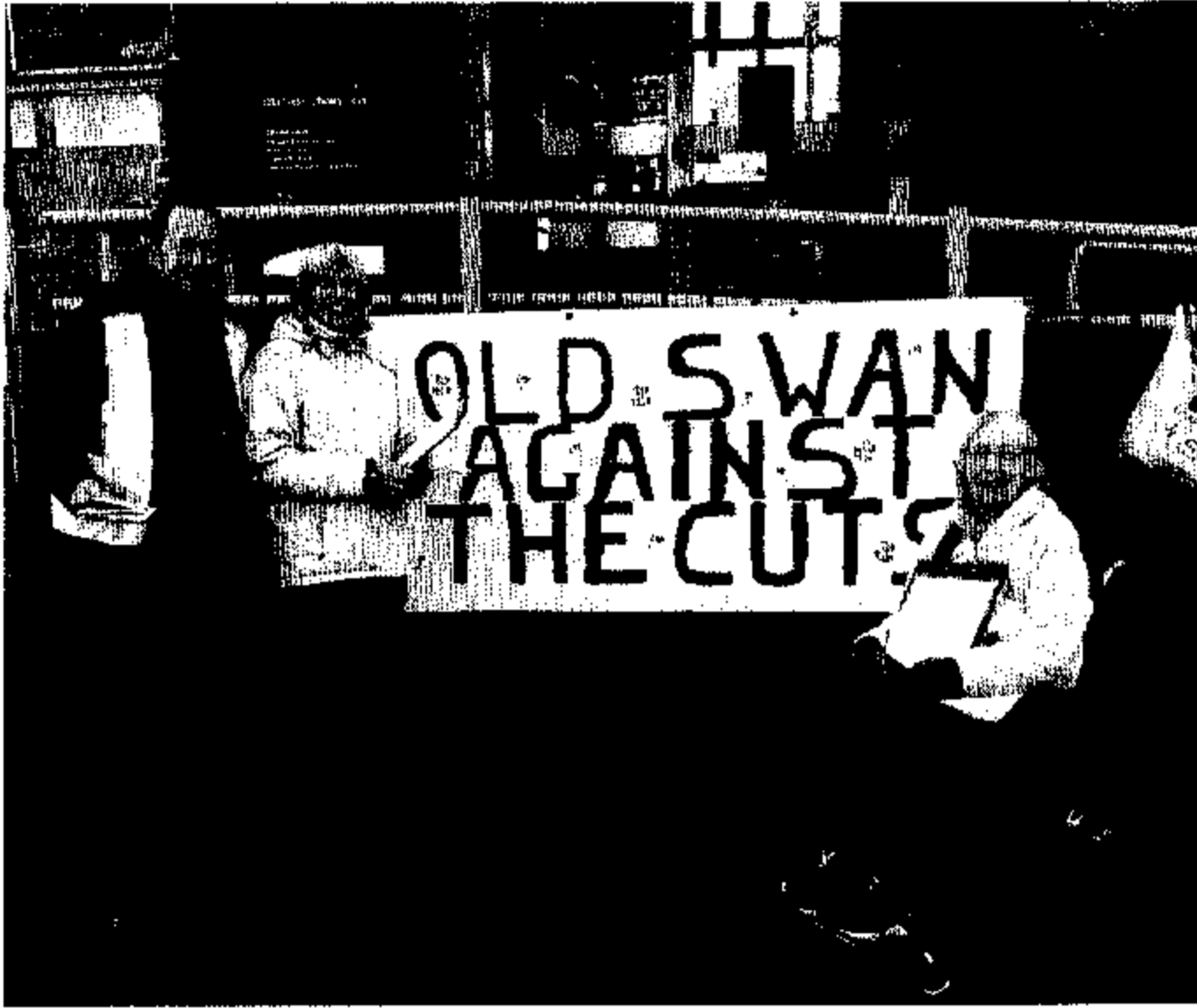
However, when a businessman like Mark Fletcher-Brown (who was paid £650 a day nearly £50,000 in total in 2013) hired by Mayor Anderson argues for Cameron's policy of shrinking the state, it means that this Labour council has nothing other than a pro-business and pro-privatisation agenda.

Never in recent times have attempts to build something new have been so wide. Those who want to defend services and jobs will have to build from below in the unions and in the communities. This is the only road in which to construct a defence and a fight back.

We support all class struggle community organisations that have emerged in many areas over recent years such as the anti-cuts groups, those fighting for disabled people's rights, against the bedroom tax and benefit cuts, and anti-fracking campaigns.

Support Old Swan Against the Cuts in the elections

MARGARET MCADAM INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE



In order to participate in the local elections it was necessary that Old Swan Against the Cuts (OSAC) needed to become a political party. It was unanimously agreed therefore in one of the regular meetings (held two-weekly) to form a legal party in order to stand in the upcoming local elections on 22 May. It was understood the election campaign would be a continuation of OSAC work over the last year – fighting all cuts, discrimination and attacks on class rights. Martin Ralph was unanimously agreed as the candidate.

An election is a very important opportunity to explain to workers and people what type of struggle and leadership is necessary to fight capitalism and help build the class struggle during the campaign.

The International Socialist League, whose members helped develop OSAC, have stood under the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition umbrella, with reservations, in the past. The majority of the OSAC group however did not know of TUSC and had no desire to join it.

So a legal political party was created in order to stand under the name of OSAC. There are 23 members, which is growing a little each week, with 50 supporters. OSAC's work has won respect and support from union branches and Liverpool Against the Cuts. The valuable support received from all these organisations and its members means that OSAC now has sufficient resources to participate in the local election.

TUSC is controlled by a national committee of the Rail Maritime and Transport union, Socialist Party, Socialist Workers Party and Independent Socialist Network and they have the right to veto other organisations that want to join the committee. The ISL does not think this a good method for building a workers, democratic and socialist alternative to the Labour party.

In this election TUSC are hoping to stand 625 candidates in order to contest 15 per cent of the total seats, which would entitle their main candidates to a TV election broadcast. This means that paper candidates are being stood, that is candidates who have no history of class struggle work and are not known in the area. This has been common practice of TUSC which the ISL opposes.



Protest against cuts, but no council union leaders spoke

Build OSAC and grass roots struggle

Locally OSAC has built a reputation of being a consistent and fighting organisation. 1000s of leaflets are regularly distributed in the area with information about the cuts, people's rights, and the fight back. The only opposition has come from people like the local Labour councillor Peter Brenner, who aggressively argued against the anti-cuts campaign. He has been adamant that the local library will stay open, even though there are already massive cuts to the opening hours. Despite many requests Mr Brenner has failed to put in writing any reassurance that what remains of the library service will stay.

OSAC stands for public services and accountability, and opposes all forms of oppression against women, disabled people, Black and Ethnic minorities, and young people.

"Many of us have woken up to the fact we have a supine media who push the government's agenda by disgracefully scape-goating benefit claimants and immigrants to cover a crisis that has been created by the greed and corruption of those at the top. Disabled people, the unemployed, immigrants, the youth and low paid workers are not responsible for this crisis.

Old Swan, like many working class areas in the country suffers from cut backs: there is now a part-time library, we have a youth club that struggles to stay open because its council funding was completely cut and there are even people who are forced to beg at food banks.

In 2014 and beyond we are going to see Liverpool City Council implementing more cuts to statutory and non-statutory services. Which means things will only get worse.

Old Swan Against the Cuts is part of a growing national opposition to these plans. We work with Liverpool Against the Cuts and Liverpool TUC and we are calling on unions and communities to fight the devastation that is happening to our communities".

OLD SWAN
AGAINST THE CUTS

Education cuts hits special needs children

Socialist Voice interviewed Karen Price, who is an anti-cuts and bedroom tax activist, on the effect of council cuts in the community, cuts are something Labour councils do, but they don't care about the effect.

SV: You have seen council cuts over years, can you say something about what services you are involved in and the effect of cuts?

I have had both paid and voluntary work supporting children with special educational needs in a number of ways including transporting them to and from school for over 10 years and I have seen the impact cuts have had in that time.

The majority of these children have a range of disabilities and impairments with varying degrees of severity although some have problems that arise from neglect and/or abuse. Each child is different and all have individual personalities and needs.

Children used to be transported in taxis from their home to school and back, which meant three or four children were picked up by a taxi and there was one adult passenger assistant. That was a ratio of four to one. But cuts were made to the service which meant the use of taxis were stopped and all school runs were allocated mini-buses.

After that cut between eight to twelve children were picked up, but still only with one passenger assistant. This means that the workload was increased by a factor of three.

SV: In practice what does that mean?

The following is an example of a school run with nine children:

Start	District
1st	Walton
2nd /3rd	Fazakerly
4th/5th/6th	Croxteth Park
7th	West Derby
8th	PrincessDrive (Huyton)
9th	Mather Ave
Arrival at school	Woolton

In practical day to day terms that means the first child is picked up at 8am and hence are on the bus for a longer period of time. There can be MANY behavioural problems that arise as children get ready for school. That can happen to anyone at anytime. An increase in the number of children and therefore journey time increases the likelihood of problems such as delays due to their families over-sleeping or issues arising when they are on the mini-bus.



Karen speaking against council cuts

From the 1st pick-up to arriving at school we pass through many districts of the city and the longer the journey the greater the possibility of delays such as road works, diversions or traffic accidents, which at peak time occur regularly, all such unforeseen problems means late arrival at the school.

Any change in routine is a major upheaval for children who have a wide spectrum of special needs with different levels of severity and consequently different stress and anxiety levels. The children's increased stress levels and coping mechanisms all differ but include rocking on the spot with hand, arm gestures and screaming. Some children become very upset by the noises and gestures used by others. Consequently the majority of the children become

disturbed.

Furthermore this impacts on the work of the teaching staff and classes who have to cope with children who are disturbed, confused and anxious. And all has a detrimental impact on their education.

SV: What's your opinion of the cuts

All the cuts have been carried out without any thought, care or consideration to the welfare or needs of these children. The deciding factor has primarily been to save money! There is much more to say but this is a basic account that shows in simple terms the impact of cuts on the special educational needs of these children.

I have one daughter who is aged 23 who has worked as a care worker with adults for over three years and she has seen how the cuts have impacted on care provision. Many services are either no longer provided or have been cut dramatically.

As we all know the most vulnerable and needy are already suffering as a direct result of the Government's attack on benefits. And the burden of these cuts hits women who are twice as likely to be affected than a man. I am a mum, my daughter will become a mum and I will be a nanna in early September. Children are "our" future. WE all have to accept the responsibility to fight for OUR children's future....Because our ACTIONS will determine what happens!

International Socialist League

Britain, one of the most advanced countries of the world, is ready for socialism. But the working class faces great barriers, the Labour Party, the trade union bureaucracy and the illusions sections of the working class have in the Labour party.

The so-called British revolutionary parties failed, one after the other, in the task of leading the working class to defeat the bourgeoisie and its acolytes, the Labour party and the Trade Unions bureaucracy.

The building of the ISL is of utmost importance to surpass the crisis facing the working class. Our programme is based in the necessity for the working class to become the leadership of the struggles and to unify all the oppressed against the government and capitalism.

Join us in the fight back:

isinfo@talktalk.net or www.facebook.com/isinfo

Struggle for a revolutionary programme and party

Part of the turmoil in the revolutionary left has led to the International Socialist Network becoming involved in a regroupment process. The ISN was formed by comrades who had left the Socialist Workers Party last year because of the SWP's refusal to properly investigate an allegation of rape against one of their leading members by a young SWP comrade, (<http://goo.gl/vOayU5>).

The regroupment process involves three other groups at the moment — Socialist Resistance, Anti-Capitalist Initiative and Workers Power. Each group has a right of veto over whether or not to include other groups in the process. While the ISN is interested in widening out to involve other groups, Socialist Resistance is not.

The International Socialist League approached the ISN about participating in this process and at the ISN national meeting in March they voted by 24 to accept the ISL into the project with just one abstention.

The manner of discussion with the ISN is open, honest and serious. This does not mean that we are in agreement with everything with the ISN but we believe they are genuinely seeking a class struggle alternative.

It is essential that all the parties participating place the programmatic discussion at the centre. This discussion, however, should not be threatened by a veto from any of the "group of four" which began the merging process.

We think there is a basis on which we should join the "group of four", since there is a genuine will to build a new organisation in which we could discuss and approve, in the near future, a revolutionary programme. Such a programme would need to discuss the central problems facing the working class, how the masses can be united for action against austerity, and how this can be the basis for uniting the masses in a revolutionary struggle for socialism, in which the working class would have to take power in connection with an international revolutionary development of the class struggle.

Tim Nelson, ISN, in a meeting with representatives from the other groups on 18 January said, "The ISN should seek to build joint forums, meetings and action with others on the revolutionary left to build an organic foundation for revolutionary unity". <http://>

internationalsocialistnetwork.org/

Many have tried since the early 1990s but have failed to construct an alternative to Labour or a revolutionary alternative, as there has often been more attention paid to structures than the class struggle and programme. The ISL shares important perspectives with the ISN, such as in rank and file struggle in the unions and communities; women's oppression and the need to combat male chauvinism in the revolutionary left and in the trade unions; standing class struggle candidates against Labour; and with Syria and Ukraine.

ISL letter to the ISN 24 February 2014

The ISL is interested in being part of the re-groupment process that currently brings together four groups, recognising this as part of a world-wide process, where a number of revolutionary parties have not faced the real tasks of the working class in their country and internationally.

Interest in the regroupment project came from ISL experience in working with members of the ISN in Liverpool on common issues: the student movement, Higher Education strikes, the Syrian revolution, the importance of rank and file struggle against bureaucracy, and the importance of the women's struggle. We also appreciate the discussion held with ISN members at recent meetings.

Capitalist crisis and programme

The world economic crisis continues to deepen as does the response to it, not only in the Middle East and Europe but also in Turkey, Brazil and other countries.

In Europe the euro-zone economy contracted around 1.2% in 2012, and the growing public debt is the pretext used to attack over 50 years of workers' achievements. Austerity in Britain places the greatest burden on the working class, especially the most vulnerable and minorities.

We are for a revolutionary party that is based in the struggles of the working class and in the struggle for the Fourth International, which is aim of the International Workers League-Fourth International (do not proclaim to be the

Fourth International). The IWL seeks to build in the struggle whether in Brazil, Syria, the USA or Britain without self-proclamation and based on a programme that is developed out of the experiences of the working class and our groups.

The ISL perspective for Britain priorities the discussion on programme, which includes, "Rank and file organisations have to fight to control the unions by means of mass meetings and workers' democracy and it has to build on the rich history of rank and file movements in the post-war period.

"At the same time, we recognize the right of the workers to build new rank and file organisations to replace the degenerated and corrupted traditional unions, when it's the will of the rank and file to do so and is at the service of the struggles" ISL conference document October 2013.

Only the working class can find a way out of the present situation, in alliance with students etc.

A programme has to express perspectives for supporting and linking with the class struggle in relation to Europe and internationally such as in Syria.

We think we need to discuss what our programmatic agreements are, out of which can come a new programme and new experiences to test out our agreements in the class struggle.

Progressive split

The ISL thinks the split from the SWP as progressive and the question of fighting women's and all oppressions is a central point for Marxists. We recognise that all working class organisations face this bourgeois pressure. The IWL and all its sections while oriented in this fight against this pressure recognises that it is not easy and so puts this fight centrally in the programme for revolution.

The ISL has a wide number of contacts in the unions and communities. We have just completed the process of legally registering Old Swan Against the Cuts (OSAC) as a political party to stand in the Liverpool local elections in May. OSAC unanimously rejected standing as TUSC.

OSAC are campaigning against council cuts and closures such as the libraries, for disabled people's rights and is part of Liverpool Against the Cuts. Two ISL members are part of this group and one

was unanimously elected represent the group in the elections. OSAC is 100 per cent working class and the group and the committee is 50 per cent women. Most are taking their first political steps but it is possible that if Left Unity develops more towards the working class they can be part of that.

We agree with the ISN on the question of a multi-tendency revolutionary group.

Some regroupment experiences

The regroupment process is an important part of the IWL tradition and practice. Not all regroupments end successfully but each experience can be rewarding to help develop towards a revolutionary party. In June 1992 comrades in the CS (our current in Lula's PT) in Brazil were expelled from the PT. In response the CS formed the Revolutionary Front which at a Congress in April 1993 became the PSTU with the fusion of CS into the new party alongside a number of smaller groups. Not all remained. It took another year to discuss which International to join. In that case the choice was the IWL or the CWI.

In Argentina in May 2011 after eleven months of debates, discussions, common activities and mutual agreements the merger took place between the FOS (Socialist Workers' Front) and the COI (Internationalist Workers Trend). This party was formed amidst the Arab revolution where the youth and the workers played a key role, amidst the workers' strikes against social adjustments in Europe, the mobilizations in Bolivia - against the populist governments' policies - and Honduras and the riots in the United States against anti-immigrant laws.

In the first week of January 2007, the foundational Congress of Partito di Alternativa Comunista (PdAC) of Italy was held as a new stage of the organisation PC-ROL (Progetto Comunista - Rifondare l'Opposizione del Lavoratori). This party had had important experiences inside Rifondazione Comunista. Soon after it joined the IWL. There are also long experiences in Spain and Portugal.

Advances but of course also mistakes are part of our international experience, only those who don't fight never make mistakes, the point of course is to learn from them.

The PSTU in Brazil is large and has strength in the working class, so they can attain important leadership positions. The special conditions in

Brazil, the dictatorship, the lack of a social democratic party, the betrayals of the communist party meant the working class had to build a new party after 1979 and that was the Workers Party, which our comrades helped build. They also had an input into the founding programme, which included the position what is won is won on the streets and class fights, parliament can be used but not to replace the class struggle.

The PSTU are able to be an important part of the leadership in CSP-Conlutas federation. CSP-Conlutas includes 100s of trade unions, trade union tendencies, social movements (homeless, landless etc) Race and Class (some comrades met Tamiris last September from Quilombo Race and Class) and ANEL, (national student union, not the PT one!)

We can give further information more about all these experiences.

Second part of "Stop Violence Against Women: History of International Women's Day"

<http://internationalsocialistnetwork.org/> (due to reasons of space this article has been shortened for SV)

SARA MAYO, ISN

International Women's Day this year closely coincided with the 30th anniversary of the start of the great Miners' Strike of 1984-85 in the UK. This was the greatest battle of the working class in this country in living memory... The devastating consequences of the miners' ultimate defeat at the cowardly hands of the then Labour Party leader Kinnock and the TUC leaders who refused to call out the whole class in defence of the strike meant that our class here suffered an almighty setback...

Furthermore, a key lesson for us today is the amazing role of women in this strike, women who showed just what they were capable of as they fought alongside their brothers, helping to put women's rights back on the agenda too. During the strike the vital lesson of working class solidarity and collective action also helped to directly challenge

sexism, racism and homophobia in the communities, raising consciousness and changing attitudes...

Meanwhile, Thatcher may have been the first female prime minister in UK history, but she was no feminist icon and was instead a ruthless class enemy...

Even worse, 'New' Labour directly continued with her government's policies and embraced capitalism wholeheartedly... For instance, one of the first acts of Blair's government, following the Labour landslide of 1997, was to destroy free education at university by introducing tuition fees and replacing grants with loans... One of the horrifying consequences of both tuition fees (continued and increased under the Con-Dems) and the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance in England and cuts in Wales has been the huge increase in the number of female students turning to the sex trade to help pay for their education, as research by the NUS has shown for example.

Today of course we face the brutal austerity of the Con-Dem government, whose spending cuts for the working class are also implemented by both Labour and Plaid Cymru in Wales... let International Women's Day be a call to women everywhere to once again move into the streets, into the unions and into socialist, anti-racist and feminist struggle to get rid of this government...

However, I also need to issue a warning to socialists, anarchists and the labour movement as a whole: while it is right that we concentrate the blame on the system itself that doesn't lesson our own responsibilities to challenge sexism and abuse of women on our side... We need action now... We cannot have a tokenistic attitude towards women's rights. Nor can the labour movement look the other way and pretend it didn't happen when perpetrators are exposed by survivor activists in the movement... Furthermore, of course we don't think all men are capable of abuse but we do need our comrades to take a principled stand against gender-based violence and sexism, wherever it rears its destructive and divisive head.

...

Sisters and brothers! International Women's Day 2014 is an opportunity to take our message of solidarity, struggle and resistance to the movement and the world as a whole. Now is the time to fight back, build a mass movement with women at the heart of it and make history again.

On Yanukovych's fall in Ukraine

STATEMENT OF IWL(FI) 3 MARCH

Yanukovych is overthrown by a people's mobilisation!

No trust in Timoshenko, Klitschko or the new interim government of Turchinov!

Ukraine will only be independent under a worker's government!

The revolutionary mobilisation of the Ukrainian people overthrew the genocidal, oligarchic and servile government of Victor Yanukovych.

A democratic victory was achieved showing the way for people across the world, creating fear amongst the ruling classes in the Ukraine, Russia, imperialist Europe and the entire world.

Tens of thousands organised themselves and seized the symbolic Maidan Square (Independence Square) where they fought the brutal repression which was ordered by Yanukovych. The sinister Berkut (elite police troops) tried several times to drown Maidan's brave defenders in blood.

The police siege and dozens of snipers killed over one hundred people and injured over one thousand. But the self-defence militias at Maidan, using sticks, stones, Molotov cocktails and guns taken from police stations, resisted and opened up a crisis of power in the country.

The fierce resistance finally broke the armed forces' chain of command, and split them on whether or not to crush the demonstrators.

Yanukovych and his entourage were cast adrift and at the last moment desperately tried to implement an agreement to save his government from total collapse.

This agreement, signed "from the top" by Yanukovych and the parliamentary opposition (The Motherland, UDAR and Swoboda), and backed by representatives from Europe, US imperialism, and also Russia, was strongly rejected by the Maidan occupiers. The promise of "future elections" in December and a "new government of national unity in ten days", was rejected, the reply was firm, "Yanukovych out now"!

The government collapsed on Saturday morning, 22 February, and the tyrant fled Kiev.

When the city awoke it was in the



Maidan

hands of demonstrators, whose self-defence organisations had occupied the main strategic centres of power: the presidential palace, the central bank and main ministries.

Images of thousands invading Yanukovych's luxury mansion were seen across the world including an interview with a member of the militias sitting in the presidential chair. It was testimony to a dual power situation.

Dramatic lack of a revolutionary leadership

Following Yanukovych's departure, while the self-defence militias occupied the main public buildings, the pro-EU opposition and the far-right forces tried to fill the "power vacuum" taking advantage of the lack of a revolutionary leadership.

The Ukrainian Communist Party has always supported Yanukovych, approved his repressive laws and is now preaching that the oligarchic satrap was a "legitimate president" who has been overthrown by a "fascist coup". Stalinism, as in Middle East, stands once again with tyrants against the revolutionary masses.

In this context, the opposition's oligarchic sector used the Supreme Rada (parliament), which was not occupied by the demonstrators, to close the crisis of power vacuum.

The Rada "deposed" Yanukovych (which had already happened) and named Alexandr Turchinov as the "interim President" for both legislative and executive powers, and called for elections on 25 May.

They are trying to divert and stop the resistance and stabilise their control but it is not easy because the mass movement feels victorious and does not trust these "new" representatives in power so they continue to mobilise.

Moreover, the economic situation which is on the verge of collapse prevents these

"representatives" from taking measures to effectively overcome the misery and unemployment of the Ukrainian working class.

Our position

1- Yanukovych's fall represents a huge victory for the revolutionary mobilisation of the Ukrainian people who defeated the repression, divided the repressive forces, and but did not fall for the deceptive "pact" between Yanukovych and the parliamentary opposition supported by European imperialism and Putin. In addition their actions caused the collapse of the main institutions of political power through the self-defence militias.

2- There is dual power in the Ukraine. On the one hand, the self-nominated "new government", based in the far-right and pro-imperialist opposition and, on the other, the latent power of Maidan. Although far-right sectors participate in the self-defence militias and a section have been co-opted as agents of the "new power".

3- There was a revolutionary crisis, a power vacuum on 22 February, when protesters and self-defence militias took control of the main state buildings and Yanukovych fled.

This happened regardless of whether the mass movement were aware, and due to a lack of a political revolutionary leadership, the crisis of power has not been resolved in their favour.

4- It is therefore essential that revolutionaries stand for a policy in response to this specific situation:

The transfer of power to Timoshenko, Turchinov, Yatseniuk, Dobkin (governor of Kharkov) or any other leader or party of the "pro-Western opposition" must not be unaccepted.

They are part of the same oligarchy that led Ukraine into deep chaos, and that exploit the people, curtail democratic freedoms, and delivers the country's wealth to both the EU and Putin!

No trust in the usurpers of the revolution. For the struggle of the Ukrainian people!

5- This is critical, because what is currently posed in Ukraine, beyond the appointment of a weak interim government, is the question of political power. Our position is that power should pass into the hands of the democratic

War zone in Sao Paulo as demo against World Cup is repressed

BY PSTU, BRAZIL SECTION OF THE IWL

On 22 February a peaceful protest in Sao Paulo's city centre was brutally attacked by the state's military police and 262 people were arrested, at a time when huge amounts of public funds are being used to build World Cup stadiums. The rally was organised to demand funding for public health and education.

Staging a show of power 2,300 police officers flooded Republica Square (one of the main squares in Sao Paulo) where the march convened. The officers outnumbered the demonstrators three to one and also used low-flying helicopters to follow the protesters.

Tactics of intimidation and repression were clearly being used from start of the demonstration. Activists arriving at the meeting point were searched and legal advisors had their identification documents confiscated by the police.

Despite police intimidation, the demonstration remained peaceful. The organisers stressed the importance of not reacting to police provocation. Despite this an hour after the beginning of the march the police brutally attacked the demonstrators. They used the narrow streets to cut the demonstration in half using a police cordon. The police then surrounded around 200 demonstrators, many of them under 18. They were beaten with batons and many were pulled across the street by their shirts and handcuffed.

The press were impeded from reporting the repression. Five reporters were detained and beaten and their equipment was damaged. Lawyers were threatened and prevented from assisting people. The repression spread quickly through the city, with gas bombs and rubber bullets being used indiscriminately, some hitting bystanders. Hundreds of protesters were detained, and were charged with vandalism and disrespect for police authority but they were released a few hours later.

The method used by the police force is widely known as the "Hamburger Kessel", originally tested in 1986 in Hamburg, Germany, in an attempt to break down an anti-nuclear protest. It was universally condemned, and by German courts determined it to be an illegal violation of human rights and the right to protest. [SV editor: called kettling in Britain first used in 1995.]



The following day the police command admitted in a press interview that there was no vandalism or provocation from demonstrators prior to the police repression. Justifying their actions, police stated their undercover agents believed was a possibility of "a disruption" by activists and therefore opted to use "preventive" repression.

Criminalisation

The brutal repression of the protests in Sao Paulo was not an isolated incident. There is a widespread campaign to criminalise protests and social movements. President Dilma Rousseff's federal government have just presented a bill to congress which will prohibit activists from wearing masks and demands that the military police are informed about any plans for public action. Additionally, the government has moved an urgent motion for an anti-terror bill. This aims to classify demonstrators as potential terrorists who will be subject to sentences of 15 to 30 years, and the bill is planned to be passed before the FIFA World Cup.

Brazilian and state governments, including those supported by the right-wing opposition as in the state of Sao Paulo, have increased the repression and criminalisation of protests with the intention of ensuring the smooth functioning of the World Cup in June. The World Cup is widely questioned by the population due to large amounts of public funds being used to the detriment of investments in schools and hospitals. A recent poll has indicated that over 51 per cent of the population wished that Brazil had not been chosen to host the event.

But the government and the police forces have demonstrated that they are willing to do everything in their power to guarantee the event that will generate enormous financial rewards for big multinational companies and international investors, even if this means applying dictatorial measures throughout the country.

organisations of the working class.

It is now more than ever, essential to promote the independent organisation and mobilisation of the working class and the youth. As a matter of urgency a national conference or meeting should be convened to discuss a program that will serve the social interests of the exploited classes, and central body of the working class takes power to carry it out. 6- It is the exploited people who ousted Yanukovych who must take charge of their own destiny and democratically decide the political and economic direction. Only by concentrating power in the hands of the working class and the exploited people of Ukraine, can a coherent anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist program socialist program be applied, to ensure the full independence of the country (both from the EU and the Russia), nationalisation of its natural resources, with full democratic freedoms, respect for minority rights, confronting both neo-Nazi provocation and any separatist attempts. Only a workers and popular government can develop the agrarian revolution and realise full employment for improvement in the living conditions of the people.

7- For this reason it is critical to defend the expropriation of all oligarchs (from Yanukovych to Tymoshenko), imperialism, and the Russian oligarchy, and put the entire economy at the service of the country. The struggle must continue until the people are the owners of all of country's wealth, not just a handful of millionaires who sold-out to the EU or Russia!

8- Therefore, we support the continuation of Maidan Square's mobilisation. It should take place in all Ukrainian cities and the people should not give up their weapons. The task of revolutionaries is to continue developing the struggle for a socialist program and for centralised bodies of popular power, always fighting against the influence of neo-Nazi and ultranationalist sectors.

9- The situation of the Ukrainian revolutionary process and dual power dramatically reinforces the need for a revolutionary working class, socialist party that is part of a democratically centralised International. The construction of the revolutionary leadership, as in all countries, should be the number one priority of Marxists, the working class and social movements.

They shoot children for protesting

CANAN SAGAR, INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE



Berkin Elvan was 14 years old when he became one of the victims of the police attacks on the Gezi Park resistance that led to the June uprising in Turkey in 2013. The police aimed at the young boy and shot him in the head with a gas cylinder. He was in a coma for 269 days and died on 11 March 2014, just 15 years old when he died.

Berkin had left his home to buy a loaf of bread for his mother.

The majority of the cities in Turkey protested against the brutal suppression of pickets at Gezi Park last June when 2.5 million protested and 8,000 received injuries from police attacks. Protests have continued since then.

Berkin's funeral took place on 12 March and police brutally attacked the funeral injuring 20 of the demonstrators, one was shot in the head by a tear gas canister and 150 were arrested.

The masses were chanting "prime minister resign", and, "AKP government killed Berkin". However, there is no sign that the prime minister Tayyip Erdogan or members of the AKP government will resign.

It is said over a million people in 30 cities took to the streets that day and for the next few days.

Marches were also supported by the left unions KESK, DISK, TTB and TMMOB who called for mobilisations with a one hour stoppage in workplaces.

The RED militants, section of the IWL, were at the fore-front of the fight carrying their flags. ISL comrades joined the 1,000 protestors in London who marched to the parliament buildings to show solidarity to the Turkish resistance and in memory of Berkin.

Youth in the forefront

The high school Youth Opposition of Hope started a protest in Kadikoy, Istanbul on 17 March 2014.

Many students went to the streets

of Istanbul after Berkin's death, and called on all high school students to go out onto the streets, and stated that in commemoration of Berkin they would not leave the streets.

They protested against the Turkish government and police force and shouted "if there's no Berkin, there's no lesson", marching and chanting slogans, "We will not forget Berkin, he will live in our high schools".

Berkin's mother Gulsum Elvan said, "it's not god who took my son it is Tayyip Erdogan".

Meanwhile the Prime Minister, MPs and their children have been taking something else - millions of euros from the public purse.

Mrs Elvan said that "their children steal and our children die"!

Although the cause of death was known, the government asked for an autopsy, which increased the anger of the masses and was an insult to his family.

Konak, Directorate of Education, requested a list of students, teachers, administrators who attended the protests after Berkin Elvan's death. He convened an urgent meeting for one reason only, that was to find out who had attended Berkin Elvan's funeral.

Student occupation

On 19 March an abandoned house in Besiktas was occupied by students. They named the house the "Berkin Elvan Student home".

The four story building had not been occupied in over four years. The occupation took place on the birthday of Ali Ismail Korkmaz who was beaten to death by police in Eskisehir in the June uprising.

A placard was hung in front of the house saying "Berkin Elvan Student home".

One youth said, "We came to this neighbourhood as friends and neighbours. Firstly, we would like to invite everybody to help with cleaning. We want to make this house a permanent student home. In time we will build a library, student centres and a symposium and there will be art and cultural activities".

The neighbourhood expressed astonishment but approval.

Spanish youth build the struggle

MAY ASSIR, MEMBER OF CORRIENTE ROJA, IWL SECTION IN THE SPANISH STATE

We, the Spanish youth, have been raised thinking that we live in a welfare state with a splendid public education system which would provide us with a dreamlike future and a great health system that cured everyone and most of all, allow us irreversible high minimum wages where people could buy a house, a car and even have decent labour rights!



"bread, jobs, dignity" a million in Madrid, 22 March

We grew up like the Greeks, Portuguese and Italians, but since 2008 (the year of the crisis) we discovered that we live in a day-to-day "worst-fare" state.

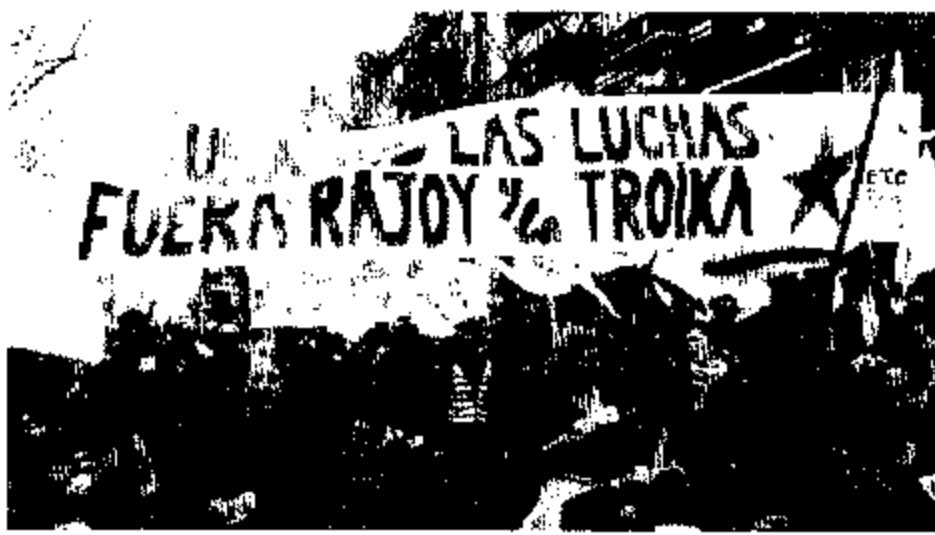
Our public education is not cheap anymore and once we finish we have three options: leave our country to work in England or Germany, stay and hope we are lucky enough to find an insecure part-time job, or be one of the 60 per cent of unemployed youth in Spain.

Our public health service has been turned into a private wealth business for the private sector that has prioritised making more money, even if that is at the cost of curing fewer patients.

Minimum wages are minimised more every day, and of course our labour rights are disappearing rapidly.

The deterioration of society is no coincidence. For the past twenty years high level business men and bankers have been speculating in the construction market to such an extent that it collapsed and unveiled a huge debt to the European Union.

For us, the European Union is a hierarchy where the German government rules and the rest must obey.



Banner says Unite the struggles, [president]Rajoy and the Troika (EU and IMF) out. Corriente Roja, the IWL section in Madrid

In this new reality we knew we had to stand up for our rights.

The effects of this unmerciful crisis, on 15 May 2011 led thousands of people to an occupation of "la puerta del sol" (the most important square in Madrid) against our government's corruption and injustice and we took to the streets for many days.

This young movement shook many out of a long "apolitical" sleep and we have not stopped since then.

We are in a time when indefinite strikes can occur anywhere, where thousands are demonstrating to defend our public health services, where small villages like Burgos defeated the government's urbanisation plans, and where the Spanish miners are a model for every young activist.

We are fighting against a debt that we never generated, against corrupt politicians who do not represent the youth or workers, and against an EU which is condemning us to dire economic misery.

We have proven the strength of our movement but we still have important tasks to develop.

The leaders of the worker's movement are clearly defending the business men: the two biggest trade unions (CCOO and UGT) in 2012 signed 95 per cent of the mass dismissals.

The government decreases our rights every Friday and these trade unions have the capacity to call for a general strike every Saturday; but they don't.

We as a movement have the need for an organisation to sort out our demands and turn them into one struggle against a government and a debt that stands for the interests of the EU's bankers and business men.

An international organisation that fights for our demands and in our interests until we get what we want: the right to a future without hunger or need.

World Crisis hits Australia Cutting jobs, hitting benefits

BY DEREK MORTIMER

Australia's Tory government has launched an unprecedented attack on the rights of workers, blaming enhancements, or penalty rates, as they are termed in Australia, for the financial crisis in a whole range of industries from car manufacturing to hospitality.

Since it was elected in a sweeping victory against a discredited Labour government in September last year the Coalition of Liberal and National parties has prepared the ground for an all-out assault.

Treasurer Joe Hockey said, "We've got to reduce our costs of making things in Australia."



AMWU union official Steve Dargavel (second from left) after the announcement that the plant is to close.

Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane said "we do have to have competitive working conditions and we do have to make sure that some of the things that have happened in industry in Australia in the past are addressed."

Prime Minister Tony Abbott recently blamed penalty rates and loadings paid on top of the award wage for the proposed closure of Toyota's plant in Australia. At least 2,500 workers will lose their jobs directly and up to 44,000 jobs in support industries will go.

The company will join Ford and General Motors Holden in ceasing production by 2017, marking the end of car manufacturing in Australia with the overall loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Aluminium producer Alcoa has said its smelter and rolling mill near Geelong, Victoria will close this year, as will a rolling mill in Yennora, NSW.

The company was given a \$40 million grant last year by the then Labor government. There will be a direct job loss of 980 and a further estimated loss of 3000 jobs in subsidiary industries.

Fruit canning factory SPC Ardmona in Shepparton, Victoria, owned by

Coca-Cola Amatil, one of the largest bottling companies in the world has also announced it will close, with an estimated overall loss of 2000 jobs.

Senior government figures, including PM Abbott and Treasurer Hockey, claimed that workers at SPC had "astounding" conditions which were the cause of the company's financial crisis.

The company denied this and even a member of Abbott's government, Sharon Stone, in whose electorate the company is located, said the Prime Minister was a liar.

Union officials said that the manager of SPC Ardmona had told them at the end of last year that the Abbott government

had pressured the company into forcing workers onto award wages, which would have meant cuts of up to \$30,000 a year for many, if it was to receive a \$25 million bail-out.

Australia's iconic Qantas airlines has announce it will slash five thousand of its 22,000 full time workforce over the next three years after announcing a loss of \$250 million. It is also expected to use the crisis to freeze wages.

Abbott, Hockey and other ministers are all singing from the same song sheet. Abbott called for "an end to the handout mentality" while Hockey has demanded "the end of the age of entitlement."

The massive government and employer attacks on wages and conditions are taking place despite the fact that the wage price index rose only 2.6 per cent in 2013. This is below inflation of 2.7 per cent.

A Fairfax Media economics writer said, "It's the lowest outcome this century, and also the lowest on record because the records only go back to the late 1990s. Throughout most of this century wages have been growing at more than 3.5 per cent. For four years from 2005 they grew at more than 4 per cent."

Bill Hunter's Archives

Rank and file movements after the 2nd World War

This is part two taken from Bill's book on the unofficial committees of the dock workers after the Second World War.

Under the pressure of the feelings of the rank and file, a National Delegate Conference of the docks section of the Transport and General Workers Union declared their support for the demand for 25 shillings a day.

A National Portworkers' Committee was set up and Bert Aylward was elected as its organiser. The National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union members on the National Portworkers' Committee included Bert Aylward and Dick Barrett, the General Secretary of the NAS&D. Both of them were at that time members of the Communist Party.

The Party had given reluctant support to the strike at the beginning, then began advocating a return to work. The Party members eventually succeeded in moving a resolution in the unofficial committee in London — known as the London Progressive Committee — that the dockers return to work and give 28 days notice of strike action.

Some of the members, including Dick Barrett, walked out of the national unofficial committee when they were told that they had no alternative but to call for a general return to work. Bert Aylward and several other Party members broke with the Communist Party over their policy during this strike. Barrett was to leave sometime later.

Ten days after the return the London Progressive Committee disbanded on a motion proposed by Communist Party members. At that time the Party had a policy of national unity behind the Labour Government. A number of members of the Progressive Committee, led by Harry Constable and Bert Aylward, began organising another unofficial committee.

Aylward, like Harry Constable, subsequently joined the Trotskyist group in the Labour Party. Among all the unofficial leaders Harry Constable had the greatest ability to bring politics into relationship with the dockers' life. Aylward and Constable played a leading part in developing a National Portworkers' Defence Committee built on links forged during the 10 weeks struggle of 1945. The National Portworkers' Defence Committee began a campaign for a "Dockers' Charter". The Charter



MIS investigated a dock strike dispute in 1949, as dock workers unofficial action increased

consisted of five economic demands: a 40 hour week, a daily minimum of 25 shillings, a fortnight's paid holiday, a pension scheme for aged and infirm dockers, and a welfare services in all ports. It also demanded an end to casual labour. During a press conference to condemn a dock strike in 1951, Arthur Deakin, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, declared the Charter was "impracticable".

The conditions and traditions that prevailed in the docks resulted in a stormy period of unofficial strikes, some of which were lengthy. In 1948 eleven London dockers were working on zinc oxide. The men stopped work and asked for protective clothing. The employers refused. The men demanded 'dirt money' to replace their ruined clothes. This was refused. Eventually they worked the cargo.

Then they were charged by the Dock Labour Board on which sat union officials, suspended for a week and deprived of attendance money for 13 weeks. This callous action enraged fellow dockers and a strike spread throughout the London docks. Deakin, the leader of the T&GWU, supported the sentences and declared the whole strike to be a "red plot". Attlee broadcast to the country on the same theme.

Zinc oxide can turn the flesh purple on contact with the skin and ruins the clothes of those working with it. Attlee, however, declared that the men refused to work because the cargo "happened to be a little dirty". The strike committee was denounced as being led by members of the Communist Party. The strike committee was in fact composed of 27 dockers who were members of no party, 10 Labour Party members, and five Communist Party members.

Twenty thousand London dockers were on strike for two and a half weeks, and there was sympathy action in Liverpool. A State of Emergency was declared by the government on 28 June. Aneurin

Bevan stated in a Cabinet meeting that emergency action was inevitable if a socialist government was not to be undermined at a critical moment by indiscipline and subversion.

The dockers returned to work demanding a public inquiry into the Dock Labour Scheme, with special reference to Clause 10 (the punishment clause). The Strike Committee recommended the return: "in view of the complete line-up of reactionary forces against us and the considerable complacency of the respective factions — employers, higher trade union officials, and the government".

In April 1949, after the 'Dromore' or 'Canadian Seamen's Strike,' as it was generally known then, Constable, Saunders and Timothy — unofficial leaders — were expelled from the T&GWU for "acting against union policy". Their expulsion was carried through because they played a prominent part in this strike against working on a Canadian ship which was manned by members of a strikebreaking Canadian union. The strike spread from Bristol to London and then to Liverpool and Glasgow. "The first big strike I was in" recounts Peter Kerrigan "was the 'Dromore' strike.

"I'd been in half-day stoppages here and there, but never in a big one. The 'Dromore' was an international strike. The whole of Bristol was out, Glasgow was out, London and Liverpool were out. The strike in Glasgow was an official strike called by the Scottish Transport and General Workers Union. 'Dromore' was the name of the ship which was blacked as a result of a Canadian Seafarers' strike. The Canadian Seaman's Union was led by Communist Party members and the strike was opposed by right-wing union leaders here and in Canada. There was a big witch-hunt in the press. The 'Dromore' was manned by members of another union and it sailed to Bristol, where dockers refused to unload it, bring it round or throw the ropes off. The ship sailed to Liverpool, Bristol dockers came here and Merseyside stopped work. Dockers had already stopped in London and Constable came up here and made a speech".