



Solidarity

For social ownership of the banks and industry

No 395 24 February 2016 50p/£1

YES TO EUROPE YES TO SOCIALISM



NO BREXIT! FIGHT FOR:

- MIGRANT RIGHTS
- OPEN BORDERS
- LEVELLING UP
- EURO-DEMOCRACY

David Cameron's negotiations with the EU and the referendum now set for 23 June were designed to woo UKIP voters back to the Conservative Party.

Most of big business oppose Brexit because they think (rightly) that it might disrupt flows of investment, trade, and labour. Maybe not much, since a capitalist Britain out of the EU would probably try to negotiate a deal similar to Norway and Switzerland, which apply almost all EU regulations without having a say in them, but it might disrupt.

As socialists, our concern is not what is "good for business".

Solidarity is for a vote to remain in Europe for the exact opposite reason that the Tory right and Ukip are for Brexit. We support workers' rights and open borders. We dislike the existing EU regime because we want more workers' rights, and more open borders, than it includes.

More page 5

Inside:

Junior doctors step up fight



Junior doctors have made plans for escalating strikes in the junior contract dispute.

See page 3

Are we all savages?



Solidarity reviews 'The Revenant', in cinemas now.

See pages 6-7

Librarians plan strikes to save services



Ruth Cashman, Lambeth Unison, reports on library workers' plans to strike.

See page 9

Join Labour!

Left-wing activists expelled from Labour! Join the anti-purge campaign

See page 10

Cause to be grateful to “an erratic Marxist”

Matt Hanley reports from Berlin

The queue on 9 February went all the way around the block for a ticket-only political rally that had nevertheless been sold out for months.

It was standing room only in another part of the Volksbühne theatre at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlin, where the event was shown simultaneously on a video screen — the launching of the “Democracy in Europe Movement”, DiEM, by “erratic Marxist”, game theorist and ex-finance minister in the Greek Syriza government, Professor Yanis Varoufakis.

“What’s his game?” is surely the question to ask. A recent *Solidarity* editorial thought the event would be more of a “personal vehicle” for Varoufakis than a movement. Yet DiEM has only just been launched.

Varoufakis may well have been centre stage, as the biggest name involved, but he didn’t completely dominate the event, which was intended as the starting shot of a broad-based, explicitly not left-wing, pan-European movement to democratise the EU.

Others speaking in Berlin, who were involved in the discussions which led to the launch of DiEM, included British Green MP Caro-

line Lucas, Mayor of Barcelona Ada Colau, Irish Labour MEP Nessa Childers, Slavoj Žižek, some Podemos MEPs, and members of Germany’s Blockupy. And Brian Eno, as only one of a large number of artists and people from the world of music and theatre who have put their name to DiEM’s launch documents. People from “the world of work” are noticeable by their absence — even big names, let alone the rank-and-file.

For all of the reasonable criticism made by Varoufakis and others that the EU is controlled by unelected bureaucrats who claim to be apolitical — technocrats — yet are anything but, it is hard not to criticise his apolitical protestations that the major problem with the European Union is one of a lack of democracy and transparency, when he does not offer any alternative programme (yet).

Would the EU be fine if it had the same policies as now, but they were legitimated by the “people” of Europe? Of course not, and surely Varoufakis does not really believe this. For all his claims that DiEM is not to be a leftist movement, but instead an “alliance of democrats”, the speakers were clearly of the left and far-left, even if not especially to the taste of this writer and probably many readers of this paper.

This was not the only point of po-



litical “erraticism”: “Some of my greatest political friends, associates and collaborators are people who would be described in Britain as Thatcherites and neoliberals, those who are incensed at the lack of democracy in Europe”, claimed the Professor at the press conference before the rally. Are these the people he seriously wants to work with? Hardly.

And would these “great friends” want to join him in quoting Rosa Luxemburg on bureaucracy in the young Soviet Union? Probably not, though I wouldn’t put it past Michael Gove.

When asked if he should, like the KKE, the Greek CP, not want countries to withdraw from the EU and argue for its break up — like his Thatcherite associates — he an-

swered “to my friends in the Communist Party and radical parts of the left who are articulating the position that disintegration, going back to our national currencies, to our nation states and so on, is our solution, I remind them that... in the 1930s, it was not humanism, it was not the left that benefited. It was the fascists, it was the Nazis. And Europe fell into a terrible trap with immense human costs. Do we want the same? I certainly don’t.”

Refusing to retreat into nation-stateism and instead democratising the European Union — and its nation states — is a fine aim and a demand which needs to be made, and carried through. DiEM aims to spend the next two years organising events across Europe, online and analogue, in which policies can

be developed to strengthen Europe’s integration “from below” by bringing people together who want European integration on a democratic basis.

Time will tell if anything comes out of this, but it is refreshing that someone seen as being of the left, yet is not a nationalist demagogue — and is well-known across the continent — is willing to launch such an initiative, without putting himself forward as a “saviour”, despite a clear ego and a good television manner.

This approach is diametrically opposed to that of French social democrat “saviour” Jean-Luc Mélenchon, or German ex-finance minister and former leader of Die Linke, Oskar Lafontaine, whose “Plan B” for Europe amounts to little more than a retreat back to national currencies and the nation state. (And Lafontaine has somewhat unsavoury positions on the refugee crisis.)

DiEM offers the possibility to get the message that “another Europe is possible”, without wishing for the total destruction of the European Union, out to far more people than would otherwise be thinkable. For this alone, we may have cause to be grateful to Europe’s probably most well-known Marxist politician, “erratic” or not.

Strikes and boycotts in Iraqi Kurdistan

Aso Kamal, Kurdish socialist activist, spoke to *Solidarity* about class struggle in Iraqi Kurdistan

There is a recession in Iraqi Kurdistan, and there are strikes and demonstrations happening all the time.

Since 2006, Kurdistan has had a share in the world oil market. From 2013, the oil price fell and the budget of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has fallen. The price was \$100/barrel but now it is more like \$30/barrel. So there is a currency crisis and an economic crisis. Now the KRG is \$22 billion in debt. They are selling one million barrels of oil a day, from Suleimaniya, Kirkuk, Erbil, Dohok.

For the last six months, the KRG has not paid any wages to its 1.5 million civil servants. There are strikes and boycotts everywhere. Public services are collapsing. Doctors, teachers, workers and everyone who is owed pay from the government is on strike.

In February, the KRG said that they had to cut wages in order to manage their way out of the economic crisis. The civil service minimum wage is £100 a month for most government departments and the KRG wants to cut this by 25%.

The people have not accepted it, they have said that the KRG rulers have a lot of profits being put away in European banks and so on.

The KRG wants to use religious leaders in their battles. There is a religious ministry in Iraqi Kurdistan, paid by the government. At Friday prayers, the preachers promote the government’s decisions and arguments. They tell people to wait and be patient, to end the boycotts and strikes, and work without pay. For that reason, people are turning against the preachers.

These are the methods that the government is using to keep the people down.

There is a political crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan. The [ruling] KDP won’t work with the Change Party (Gorran, the official opposition, a split from the PUK), leading to deadlock in the parliament. The crisis came about after Barzani, having served his term, refused to step down. Parliament is not working, the ministers have gone home. The people and the representatives of the strikes and demonstrations have lost faith in the leaders of Change and other opposition parties, including Islamist parties.

Teachers, doctors, electricity and water workers, are demanding their wages from the last six months and they are against the

25% minimum wage cut. They also want the money that has been stashed by KRG leaders in foreign banks to be returned to Kurdistan, and for money that has been siphoned off by corrupt officials to be returned to the public coffers.

There is a lack of clarity about income from oil. The oil revenue is controlled by the Barzani and Tala-

bani families. Nobody knows where the money goes, how they spend it, and so on. People are asking for clarity on this question.

They know that if KDP and PUK are still in power, it is because they have militias and they are ruling on the basis of a militia system.

It is clear that the oil is going cheap. Other companies in the re-

gion, like Gulf and General Energy, hold shares in the oil of Iraqi Kurdistan. They have a share in the administration of the oil, and they have power there.

The cheap oil in Iraqi Kurdistan is going to international companies and to Turkey. And income is going straight to the KDP and the PUK.

Making solidarity on Iran’s “revolution day”

On 11 February activists in London gathered at the Iranian regime’s embassy to protest against the usurpation of the glorious revolution of 1979 by the most blood-soaked section of Iran’s bourgeoisie — the reactionary Shia hierarchy.

11 February is the official celebration of “Revolution Day” in Iran but the fact that the revolution was driven forward by Iranian workers, fighting not only against the corrupt monarchy but also against the capitalist system. They were robbed of their gains in the revolution and then savagely repressed for over 35 years. In the evening activists attended the Campaign for Trade Union



Liz Lawrence, National President of the UCU (left) and activists outside the Iranian Embassy (right).

Freedom’s meeting about the Trade Union Bill and collected petition signatures on a petition against the arrest of Iran’s Khatonabad copper

workers. Union leaders took “selfie” pictures holding a sign in solidarity with Iranian unionists.
• <http://iwsn.org>

Junior doctors fight imposition of contracts

By Pete Campbell, British Medical Association Junior Doctors Committee (p.c.)

The BMA has called three 48-hour strikes over the next two months against government plans to impose a new contract on junior doctors from August 2016.

The strikes will take place on 9-11 March, 6-8 April and 26-28 April.

The new contract would mean a substantial pay cut for many junior doctors, changes to working patterns by introducing non-resident on-calls and increases in the hours designated "plain time" (rather than unsociable hours, and thus paid at a reduced rate). The contract and its imposition has been widely condemned by junior doctors and the wider medical profession.

In a letter to junior doctors, the Chair of the Junior Doctors' Committee, Johann Malwana, highlighted the BMA's argument that, in pursuit of the a "7-day service" agenda, the government is attempting to impose a contract which asks doctors to do more for less.

While everyone is in favour of increasing services within the NHS, the Tory austerity agenda stops these changes from being funded. The imposed junior doctor contract will not help provide the services, as junior doctors already provide 24-hour 7-day a week cover, and the government is not proposing to train any more doctors.

The government and NHS employers came in for more scorn when new model rotas were supplied to junior doctors. These showed no more doctors working at the weekend than previously,



some doctors working single night shifts then immediately returning to day shifts, and doctors working consecutive weekends. This last change was something junior doctors were told would not happen by the Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State.

The labour movement must stand up and support junior doctors in the forthcoming action, as they fight for decent and fair terms and conditions.

We must oppose imposition of contracts upon any worker; it is clear that if this government feels it can impose contracts, it will not stop with junior doctors. We must not allow the government's political desires to destroy a key workforce within our NHS.

• **Petition: Labour Party should call a demonstration in support of junior doctors — bit.ly/labourNHS**

Migrant solidarity activists gather

By Ollie Moore

Anti-racist and migrant solidarity activists met at London's School of Oriental and African Studies on 20 February.

This was a summit organised by "London2Calais", a solidarity network involved in building links with and providing practical support for migrants in the "Jungle" camp in Calais.

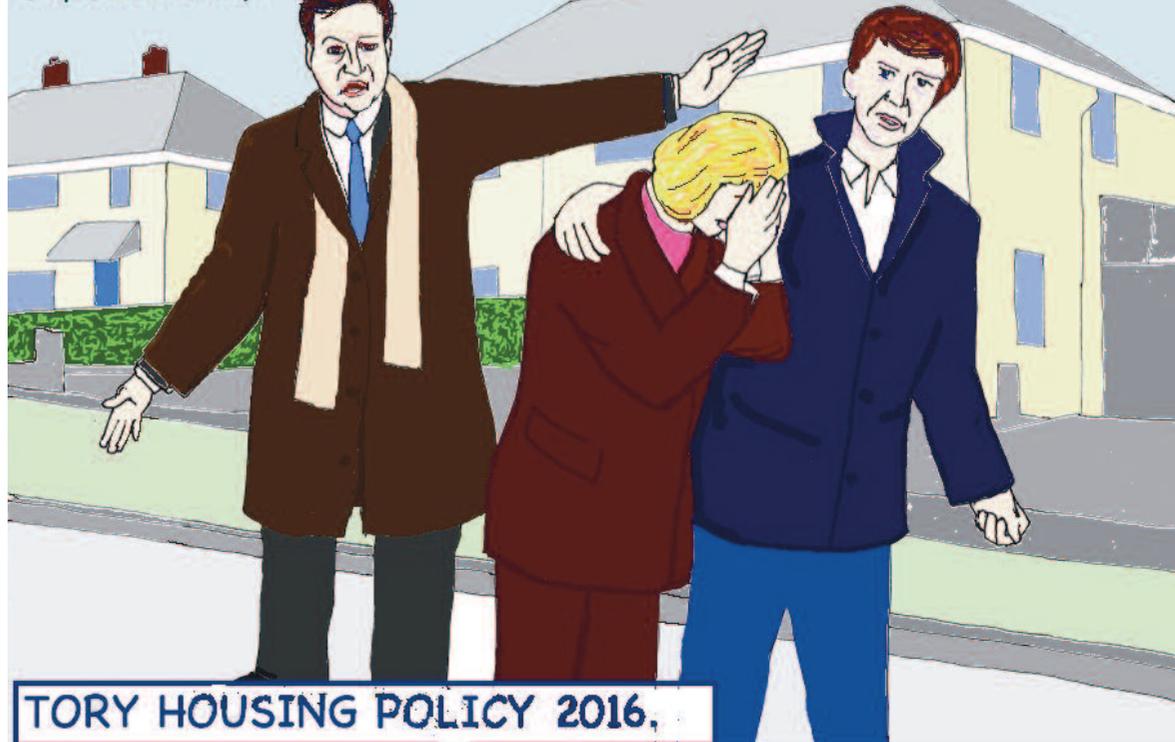
The opening plenary featured a harrowing report, via Skype link, from Shakir, a Pakistani resident of the Jungle, who provides medical

aid to refugees. He reported how much of his work involves tending to refugees injured by the French police or by the gangs of racist, far-right activists who now regularly raid the camp.

Other sessions discussed the migrant and refugee crisis in the context of imperialist conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere, and how migrant and refugee solidarity work fits into wider anti-racist and anti-fascist campaigning.

• [Facebook.com/london2calais](https://www.facebook.com/london2calais)

Pay to stay or go away!
We've no place for council tenants in our property owning kleptocracy, (oops) democracy!



Make banks public utilities!

By Colin Foster

Banks should be public utilities, or at least so closely regulated that they must behave like public utilities. They shouldn't be free to do whatever brings most profit to their bosses and shareholders.

If you're a regular reader, you will know that's *Solidarity's* view. You may not be surprised to hear that in 2012 the TUC voted for public ownership and democratic control of the banks.

You may be disappointed that the new Labour Party leadership of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell has not yet taken that TUC demand into their economic policy, or that Bernie Sanders in the USA calls only for the big banks to be broken up, not for them to be made public utilities.

But you will probably be surprised by the latest news from the USA.

Neel Kashkari, a US financier, a lifelong Republican, on his own description "a free-market Republican", has called for the banks to be made public utilities.

He worked for Hank Paulson at the US Treasury on the \$700 billion bank bailout program (TARP) to stop the financial crash escalating in 2008. He has recently become the president of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank.

He is as pro-capitalist, as economically conservative, as you can imagine anyone being.

But in a speech in Washington on 16 February he proposed "turning large banks into public utilities by forcing them to hold so



much capital that they virtually can't fail (with regulation akin to that of a nuclear power plant)". His scary experience in 2008 has shaken him up.

The nuclear reactor analogy holds, he said, because "the cost to society of letting a reactor melt down is astronomical. Given that cost, governments will do whatever they can to stabilize the reactor before they lose control".

Big banks, he said, are the same. When they get into trouble, it's not the idealised picture of the wonderful free market firmly but fairly ensuring that all economic enterprise is trim and efficient.

"Even with the 2008 bailouts, the costs to society from the financial crisis in terms of lost jobs, lost income and lost wealth were staggering — many trillions of dollars and devastation for millions of families... We had a choice in 2008: Spend taxpayer money to stabilize large banks, or don't, and poten-

tially trigger many trillions of additional costs to society".

Kashkari also suggested the Sanders alternative — "breaking up large banks into smaller, less connected, less important entities" — though he did not explain how that would help decisively. (If hundreds or thousands of smaller banks go bust, as happened in the 1930s, that has knock-on effects as bad as a few bigger banks failing).

He said that changes in regulation since 2008 have been insufficient. "The financial sector has lobbied hard to preserve its current structure and thrown up endless objections to fundamental change".

Kashkari restates much of the basic socialist case for a whole economy which runs as "a public utility", rather than as whatever the rival profit-greedy efforts of a small minority of business-owners make of it.

On one level, he misses only two points. First, that his argument applies to other giant capitalist enterprises as well as banks. If the big US car corporations, for example, had gone bust in 2008-9, rather than being bailed out by the government, that would have brought huge knock-on damage too.

And second, that these giant capitalist enterprises do great harm — exploiting and abusing workers, misdirecting investment, recklessly running up social and ecological costs — when they are doing well in their own terms, as well as when they are doing badly.

Brexit will not be “left”, but a step backwards

THE LEFT

By Michael Johnson

A statement arguing for a “left exit” from the European Union (EU) appeared in the *Guardian* on 17 February, signed by several trade unionists, a smattering of Stalinists and a number of others.

The statement contains a collection of mostly true claims about the EU. It is true that the EU is an undemocratic institution wedded to neoliberal capitalism and complicit in attacks on workers’ rights and social conditions. It is true that “Fortress Europe” discriminates, often murderously, against non-European migrants, and that the EU has imposed brutal austerity on Greece and other European states.

Yet, as is often the case, a collection of true or half-true statements can be used to paint a skewed picture of reality — and to draw conclusions which are radically false.

All the claims made against the EU are also true about Britain. Pulling out of the EU will

leave us with a profoundly undemocratic British capitalist state, with a monarchy, an unelected second chamber, and a wholly unaccountable state bureaucracy — not to mention its police, army and “secret state”. This would be Britain committed wholly, as now, to austerity and to trade agreements such as Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). In what sense is this a step forward for workers?

Exit will not be a blow for democracy. Just as the British working-class fought the ruling-class over two centuries for the very real yet still limited democratic rights we have today, the workers’ movement across Europe needs to unite to extend democracy across the continent. Pulling out of the EU is to seek the short-cut of national solutions and can only cut us off from our potential allies in Europe.

Worse still, the shameful “Fortress Europe” we have today will be augmented by a “Fortress Britain”, with the residency status of European migrants in Britain placed under threat. The statement rightly says that “without labour rights and an alternative to auster-



Mick Cash, General Secretary of the RMT union and one of the signatories to the “left exit” statement

ity, migrants will be prey to hostile xenophobic forces with or without the Schengen agreement”. It fails to explain why the solution is to erect more borders and not to unite workers across Europe to fight collectively

for their rights and against racism!

We should not fatalistically accept the “irrevocable” or “irreversible” nature of the EU’s commitment to neoliberal capitalism in order to rationalise a relapse back into national capitalist states — which will be no less rapacious in their attacks on workers and thirst for profits. Rather than roll history backwards, we need to push through the capitalist semi-unification of Europe towards a genuinely democratic workers’ Europe.

We agree on a the need for “a positive vision of a future Europe based on democracy, social justice and ecological sustainability, not the profit-making interests of a tiny elite.” But it just does not follow that the left should therefore advocate “a vote to leave the EU in the forthcoming referendum on UK membership”. This will take us further away, not closer, from the Europe that we need.

We should call for a vote to stay in the EU, and argue for an independent labour movement campaign to defend migrant and freedom of movement, and fight for the levelling up of wages, conditions, services, and rights across Europe.

The metamorphosis of Andrew Gilligan

DAVID OSLAND

Andrew Gilligan, it should not be forgotten, once saw better days.

Thirteen years ago, the BBC reporter’s role in making clear that the Blair administration purposely sexed up the first of the two dossiers advanced in fraudulent justification for the invasion of Iraq should rightly have won him every journalistic prize going, not to mention the plaudits of the entire left.

Predictably, the New Labour machine responded with all the brutal fury it alone could muster. ‘Scuse French if I quote verbatim the party’s then director of communications Alastair Campbell, a thuggish adversary with rather better claim to the epithet “Stalinist” than the incumbent, who openly averred his determination to “fuck Gilligan”.

Fuck Gilligan Campbell proceeded to do, and fuck him most royally, come to that. For the crime of reporting a story that was pretty much on the money, Andrew lost his job, and was subject to some spectacularly salacious innuendo about his solitary sexual practices in *Private Eye*. For many years, his name was unfairly upheld as synonymous with sloppy journalism.

All that, of course, was in 2003, and the years immediately thereafter. Fast forward to the current decade, and he has now sadly re-emerged as specialist in churning out meretricious ostensible exposés of Labour activists for the benefit of politically prurient *Telegraph* readers.

He’s hardly Britain’s sole purveyor of vindictive high-octane Corbynista bashing. Far from it. But the regularity of his broadsides do make him stand out, even at a time when socialists are being exposed to a level of vituperation unprecedented since the heyday of Bennism.

In the 1980s, the victims were the likes of Joan Twelves and Greg Tucker, Linda Bellos, Diane Abbott, Bernie Grant, Derek Hatton, Mandy Mudd, Pat Wall and the man the *Sunday Express* (27 October 1981) memorably branded “IRA-loving, poof loving” Ken Liv-



ingstone. Some of those at the sharp end were friends of mine then, and some of those who have not subsequently passed away I am glad to call friends still.

Today, it seems only the names have changed. Andrew Fisher, James Schneider, Christine Shawcroft, Simon Hewitt, Michael Chessum, Frankie Leach, Louise Whittle, Marshajane Thompson, Jackie Walker and Jill Mountford, to name but a few, have all been hung out to dry by sections of the rightwing mass media.

Spent convictions — and shamefully, even the criminal records of people’s parents — are plastered all over the public prints. Past political follies and asinine Tweets are relentlessly brought to light. If there is no dirt, what the heck, these guys are fair game to be named and shamed anyway.

This sort of treatment comes with consequences. Most obviously, job prospects may suffer. There will be strains in family life. And I know for a fact that some comrades that hit the headlines in the 1980s paid a price in terms of their mental health, and it wouldn’t

surprise me were that to recur this time round.

Let us be clear, nobody has been caught red-handed running Kalashnikovs for Islamic State, or dangling kittens over bunsen burners as sweet little Sunday School kiddies look on aghast.

The targets for Gilligan’s venom have done no more than to engage in the democratic process, and given up more Saturdays to sit in committee meetings than anybody reasonably should.

Gilligan’s latest epic appears under the headline ‘The radical hard-left Momentum activists mounting a ruthless purge of Labour’.

Purge? My, how wonderfully evocative of the USSR in the 1930s that term is, and entirely deliberately, of course. But Momentum has ‘mounted a purge’ how, exactly?

Since Corbyn’s election to the Labour leadership last September, not one single MP has been deselected, and, to the best of my knowledge, not one single party member has been expelled on ideological grounds.

If some MPs are not chosen again as candidates in 2020, that will be through the mechanism of trigger ballots rather than the mechanism of triggers. No-one will be shot in the back of the neck and the family presented with the bill for the bullet.

Old uncle Lavrentiy Beria would no doubt be thoroughly ashamed of those of us now branded his spiritual children for wimping out, but hey, that’s the way it is with the new kinder, gentler politics. We’re just too damn nice to our opponents.

The suggestion in the subhead that ‘the identities and backgrounds of those controlling Momentum can be revealed for the first time’ is equally daft. Anyone could readily have ascertained the identities and backgrounds of everyone mentioned via an expedient no more strenuous than entering their names into Google.

Of course, people who engage in politics at any level should be subject to scrutiny. But repeated corrosive attacks in mass circulation newspapers, with no means of redress, raises the obvious question of just who is being bul-

lied here. Clue: it isn’t hapless Blairite MPs.

I’m not one of those lefties who makes counterproductive calls for state intrusion in what still counts as a free press, even in broadsheets owned by tax exiles with their own private Channel Island. Vindication will come through the success of the Labour left project, if it comes at all.

But Andrew — a guy I used to know well enough to be on first name terms — really needs to rethink this tawdry little vendetta and recall that the best traditions of the investigative journalism in which he once excelled do not run to kicking seven shades out of the defenceless.

It’s all a long way down from rocking governments, isn’t it, mate?

Bernie Sanders: a socialist President in the USA?

The dramatic rise of avowed socialist Bernie Sanders’ campaign for President has shaken American politics, pushing the limits of the corporate liberalism represented by Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Can Sanders still win? If he doesn’t win the Democratic nomination, what should the left advocate? What does Sanders represent politically? How does his rise relate to the rise of Corbyn in Britain and movements like Syriza and Podemos?

Speakers:
Traven Leyshon, Vermont Teamsters/AFL-CIO leader and organiser for the Sanders campaign (by Skype)
Eric Lee, “London for Bernie”

Thursday, 17 March 7-9 pm
Lucas Arms, 245A Gray’s Inn Road
London, WC1X 8QY

Yes to Europe, yes to socialism!

David Cameron's negotiations with the EU and the 23 June referendum were designed to woo UKIP voters back to the Conservative Party.

However the concessions he has won are relatively minor; instead he has infuriated large numbers of Tory MPs and deepened the division in his own party. As the *Financial Times* put it:

"Eurosceptics would have preferred the prime minister to be 'battling hard' over the repatriation of EU employment law, scrapping the Common Agricultural Policy or asserting British supremacy over EU law, not child benefit payments for Polish plasterers."

"Repatriation of EU employment law" here means enabling the British government to scrap the laws deriving from EU rules which limit working hours, give rights to agency workers, require consultation on redundancies, and protect earnings when a job is transferred from one contractor to another.

That's what right-wing Tories and Ukip want, as well taking rights away from EU-origin people now working in Britain, and making it more difficult for workers to move across borders to get better jobs.

CUTS

Cameron couldn't get that, and settled for mean-spirited and reactionary — but, in the large picture, minor — benefit cuts.

Thus the *Daily Mail* has claimed that 140 Tory MPs now publicly support leaving. Nearly 100 still have to declare. Seven Cabinet members, including Michael Gove, Iain Duncan Smith, and the shameless opportunist Boris Johnson, have declared for Brexit.

Most of big business oppose Brexit because they think (rightly) that it might disrupt flows of investment, trade, and labour. Maybe not much, since a capitalist Britain out of the EU would probably try to negotiate a deal similar to Norway and Switzerland, which apply almost all EU regulations without having a say in them; but it might disrupt business relations.

As socialists, our concern is not what is or isn't "good for business".

Solidarity is for a vote to remain in Europe



for the exact opposite reason that the Tory right and Ukip are for Brexit. We support workers' rights and open borders. We dislike the existing EU regime because we want more workers' rights, and more open borders, than it includes.

The Tory right and Ukip want to use Brexit as a springboard to turn Britain into a minimal-workers'-rights, low-regulation, low-wage, low-social-provision, offshore site for the multinationals. We want to use a vote to stay in as a springboard for greater unity and

solidarity of workers across Europe to win more workers' rights, more open borders, more social levelling-up, more migrant rights.

The Labour Party is officially committed to campaigning for an in vote, and only a few Labour MPs are lining up with Ukip and the Tory right.

Jeremy Corbyn responded to Cameron: "The prime minister has been negotiating for the wrong goals in the wrong way for the wrong reasons.

"He should have been talking to other European leaders about action to save our steel industry; about how to stop the spread of low pay and insecure jobs, and end the undercutting of wage rates and industry-wide agreements through the exploitation of migrant workers. He should have been focused on the scandal of the refugee camps in Calais and Dunkirk and how to deal with Europe's migration crisis in an equitable way.

"He could have been using Britain's leverage to stop the threat to our services and rights in the secretive Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations; to build human rights and environmental protection into future trade treaties; and halt the pressure from Brussels to deregulate and privatise public services. He could have been arguing for an end to self-defeating austerity and for the strengthening of workers' rights across Europe....

"Cameron's Tories want a free-market corporate Europe. We want a social Europe of decent jobs and equality for all."

That was more promising than the so-far uninspiring official "Labour In for Britain" campaign, run by right-winger Alan Johnson.

The "Brexit" camp includes much of the Tory Party (and the worst parts of it); Ukip; forces to the right of Ukip; and charlatans such as George Galloway.

Yet the SWP, Socialist Party and CP-backed *Morning Star* newspaper think they can build a "left-wing" campaign to leave the EU. There are many faults with the EU: we will vote "in" to get a better basis for a fight for democracy across Europe, not because we like the present undemocratic structures.

But how can building higher barriers between countries improve the prospects for working-class cooperation and joint industrial and political effort at the European level? It can't, particularly in a climate where a major plank of the "leave" rhetoric is anti-migrant.

The bosses are uniting across Europe. So must we! We should not seek to retreat to the situation that prevailed before European integration: competing and often warring capitalist states.

A really "left-wing" leave campaign is impossible where the "leave" camp is dominated by Little Englanders and xenophobic migrant-bashing or scapegoating.

We support the campaigns Another Europe Is Possible and Workers' Europe. The Workers' Europe Facebook page and blog provide campaigning resources, including up-to-date articles and comment, and model motions to put to your union/Labour Party branch or student union, supporting these vital ideas:

- Vote against UK withdrawal from the EU
- Defend migrants' rights and oppose racism
- Campaign for a workers' Europe based on solidarity between working people.

Contact Workers' Europe:
www.facebook.com/ForAWorkersEurope
[@workers_europe](https://twitter.com/workers_europe)
campaign.workerseurope.net
workerseurope@gmail.com
AEIP: www.anothereurope.org

Cameron's EU deal

What Cameron demanded from the negotiations and what he got:

1. He wanted a freeze to EU migrants' in-work benefits, e.g. tax credits and housing benefit. What he got: If it wants and if it meets certain criteria, the UK can in future apply an "emergency brake". This would mean EU migrants working in the UK would not be eligible to the same benefits as other workers, for up to four years. Cameron conceded that the changes would not apply to EU workers already in the UK, only to new arrivals. Once the brake is applied, these rules can remain in place for seven years only, although repeat applications are allowed.

2. Stopping EU migrant workers sending child benefit to their children living outside the UK. Before the EU summit Cameron stepped back to the demand that child benefit should be indexed to the standard of living in the country where the children live. Cameron got that. It will apply to new arrivals to the UK, once legislation has been

passed, and to all workers in the EU from 1 January 2020. Applied now, this would affect 34,000 children of EU migrants working in the UK, and the actual saving to the UK would be just £25m (or maybe nothing, once the extra admin costs are factored in). The measure is nasty and will be financially significant to some families. Its purpose for Cameron is symbolic.

3. Protection for countries outside the eurozone against regulation made by those inside: Cameron won the right of non-eurozone states to force a debate among EU leaders about "problem" eurozone laws. That does not amount to a veto. It only delays matters.

4. Cameron wanted a declaration that the treaty motto of "ever closer union among the peoples of Europe" did not apply to the UK.

He got this reassurance: "It is recognised that the UK ... is not committed to further political integration in the European Union... References to ever-closer union do not apply to the UK."

Returning to



Andrew Coates reviews *The Two Trotskyisms confront Stalinism*, edited by Sean Matgamna. Part one of the review was printed in *Solidarity* 394.

The debates in this volume are about the armed foreign policy of the USSR. But behind this is the issue of the nature of that regime.

Some might consider that arguments about the character of the former Soviet Union — whether it was a workers' state, a degenerated workers' state, state capitalist, bureaucratic collectivist, a "new class society" — resemble discussion on the Trinity. If some Trotskyists have sunk into religious veneration for Trotsky a more common fault is scholasticism — "proof" of any view by appeal to the authority of quotations from the Old Man, Marx, Engels and Lenin. But when it comes to working out what was wrong with Stalinism, the economic and social

framework of the former Soviet Bloc, the several decades of Trotskyist, reflection and debate, orthodox and heterodox play an essential part in the effort to develop a socialist alternative today.

Differing stands on these issues, examining Trotsky's and many other views, is explored more widely in Marcel van der Linden's *Western Marxism and the Soviet Union* (2007). In this context the clash between the "Orthodox" and the "Heterodox" Trotskyists is only one of many, more or less intense, debates. The "heterodox" Trotskyists produced evidence of Stalinist totalitarianism sprung to life and ready for — defensive — expansion in the first years of the Second World War. On the wider theory of bureaucratic collectivism judgements are mixed. Were these forms a "freak" of history, as Shachtman sometimes argued? The idea that these societies were, as Linden summarises, arranged in a sequence from capitalism to something new, whatever we label it, also seems to have outlived its use.

But the USSR's statist planning and mobilisation of 'labour armies', including forced labour in the Gulag, its "socialist primitive accumulation" may be considered, as Martin Thomas argues, not as a leap out of the capitalist world at all. It was "a compressed, intensified version of the use of direct extra-economic force" in the 'historic genesis of capitalist production'. In other words, the mode of production was not really transformed by the Bolshevik Revolution at all. If this was an oddity, normality eventually reasserted itself.¹

Stalinist imperialism is not just a bone of contention or an historical issue. New Left circles influenced by Isaac Deutscher argued that the USSR was a progressive international force through its support for national liberation movements. There are those who consider that Russian President Putin and a host of other non-Western powers represent today a kind of necessary "counter-balance" to the US-led Imperium. This might be considered, recalling Alex Callinicos' words, as a theory designed to be adapted to the needs of local lefts, desperate to discover some "resistance" to the American hegemon.

The Two Trotskyisms presents a view of the history of the Trotskyist movement. Any account on this topic, by the rules of the genre, has to be controversial.

Matgamna succeeds in demonstrating that there is a value in looking at the critical stand of the "Heterodox" towards the SWP leadership, and the orthodoxy associated with Trotsky. Yet it is a mental wrench for the reviewer, politically brought up on British and other European left-debates, including Trotskyist ones, to enter the political and cultural world of the 1940s American SWP. This was Trotskyism with a capital T. This is a group that George Orwell described in 1945 as having "a fairly large number of adherents" with a "petty fuehrer of its own" with an "essentially negative inspiration." European left culture, while influenced by a few organisations of the same stripe, had and has much broader sources. From social democrats, Communist thinkers, democratic socialists, autonomists and anarchists, Western Marxists, non-Trotskyist Leninists, not to mention activists and writers from the trade unions. Some of these would challenge Matgamna's claim to own-

ership of the Revolution. Others would find the assertion empty.

INTERNATIONAL

It is harder still to associate "orthodoxy" with the main Fourth International, figures such as Ernest Mandel or Michel Raptis, charged with apostasy by the same James P Cannon in the 1953-4 split in the Fourth International, accused of straying from Trotskyism for their support for Third-World movements of national liberation, not to mention the 1970s controversies on guerrilla warfare, to today's discussion about ecology and globalisation.

The claim that the various 'orthodox' French Trotskyist parties led by Pierre Bousset ('Lambert') indulged Stalinism ignores their intimate association with the American funded post-War break-away from the Communist led trade union federation, the CGT, Force Ouvrière, not to mention their actual writings — virulently hostile — on the Eastern Bloc.²

There are other ways of describing the divisions within Trotskyism. Bensaïd called the Trotskyists' splintering into mutually antagonistic tendencies, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the "scattering of the tribes". At the Second Congress of the Fourth International in 1948 the Workers Party and Shachtman were still present. In a protest at the lack of clarity and democracy during the conference he united with one faction, represented by Cornelius Castoriadis. The Franco-Greek theorist's subsequent history went beyond heterodoxy — designating the USSR as "bureaucratic capitalist" — to rejection in the name of workers' self-management of all the main tenets of Trotskyism, except Revolution. This indicates that post-War there was not one group, The Heterodox, but a nebula of "Heterodoxies".³

French Trotskyism is significant in the events leading up these divisions. During the German occupation the policy of "revolutionary defeatism" was put into practice, in different ways by its already dispersed forces. Trotskyist histories of the period glorify efforts to convince German soldiers to unite with French working class and other internationalist actions. They tend to look with suspicion on any "nationalist" support for the

Reviews and critical commentary on *The Two Trotskyisms confront Stalinism*

"This book is an amazing textbook ... [it] presents the material in such a way as to show the whole dialogue between two species of socialism — crudely, between Shachtman and Cannon — as it developed and, through the critical years, the development of the ideas of bureaucratic collectivism and the Third Camp theories. It keeps track, not just of Trotskyism, but of Marxism, of socialism ... This book gives us material to think about what socialism really is."

Ed Strauss

"There are some who, for whatever reasons, do not think there is much (or any) importance to such history ... To deny that there is anything useful to learn from such excavations and explorations is inconsistent with a serious attitude toward the discipline of history, as well as toward political theory, not to mention Marxism. Sean Matgamna has performed a genuine service for scholars and activists."

Paul Le Blanc

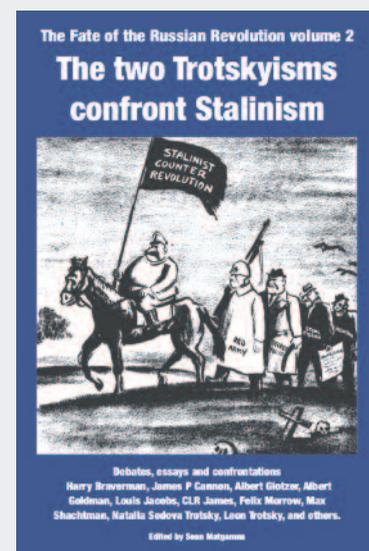
"Trotsky and to some extent Trotskyism did their best to make sense of what must have seemed utterly senseless, like the prioritised mass murder of millions of quite innocent people, but they were somehow too close to the phenomenon to do it justice. Yet to see how hard they tried, how valiantly they struggled, how readily they sacrificed their own futures for the sake of some basic understanding, there is no better place to start than here."

Robert Fine

Available now in both print and as an e-book. Order yours online today!

Read more reviews: bit.ly/twotrotsreviews

Buy your copy now bit.ly/twotrotskyisms



the sources

Resistance — that is when a small number of Trotskyists joined the armed resistance.⁴

Yves Craipeau — an early “bureaucratic collectivist” — recounts a key episode in that history. When the Allied forces landed in Normandy his faction, probably the largest, published in its underground paper, *La Vérité*, a headline, “ils se valent” — they’re the same. (June 1944) It went on to read, “En réalité, la libération de Roosevelt vaut tout autant que le socialisme de Hitler”. (In reality the liberation of Roosevelt means as much as the socialism of Hitler.) The long-term effects of this declaration, which Craipeau opposed, were such that those hostile to Trotskyism would continue to cite it for decades — though not apparently Trotskyist historians. The divisions within the Greek Trotskyists were even more severe. One wing, already in conflict with the other, refused the “defence” of the USSR and spent the War violently hostile to the other. The Stalinists physically liquidated some of them, though estimates give the total at 50 (both groups together) not the 300 — Matgamna asserts.⁵

Post-war the French Trotskyists briefly united in the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI). But one can easily imagine that given this background during the conflict Trotskyists would disunite again, on a basis with deeper roots than the US SWP’s ideological disputes. The majority view, set out much later by Ernest Mandel was that they related to the electoral strength of the Parti Communiste Français (PCF) and, one hopes, with some due modesty, they recognised the legacy of the Communists’ role in the Resistance. Part of the “scattering of the tribes”, was a result of that effort. Castoriadis —

marked by the Greek experience — refused any compromise with the Communist Party. Some groups were equally hostile to the PCF, the Socialists and, to Trotskyists who could see any merit in calls for joint activity. Yves Craipeau left the Fourth International. Like the title of Peter Jenkins’s pamphlet he thought that Trotskyism had got “lost”. Craipeau gauged that there were forces on the left, outside the PCF and the Socialist SFIO, who could form an independent left party. The long story of efforts to create one, up to the radical “new left” democratic socialist Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU), in which Craipeau played a significant part, indicate yet another direction, “post” Trotskyist, that “heterodoxy” could take.⁶

Is the study of Trotskyist heterodoxy the best way to look at this complex past? Perhaps there is another way to return to the sources of the left. Pierre Broué, once an Orthodox activist in the French Lambertists who became respected historian of the movement, left this statement in his *Memoirs*. Reflecting on the fall of the Soviet Bloc and the faults of the organisation which expelled him, he wrote in conclusion, “We must return to our sources, become again the ‘party of communists’ which only marks itself out from the mass of people with whom we live by our devotion, our continuous thinking, our openness to the world, our capacity to struggle, our will to clarify, to help the masses see things through their own eyes.”⁷

By its democratic and serious thought on some of the most serious issues of the 20th century *The Two Trotskyisms* has contributed to these generous aims.

moires d’un dinosaure trotskyste. L’harmattan. 1999. For an apologist’s account of Trotskyism in the war, which ignores, amongst other incidents, this headline see: Pages 164–5. *Revolutionary Marxism Today*. Ernest Mandel. NLB. 1975. This total and the tangled history of Greek Trotskyism: Alexis Hen. “Les trotskystes grecs pendant la seconde guerre mondiale” *Cahiers balkaniques* 38-39 (2011)

(6) Further material on Craipeau in English: The Third Camp in France. *Workers’ Liberty* 2#2. This, a small but important part of the majority view on Stalinism was given by Ernest Germain (Mandel) *Stalinism – How to Understand it and How to Fight it*. April 1947. Marxist Internet Archive. On the wider revolutionary expectations in France in this period amongst intellectuals — a significant constituency for French Trotskyists — see this useful study: *La Révolution rêvée. Pour une histoire des intellectuels et des oeuvres révolutionnaires*. 1944 – 1956. Michel Surya. Fayard. 2004.

(7) “nous devons revenir à nos sources, être de nouveau ce ‘parti des communistes’ qui ne se distingue de la masse où il vit que par son dévouement, sa réflexion permanente et son ouverture au monde, sa disponibilité à lutter, sa volonté d’éclairer et d’aider les masses à voir de leurs propres yeux.” *Mémoires de Pierre Broué*. Circulated as text 2014/5

References:

- (1) Shachtman and his critics’ views are covered in: Chapter 3 From Stalin’s ‘Great Leap Forwards’ to the ‘Great Patriotic War’ (1929–41) Marcel van der Linden *Western Marxism and the Soviet Union*. Brill 2007. “Three Traditions? Marxism and the USSR”. Martin Thomas. *Historical Materialism*. Vol.14.3. 2006..
- (2) On the Lambertists see the hostile account, in great, if contentious, detail: *Les Trotskistes*. Christophe Nick. Fayard. 2002.
- (3) *Strategies of Resistance and ‘Who are the Trotskyists?’* Daniel Bensaïd. Resistance Books. 2009. Max Shachtman. The Congress of the Fourth International. An Analysis of the Bankruptcy of “Orthodox Trotskyism” (October 1948) Marxist Internet Archive. Chapter 6. From the Second World Congress to the 1953 Split. *The Long March of the Trotskyists*, Pierre Frank. Marxist Internet Archive. Francois Dosse. *Castoriadis Une Vie*. La Découverte. 2014.
- (4) Ian H. Birchall. “With the Masses, Against the Stream. French Trotskyism in the Second World War” *Revolutionary History*, Vol.1, No.4, Winter 1988-89. See also: Ernest Mandel. *A Rebel’s Dream Deferred*. Jan Willem Stuije. Verso. 2009. *The Meaning of the Second World War*. Ernest Mandel. Verso. 1986.
- (5) See Pages 174 – 175. Yves Craipeau. *Mé-*

How Trotskyist “orthodoxy” scrambled Marxism

By Sean Matgamna

By around 1950, neo-Trotskyism had stood on its head the Communist Manifesto and its basic ideas, that is, the foundation of Marxism as it was in 1917.

1) Marx and Engels made socialism “scientific” by converting it from a moral scheme, counterposed to capitalism, into a logical, although revolutionary, dialectical development from material preconditions created by capitalism. In neo-Trotskyism (that is, mainstream revolutionary socialism, for a whole era) a pre-Marxist sectarian rejection of capitalism on a world scale, and an identification with Stalinist states as a progressive alternative (because they were anti-capitalist), had replaced this idea of the relationship of capitalism to socialism.

The idea that capitalism (and even on some levels imperialism) is progressive was excised from Marxism. So was the idea that to reject and negate the progressive work of capitalism (technology, bourgeois civilisation, the creation of the working class) is sectarian and backward-looking. Marxists reverted to the spirit of those who in the mid-nineteenth century wanted to go backwards from industrialism and of those against whom Lenin polemicised for their “petty-bourgeois” desire to unscramble imperialist concentrations of industry back to an earlier stage of capitalism.

Even reactionary alternatives to capitalism, and not Stalinist ones alone, were seen as progressive, even though they destroyed the fruits of world civilisation since the Renaissance. World history was seen teleologically as a process with an outcome — world socialism — mechanically fixed in advance, irrespective of what living women and men did or failed to do.

2) The patently false notion that capital-

ism had reached its historic end was used in the spirit of utopian socialists who felt they had discovered “the last word”. That Stalinism was replacing capitalism was supposedly proof of this proposition.

3) The idea that the proletarian revolution is made by the proletariat and cannot be made for them had been displaced by the idea of a locum acting to create, if not socialism, then the first decisive step towards socialism — the creation of a “workers’ state”. Working class rule was seen to inhere in the forms of bureaucratically nationalised property. A totalitarian economism — a fetish of nationalised economy, separated off from all the social and political conditions that might give it a working-class socialist character — was substituted for the traditional politics of Marxism. The “revolutionary process” led by Stalinist forces was the first and immediate stage of the socialist revolution. Workers’ rule would be a second and subsequent stage.

DEMOCRACY

The old communist centrality of democracy — even during the dictatorship of the proletariat — went.

Democracy was a desirable extra. It could be done without in the “workers’ revolution”, at least in the first and immediate stage. The idea of socialist revolution was detached from Marx’s notion of the organised, self-aware working class as the force that could make it, and reduced to millenarianism, the hope for a superhuman agent of liberation.

Again, Stalinism was central; it was the prototype of the non-proletarian force which nonetheless, through a perverse twist of history, becomes the agent of proletarian progress.

4) Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto saw the development of the organised, conscious communist political party as integrally interlinked with the self-development of the whole working class. The communists would “represent the future of the movement in the movement of the present”. This was replaced by the notion of a “party” self-defined by the possession of an esoteric doctrine and revelation.

The Marxists were those who could see the hidden and secret process leading to a socialist future within the horrors of Stalinism. Having once discovered that truth, their job was primarily to gain enough forces, anyhow, to present themselves as “the leadership” to the elemental working-class revolt guaranteed by the decay of capitalism.

Neo-Trotskyism, rationalising from Stalinist reality and building its “revolutionary perspectives” around it, regressed back behind the political level attained in 1848 at the dawn of Marxism.

• From the introduction to *The Fate of the Russian Revolution, volume 1: Lost Texts of Critical Marxism* (the first volume of the series of which *The Two Trotskyisms* is volume 2).



Comments on the US Civil War

By Mark Osborn

This article was prompted by an advert for an AWL public meeting about Sacha Ismail's pamphlet, *Workers Against Slavery*. One sentence read: "When the war began, both sides, North and South, said they would preserve slavery. What changed? One thing was mass action by the slaves themselves, forcing their way into the conflict and helping to transform it into a battle against slavery."

This idea is mysticism. Lincoln was obliged to re-set the Northern war aims in late 1862, declaring a war to abolish slavery, because he felt that was necessary in order to win. The slaves played no role in Lincoln's policy shift whatsoever. They were slaves after all. And those former slaves, who had managed to reach Union lines were politically marginalised, oppressed, largely unorganised and powerless.

Sacha Ismail made a similar statement in an exchange of letters in *Solidarity* in 2013. Following a film review by Eric Lee, he wrote, "I am not denying the role of the US army in the US Civil War. Nonetheless, American slaves played a central role, perhaps the central role, in their own emancipation." Sacha cited Marx who reported a slave rising in Missouri and claimed more generally that, "more and more slaves escaped their masters and pushed their way into Northern lines [and] forced the US army to accept them, first as workers and then as soldiers."

In my view Eric Lee was completely correct at that time to claim, "It wasn't Black slaves who brought down slavery... [but] a mostly (though not entirely) white army led by a white man." And I responded in *Solidarity*, supporting Eric, by noting that, "many slaves were able to run away. But they were able to do so because of the power of the Northern state, and the pressure of the Union armies. And running away from a master is not the same thing as a mass, armed slave rebellion."

In that debate Sacha defended the idea that the British workers had a role in stopping the British government from joining the war on the South's side: "Faced with a government that wanted to intervene militarily in favour of the slave-owners, thousands of British workers across the country mobilised in mass protests against intervention and against slavery." He declared that the British workers were "a factor" in stopping the government intervening.

I wanted to make three clear propositions for the purposes of a new discussion.

- There was no "mass action" by slaves "forcing their way into the [US civil war]." There was a very important mass Black movement in the South, but only after the civil war, among freedmen, during Reconstruction.

- The military impact of Black troops was late and marginal (although the Black troops were much more than of marginal political importance). The slaves were freed by a white President and (mostly) white armies and a bourgeois revolution from above.

- The British workers did not stop the British ruling class joining the war on the side of the South. The British did not join the war because Palmerston calculated that, on balance, war was too risky. The British workers had nothing to do with Palmerston's calculations — certainly in 1861 and 1862, when war was considered. Palmerston was concerned by Northern power, not British workers.

So, I am arguing against overestimating the

role of the progressive, plebeian forces. Of course, it would have been much better if the slaves had liberated themselves, as Marx had hoped, and that the British workers had been stronger. But we should not manufacture history according to what we would like to read.

Even if it could be shown that the British workers were solidly for the North, and the ruling class solidly for the South, that would still not amount to showing that the workers were the force that prevented Britain joining the war against the North. And even if it was possible to demonstrate the British ruling classes were for the South, this is not the same thing as being willing to go to war for the South.

But anyway, at the start of the war, the British workers' movement, was not solidly for the North. And the British ruling classes were never unanimous for the South.

According to Phillip Foner in *British Labour and the American Civil War*, for nearly a century, up until the late 1950s, there was consensus among British and American historians who accepted that the British ruling classes were for the South and the British workers backed the North. In the late 1950s this view began to be contested by pro-Southern revisionists. Despite the political bias of those who attacked the consensus a useful result was discussion on the facts of the matter.

At the start of the American civil war the British ruling class was divided, as were the workers' leaders. At the top of government Palmerston was for the South, although less clearly than Gladstone and the Foreign Secretary, John Russell. A group of about twenty in the Commons were active for the Confederacy and most of the aristocracy was for the South.

PALMERSTON

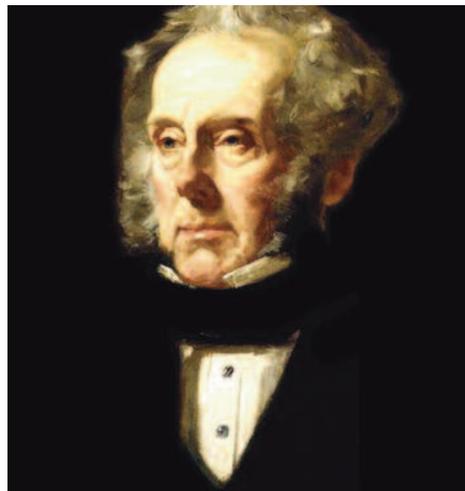
However, also in Cabinet were the Duke of Argyll, Charles Villiers and Thomas Milner Gibson, who supported the North. The manufacturers John Bright and Richard Cobden vigorously denounced the South in Parliament.

Palmerston disliked the radical democracy of the North and considered the North's vast armies a threat to Britain's interests in Canada. However Palmerston was no friend of slavery. He had played an active part in the suppression of the international slave trade. And he had been one of the most prominent public figures to welcome Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, when she visited England in 1853.

Mainstream biographers of Palmerston write that he had no intention of going to war with the North: "Though Palmerston's sympathies were with the South, he did not wish to go to war with the North." (*Palmerston*, Jasper Ridley). Ridley quotes a memo from Palmerston from October 1861: "Operations of the war have as yet been too indecisive to warrant an acknowledgement of the Southern Union." Palmerston was pragmatic; he did not want to back the losing side.

If Palmerston had recognised the South and gone to war, he calculated, large grain imports from the North would be cut off and serious damage would be done to sizable British financial interests in the North. Britain's possessions — in particular Canada — would be vulnerable to Northern military power. So Palmerston moved 11,000 troops to Canada in 1861 as a defensive measure. Such a number of troops could never be anything other than defensive, against enormous and rapidly expanding Union armies.

If Britain was going to go to war with the



Palmerston: disliked radical democracy, but no friend of slavery either

North it would have done so in 1861 or 1862. By the end of 1862 several factors had shifted against siding with the Confederacy: the South had begun to suffer serious military setbacks; Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in September 1862, coming into force on 1 January 1863, which put the Northern war on a new, explicitly anti-slavery basis. The clear anti-slavery basis for the North's war meant a great increase in popular support for the North in Britain.

However, before the Emancipation Proclamation, the most serious crisis was the Trent Affair, at the end of 1861, when the North seized two Confederate representatives from a British ship. "However much he blustered Palmerston knew that it was important to avoid a real conflict," (*Palmerston — a biography*, by David Brown) and a fudge settled the dispute.

We've seen, recently, at the time of the Iraq war, that a million people on the streets, thousands of protest meetings, substantial parliamentary opposition and many sympathetic editorials in the national press were all unable to stop Blair going to war in Iraq. It takes a lot to stop a government determined to fight.

For the British workers to have been a force capable of stopping (or being "a factor" in stopping) an allegedly war-hungry Palmerston and Gladstone, they would have had to make massive mobilisations. And yet in the early 1860s British workers did not have the vote, or a political party of their own. Their unions were relatively new, weak, and craft based. The London Trades Council had been founded in 1860, but the TUC was not set up until 1868. The International Workingmen's Association was not founded until 1864.

The ruling class had seen off the Chartists more than a decade before.

On the other hand the government was strong — not invulnerable against American power, but nonetheless strong and confident; their Empire stretched across the world.

Philip Foner quotes academic research on the number of pro-Union meetings held by British workers during the US Civil War. There were five in 1862, fifty-six in 1863 and eleven in 1864.

So the high point of the British workers' mobilisation for the North was in and after 1863, by which time the pro-Southerners in our movement had been marginalised; this was an important moment in the British working class's political development, but fifty-six workers' meetings in 1863 was nothing like the scale required to force the British ruling class to back down from war if it really

wanted a fight. And, anyway, by 1863 the ruling classes clearly had no intention of fighting the North.

There were three well-known attempts at slave rebellions in the US in the first part of the 19th Century: Gabriel's rebellion in Richmond (1800), the Denmark Vesey conspiracy in Charleston (1822), and Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia (1831). There were many other lesser known, smaller-scale events.

Turner's rising was the most important. Nat Turner and five followers started an uprising which had no clear goal. After twelve hours 80 slaves had joined the rebels and 60 white people had been killed. The uprising was eventually repressed by 3000 armed whites.

All three conspiracies were led by people influenced by the Bible, who had some education, and took place in areas (cities, villages) that offered more freedom than the plantations.

In the aftermath of the Nat Turner rebellion the Virginia legislature tightened the slave codes, limiting further the movement of slaves. In 1832 in Alabama it became illegal to teach a slave to read, write or spell with a fine of \$250-500; meetings of five or more slaves became illegal. A similar law was passed in Virginia against educating slaves. Black gatherings, including church meetings, were prohibited without the presence of white people.

Across the South the slaves were to be kept ignorant and atomised. By 1865 only 5% of Black Americans could read and write.

Mass rebellion became almost impossible. In fact the basic methods of resistance to slavery were smaller acts of resistance — slow work, damaging property, running away.

During the civil war anti-slave repression in the South became even more severe. Tens of thousands of slaves crossed to Union lines. But there were no mass risings. The conditions of life made mass conspiracy very difficult.

BLACK SOLDIERS

It became legal for Black troops to enrol in mid-1862.

Lincoln finally agreed to include Black recruits in the Union armies not because of pressure from former slaves, but because the numbers of white recruits was slowing down, and he was beginning to understand he had to use every possible resource to win the war. Black slaves crossed the lines, but mainly towards the end of the war, especially as the Union armies smashed through the South in 1864.

Eventually 179,000 Black men joined the Union's army, or 9% of the total.

In total 360,000 men died fighting for the North, 110,000 in battle. Around 37,000 Black soldiers died, 26,000 from disease, 3000 died in battle. 15 000 deserted. Black troops were used less often — because of racism — than whites.

About half of the 179,000 Black recruits were former slaves from the South, a quarter were from pro-Union border states, and the final quarter were free Black men from the North.

The 1860 census shows 3.9 million slaves and 488,000 were free. So, proportionately many more free Black men signed up than former slaves. Necessarily most former slaves signed up in 1863, or after.

The shift in the North's policy was from direct necessity, not pressure from former slaves.

On est tous des sauvages?

Daniel Randall reviews 'The Revenant' (dir. Alejandro G. Iñárritu, 2016)

The Italian futurist Filippo Marinetti, who, like many of his contemporaries, became a fascist, wrote that “any work of art that lacks a sense of aggression can never be a masterpiece.”

Although a film set in the American wilderness in the 1820s might seem a world away from the hyper-modern, industrial preoccupations of that movement, something of that idea is suggested by 'The Revenant'.

It is a difficult film to watch, and not only in its bloodier, flesh-tearingly violent moments: it is frequently disorienting, the shots jumping from close ups of snails' shells, plant stalks, or the eyes of horses, to sweeping landscape shots or kaleidoscopic geometries of tree branches.

The sound editing is jarring too, with its sparse musical soundtrack punctuated with the amplified buzzing of a fly, or the rushing of the wind. Much of its climactic sequence is overlaid with a constant, high-pitched, piercing whistle. It is, at times, a genuine physical challenge for a viewer.

That, undoubtedly, is the point. Director Alejandro G. Iñárritu brings the audience into the gruelling struggle of the film's characters, placing us within the action. At one point, a character's breath clouds the lens of the camera. At another, it runs wet with melting snow.

“Masterpiece” is too big a word for an amateur film critic writing reviews in a Trotskyist weekly to deploy, but 'The Revenant' unquestionably has “a sense of aggression”. It goes beyond aggression, into visceral brutality.

Many mainstream reviews of 'The Revenant' have described it as a “survival



film”. It can indeed be read as such, an exploration of the human will to survive, to overcome any obstacle to simply go on living.

But it also, and perhaps more fundamentally, uses the backdrop of the dispossession of the indigenous peoples of America by European settlers to explore the nature of savagery. It almost feels as if we're being asked to decide what is most savage — the wild bear who literally savages DiCaprio's Hugh Glass; or the Arikara (“Ree”) Indian warbands who scalp their enemies; or the white, colonial-racist trappers and traders, “shoot-ing civilisation” into the natives.

One might conclude that human life is an intermeshing net of competing savageries, all set against the savagery of the natural world. When a group of French trappers capture and execute a Pawnee Indian, they attach a legend to his corpse which reads “On est tous des sauvages”: “We are all savages”, or, “we are all wild”.

Here is nature red in tooth and claw for sure, and savages we all may be, but, as Orwell might have put it, “some are more savage than others”. Reading the film against the historical period it depicts must resist a “levelling out” of the savagery: the “savagery” of an indigenous people resisting systematic robbery and quasi-genocide cannot be equated with the “savagery” of those carrying it out.

The true story of Hugh Glass, upon which the film was based, was spun into the legendary fabric of early American nationhood: the indomitable spirit of the frontier, overcoming the elements to build a civilisation. Iñárritu uses that story to confront, rather than affirm, that legend. He reminds America that its nationhood is built on brutality, on savagery — and not, in the first instance, from the alleged “savages”.

To say more about 'The Revenant', I would have to watch it again. It is perhaps to the

film's credit that this is not something I feel I will be able to do easily.

Finally, a note on DiCaprio. Arguably the finest Hollywood leading man of his generation, he looks set to finally secure an Oscar for his role in 'The Revenant' (this is his fifth nomination). If you're a Hollywood leading man, one supposes Oscars matter, and few could begrudge DiCaprio this accolade, particularly given the physical extremes to which he obviously had to push himself to craft the performance. But for my money there's a strong case to be made that, on a technical level, his roles in his previous nominations, 'What's Eating Gilbert Grape?', 'Blood Diamond', or 'The Aviator' (or, indeed, 'The Departed', for which he wasn't even nominated) were better performances, more deserving of the prize. The Academy moves in mysterious ways.

In the entirely legitimate furore around the Oscars' lack of diversity, and given the subject matter of this film, one is reminded of Marlon Brando's decision, in 1973 to turn down his Oscar for 'The Godfather'; having become involved in the American Indian Movement (AIM), Brando asked activist Sacheen Littlefeather to turn down the award on his behalf, in an attempt to raise the issue of the representation of native Americans in film.

Could DiCaprio do something similar? Progress has been made since 1973, but indigenous Americans still face myriad struggles. Perhaps such gestures are meaningless, even patronising, but it would at least be in keeping with the mission of 'The Revenant' to jar, disrupt, and aggress.

Given the “Oscars So White” row, and America's ongoing failure to meaningfully address the racist foundations of its modern state, no-one could deny that such disruption remains necessary.

The patriotic traitor

ERIC LEE

The title of Jonathan Lynn's new play 'The Patriotic Traitor' could refer to either of the play's two protagonists.

One, Marshall Philippe Pétain, betrayed France to the Germans in 1940, while believing all the time that he was doing so in order to save the country. The other, his disciple and close friend Charles de Gaulle, was branded a traitor by the Vichy regime and sentenced to death when he fled the country for exile, to take on leadership of the Free French forces.

The play, which just opened at the Park Theatre in Finsbury Park, is a tour de force. The venerable Tom Conti is so good as Pétain that he completely dominates the stage whenever he appears. One wonders if Pétain himself had that same charisma and intelligence. As for de Gaulle, played by Laurence Fox, he comes off as a thoroughly unlikeable character, even if history were to prove him right.

Does this nuanced view of the two men and their relationship, this sympathetic portrayal of Pétain as a tragic figure, make the play somehow unacceptable? I don't think so.

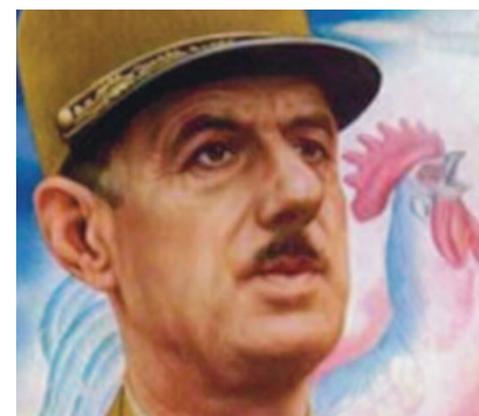
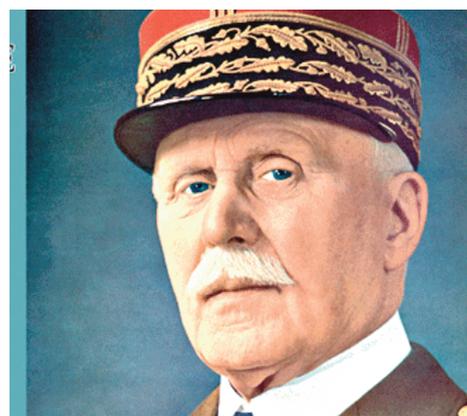
First of all, history is not a Marvel Comics adventure. Good guys (and Pétain from the

French nationalist point of view was the victor of Verdun) can turn bad. Bad guys (the thoroughly unlikeable de Gaulle) can be transformed into heroes, at the right moment. In the case of Pétain and de Gaulle, the similarities between the two men seem greater than the differences, even if they eventually found themselves on opposite sides in the Second World War.

In this thoroughly intelligent play, written by the author of the “Yes, Minister” and “Yes, Prime Minister” television series, there is a powerful exchange between the two men set after the war. Pétain is in prison, awaiting his sentence for treason. It will be de Gaulle who decides whether he lives or dies.

Pétain explains that when he took over the country in 1940 following a military defeat for which others were responsible, he was fully supported by the French people. Earlier in the play, de Gaulle becomes furious upon learning that in a referendum, 90% of the French supported the German-imposed armistice. Pétain uses the crude democratic excuse that he represented the will of the French nation. De Gaulle answers that a nation is more than its people, that it is an idea, and that above all, it was this idea that Pétain betrayed.

Some leftist purists might be appalled at the whole idea, looking for genuine good



Pétain and de Gaulle: similarities greater than their differences?

guys in this story. The problem is that they didn't exist.

The “third camp” in France in 1940 consisted almost entirely of supporters of the Communist Party — a party which enthusiastically collaborated with the Nazis during the first year of the occupation, until Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. There was no significant independent left force in the country. The choice for French people was either de Gaulle or collaboration with the German fascists. Most, including the Stalinists, chose the latter option.

There is a moment in the play when de Gaulle is placed in a BBC studio in London, about to make his first address to the French people. De Gaulle seizes the moment and says what needs to be said about the struggle continuing, calling on the French to rally behind him. Yes, he is arrogant and undemoc-

atic, unbearable as a human being. But he is absolutely right, and it is a moment in the play — and in history — that one never forgets.

At the end of the play, de Gaulle tells his wife that he'll be retiring from public life. She is shocked, cannot believe what he's saying. But he tells her that once again, history will have need of him, and he will return as President of France, with a new constitution created just for him. And this is precisely what happened following the disastrous war in Algeria more than a decade later.

The history of twentieth century France is full of characters like de Gaulle and Pétain, unlikely and unlikeable heroes and villains.

'The Patriotic Traitor' tells the story of those two men as we've never seen it told before.

Where we stand

Today one class, the working class, lives by selling its labour power to another, the capitalist class, which owns the means of production.

The capitalists' control over the economy and their relentless drive to increase their wealth causes poverty, unemployment, the blighting of lives by overwork, imperialism, the destruction of the environment and much else.

Against the accumulated wealth and power of the capitalists, the working class must unite to struggle against capitalist power in the workplace and in wider society.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty wants socialist revolution: collective ownership of industry and services, workers' control, and a democracy much fuller than the present system, with elected representatives recallable at any time and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

We fight for trade unions and the Labour Party to break with "social partnership" with the bosses and to militantly assert working-class interests.

In workplaces, trade unions, and Labour organisations; among students; in local campaigns; on the left and in wider political alliances we stand for:

- Independent working-class representation in politics.
 - A workers' government, based on and accountable to the labour movement.
 - A workers' charter of trade union rights — to organise, to strike, to picket effectively, and to take solidarity action.
 - Taxation of the rich to fund decent public services, homes, education and jobs for all.
 - A workers' movement that fights all forms of oppression.
- Full equality for women, and social provision to free women from domestic labour. For reproductive justice: free abortion on demand; the right to choose when and whether to have children. Full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Black and white workers' unity against racism.
- Open borders.
 - Global solidarity against global capital — workers everywhere have more in common with each other than with their capitalist or Stalinist rulers.
 - Democracy at every level of society, from the smallest workplace or community to global social organisation.
 - Equal rights for all nations, against imperialists and predators big and small.
 - Maximum left unity in action, and openness in debate.

If you agree with us, please take some copies of *Solidarity* to sell — and join us!



Events

Saturday 27 February

Stop Trident National Demonstration
12 noon, Marble Arch, London
bit.ly/stoptrident

Saturday 5 March

March against Lambeth library cuts
10.30, Brixton Library, London, SW2 1JQ
bit.ly/LambethLibrariesMarch

Sunday 6 March

Stop Turkey's war on the Kurds!
Break the silence! National demonstration
1pm, Trafalgar Square, London
bit.ly/kurdishdemo

Got an event you want listing?
solidarity@workersliberty.org

Tuesday 8 March

Set her free! International Women's Day protest in solidarity with migrant women.
1pm, Home Office, London, SW1P 4DF
bit.ly/setherfree

9-11 March

Junior doctors' strike
Across the country

Saturday 12 March

Taking back our NHS: Sheffield Save our NHS dayschool
10-2, Roco Creative co-op, S10 2HW
bit.ly/SSONHS

Saturday 13 March

National housing demonstration
12, Lincoln's Inn, London, WC2A 3TL
bit.ly/HousingDemo

More online at www.workersliberty.org Workers' Liberty @workersliberty

Scrap the Compliance Unit!

LABOUR

By Gerry Bates

"I'd like to scrap the Compliance Unit completely", Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell told a 300-strong Momentum meeting in Barnet on 22 February, "and I want people automatically accepted into membership when they first join".

He wants a fair and democratic process for membership disputes, and he's right.

Two weeks ago it looked as if expulsions by an unelected body with no place in the rulebook, the Compliance Unit, had come to an end, with none since November. Now there are new expulsions and threats of expulsions.

That includes two friends of Workers' Liberty in Lewisham, Jill Mountford and Tom Harris.

Nick Wrack, a well-known left-winger in south London, has had a letter from the Compliance Unit saying that he will be excluded if his CLP wishes (no reference to the CLP having to give any reason).

Jill was denounced in the *Daily Telegraph* after the Momentum National Committee, to which she was

a London delegate, elected her to the organisation's Steering Committee; and expulsion by the Compliance Unit followed soon after.

Jill stood against Harriet Harman in the ultra-safe Labour seat of Camberwell and Peckham in 2010, while calling for the return of a Labour government. Since then she has supported Labour candidates and only Labour candidates.

EXPELLED

Jill was expelled the same week that Richard Barrett, the only UKIP councillor in Hull, elected in a high profile defeat for Labour in 2014, defected directly to the party.

So nationalist bigots who stood against Labour and advocate voting against it two years ago are welcome, but class-struggle socialists who stood while calling for a Labour vote everywhere else six years ago are thrown out?

The left should step up the campaign to "Stop the Labour Purge", and Momentum should get on board.

Jill Mountford said: "Just what are they afraid of? I've been expelled as a member without any hearing or any evidence presented against me. The stated grounds

being 'closely involved with and supporting the Alliance for Workers Liberty'. The rules that support expulsion are hideous and need scrapping; the desire to expel people because they have socialist views is scandalous and has nothing to do with building a radical alternative to the bosses' party and their austerity politics. Ironically I received my letter by post while out canvassing on a local estate for Sadiq Khan, Labour's candidate for Mayor of London.

"Socialist ideas important at the founding of the Labour Party more than 100 years ago. And they should remain so now. We need to build a truly democratic Labour Party that fights for a working-class agenda. We have to fight against every expulsion and exclusion of socialists and other radicals from the Labour Party or we'll just get more of the same from Labour.

"I have every intention to fight this as hard as I can. If Shaun Woodward, Richard Barrett and a myriad of other people from the right can be accepted into the broad church we call the Labour Party, then socialists can too! I call on other socialists to join that fight."

Build real local Young Labour groups!

Rida Vaquas, a member of the newly elected Young Labour national committee, spoke to *Solidarity* in the run-up to the Young Labour conference on 27-28 February

We shouldn't understate the victory of the left slate.

Previously we had a minority of regional representatives who regularly organised with the left. We now have won every position. I think my campaign, on a firmly socialist and democratic basis, went well (I won!), but out of 3000 young members in my region only 141 votes were cast. How does the left develop a truly mass democratic movement?

If the left wins at the conference, how much difference will it make?

This depends on the work we do. Socialists have to be extremely cautious of a new inert left bureaucracy replacing the bureaucracy of the right. Socialists should put in the work of grassroots mobilisation, of organising across the country. A combative youth wing does not just come about by good people winning positions, but through the utilisation of those positions to facilitate action.

How can Young Labour increase participation and particularly working-class participation?

More work in trade unions, definitely. Also Young Labour needs to be embedded into local communi-

ties. Currently to be involved in Young Labour usually requires travelling miles across a city or even across the country. That's disengaging. We need genuinely local groups. Campaigning on issues that affect young people, being present in community campaigns, these are all things that affirm Young Labour's relevance.

What should Young Labour be campaigning on?

To start with, on issues democratically decided by conference! Currently what happens is that we pass motions deciding our position... but no action is taken. For example: 45% of 25-34 year olds privately rent, up from 24% in 2004. Rent controls, tenants' rights and the building of social housing are therefore critical policies. The crucial point is that we need to take policies seriously. A perfect political programme means nothing unless we organise to win it.

What changes are needed in the Young Labour structures?

One member one vote is a necessity now. A policy-making conference every year, in which motions can be submitted on any topic, not just on policy commissions decided centrally. NEC representatives should be mandated, by conference and by the National Committee.

What are the policy debates coming up at the conference?

Trident and free education. In both of these cases, we have a Labour Party leadership which is

sympathetic and agrees with the left position, but a Parliamentary party which is hostile. These issues will be hotly contested by the Labour right. Supporting the junior doctors is also an important precedent for showing solidarity with industrial action, crucial in a time of trade union repression by the state.

How should the Young Labour left organise?

Absolutely in a democratic and open manner. Socialism can never sneak in through the backdoor, it announces itself proudly. To build a sustainable Young Labour left, we need formalised structures, in which people discuss ideas and learn how to organise. We need everyone to feel confident in doing organising work and debating their ideas out. Momentum Youth and Students can play a role, but only if it evolves from its current state, and calls a democratic conference open to all of the Young Labour left, in which constitution, structures and principles are decided, as well as an elected committee.

What should the left do about expulsions of Labour activists?

Publicly oppose them, support comrades in fighting them. There is a strong historical tradition of revolutionary socialists in the Labour Party, but also a strong historical tradition of witch hunts.

Expulsions of people who have supported and worked for Labour victories is an attack on the left as a whole.

Scottish unions need to confront SNP cuts

By Dale Street

The Scottish Labour Party organised a lobby of the Scottish Government Cabinet meeting in Clydebank last week to protest against the SNP government's cuts of £350 millions in local authority funding.

Glasgow Council Labour Group will stage a lobby this week to protest at the SNP's cut of £133 millions in funding for Glasgow, costing around 3,000 jobs.

This is progress compared to muttering about underfunding and but getting on with "managing" local authorities on a reduced budget anyway.

But there is a lack of coordination between the Labour Party and unions. This week's lobby by Glasgow Labour Group is on Wednesday morning. The trade union lobby is Wednesday afternoon.

Pointing the finger of blame at the SNP government in Holyrood, which is what the Scottish Labour Party campaign currently amounts to, is certainly justified. But it is not the same as organising a fightback to defend jobs, working conditions, and services.

Nor is there a coordinated local-government trade union strategy.

Trade Unions for Scottish Labour, unsurprisingly, is pinning the blame on the SNP government: "The real divide: implementing austerity versus combating austerity." But while it is true that the SNP is implementing austerity, so too are Labour-

controlled councils which vote for cuts!

Unison Scotland has produced a "Combating Austerity Report and Toolkit" which proposes a series of (worthwhile) financial measures which councils could implement and, claims Unison, thereby avoid the need to make cuts.

Unite's focus is to demand that the UK Treasury write off an estimated £2.5 billions worth of pre-devolution debt owed by councils.

The GMB, despite its right-wing Scottish leadership (anti-Corbyn, pro-Trident and pro-fracking), is already carrying out a consultative ballot of its members in Glasgow City Council and its arms-length company Cordia over proposals to cut jobs and terms and conditions.

At the same time, the GMB is also backing the call for a 1p increase in income tax rates and mobilising for anti-SNP lobbies at Holyrood.

By contrast, those sections of the Scottish trade union movement who have effectively signed up to social peace with the SNP government now seem to flinch and sneer at the idea of criticising and mobilising against SNP austerity.

Labour-controlled councils have a straightforward choice: Campaign with trade unions and community groups on the basis of no-cuts budgets, or fight against trade unions and community groups to try to push cuts through.

• Full article: bit.ly/24n2IWR

Librarians plan more strikes

By Ruth Cashman, Lambeth Unison (personal capacity)

We have lost access to 14 million library books and 400 libraries in the UK since 2010.

The Tory's assault on local government has meant brutal cuts in our local library services that academics, professional bodies, unions and user groups agree is an existential threat to the national library network.

With four more years of the Tory



government, library campaigns and unions must unite to fight back against these cuts.

Some industrial action is already underway. February saw strikes in the Lambeth, Barnet and Greenwich library services. This is spreading and deepening. This week Lewisham library workers in Unison have announced a ballot for strikes against cuts in their local service. Lambeth Unison is set to announce a strategy of escalating strikes in their library service and are seeking to strengthen the li-

brary workers' strike by holding a consultative ballot for strikes across the entire council workforce in solidarity with library workers. Shop stewards across Unite and Unison have begun to discuss how to support each others' action and are calling for a demonstration in London, bringing together campaigns from across the capital.

Given there will soon be live industrial action ballots on five London boroughs, trade unionists should push for coordinated action in London library services.

DON'T STEAL OUR LIBRARIES
LAMBETH
 THE PEOPLE'S DEMONSTRATION
SATURDAY 5th MARCH
 10.30am
 Windrush Square, Brixton
 SW2 1JQ
 Bring banners, placards, drums and especially friends

FE college workers strike over pay

By Peggy Carter

On Wednesday 24 February, as Solidarity goes to press, workers in Further Education (FE colleges) in England will strike over pay.

University and College Union (UCU) members struck in November but this time they will be joined by workers who are organised by Unison. The dispute is in response to the imposition of a pay freeze by the employer organisation, the Association of Colleges.

Further action will be needed after 24 February if the tide of cuts to FE is to be stopped. Workers need to be given confidence from their unions that there will be an organised fight, as opposed to single days of action that win nothing. But that confidence should not just be trust in the leadership to do some-



thing, but a confidence in members own ability to act. Workplace-level organisation needs to be rebuilt, learning the lessons of public facing campaigns like that of the junior doctors currently.

The National Union of Teachers is currently balloting workers in sixth form colleges who are also hit

by the huge funding cuts to post-16 education. Action should be coordinated between the unions.

We need emergency conferences, uniting all the unions in post-16 education, to begin this work and we should call on and unite with the new forces of anti-austerity in the Labour Party to stand with us.

More Unison corruption leaks

By a Unison member

As the returning officer report about the Unison general secretary election is published, more leaks have shown the level of corruption inside Unison.

Prentis was re-elected general secretary of Unison on a tiny turnout of 9.8%, an incredibly diminished vote, and with allegations of union staff campaigning for him against the rules of the union.

A report by the returning officer report was due out on 10 January, but was published five weeks late. It makes very dull reading. Although some of the very many allegations were upheld, no decision was made on the allegation that London Regional Staff and London Regional Secretary were instrumental to winning votes across London, because there is an ongoing investigation on that. The report argues that because Prentis' vote in London at 46% was lower than other regions, even if the investigation proves wrongdoing it wouldn't significantly alter the result. So never mind!

What makes more interesting

reading is the new whistleblower reports to *Private Eye*. "Team Dave" emails sent out by Cliff Williams (Unison assistant general secretary, whose boss is Prentis) were leaked. Williams was organising the campaign for Dave Prentis in defiance of the rule that staff should not play such a roll. The email was sent to 50 people including 45 unison regional secretaries, full time union staff in regions, and national officers including Roger McKenzie, who is leading the investigation into the London region allegations and National President Wendy Nichols, who is charged with ensuring investigations and Returning Officers reports are published and acted upon.

Of course there is no evidence that Dave Prentis knew any of this, but how could he not know? Apart from those in the London region, there is no evidence that full-time staff campaigned during work time, but staff should not campaign for candidates — in work time or out!

We hope that the next revelations come through Unison channels and not just through *Private Eye*.

Tube drivers and DLR balloted for strikes

By Ollie Moore

Drivers in the RMT union on London Underground's Piccadilly Line will be balloted for strikes in a ballot lasting from 22 February to 8 March.

RMT says Piccadilly Line management has abused disciplinary procedures. Drivers previously voted for strikes in October 2015, over similar issues. An RMT statement said: "Following the strong 'yes' vote in the [October] ballot re-

sult, some progress was made over the issues and LUL gave commitments regarding the above which allowed us to await the outcome of further discussions in the hope that a resolution would be reached.

"However, since this time there have been further breaches of the disciplinary procedure and a lack of consistency by local management dealing with issues on the line."

On the Docklands Light Railway, RMT will ballot cleaning workers

employed by Interserve for strikes over job cuts and unilateral changes to their contracts and shift patterns. Interserve is one of the main contractors providing cleaning services across Transport for London, and is notorious for abusing its staff, including by routinely short-paying them.

In December, Interserve workers and their supporters demonstrated outside the company's offices to demand an end to short-payment and job cuts.



Solidarity

For a workers' government

No 395 24 February 2016 50p/£1

TRIDENT: TAKE THE FIGHT INTO UNIONS AND LABOUR

By Gerry Bates

On Saturday 27 February Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn will be among the speakers at the demonstration calling Britain's Trident nuclear weapon system to be scrapped and not replaced.

This demonstration should be the biggest nuclear disarmament protest for many years. The Tory government will try to get a definite decision through Parliament this year to start construction of the hugely expensive Trident replacement program. But the Labour Party now has a leader, and hundreds of thousands of new members, committed to nuclear disarmament.

The PCS civil service workers' union is calling on its members to march — noon from Marble Arch, London. The union says Trident "should be scrapped, with the money saved to be reinvested in our public services and infrastructure, generating thousands of jobs in the process. Those people currently employed to work on Trident should be given re-training and re-employment as part of this process".

Contingents will also include a "Care, not Welfare" bloc. That bloc will highlight the fact that scrapping Trident replacement would save enough money "to fully fund A&E services for 40 years, employ 150,000 new nurses, cover tuition fees for 4 million students or build 1.5 million affordable homes".



For years opinion polls have found that if the question mentions the cost of replacing Trident — more than £100 billion over the years, maybe as much as £170 billion — people are almost always against it.

The baseline case against these nuclear weapons is that they could be used for "defence" only by killing millions of civilians, that is, by making a catastrophic war even more catastrophic. Spending so many billions on them at a time of

cuts to the NHS and other vital services adds absurdity to immorality.

A big demonstration will not budge the Tory Party now. The way to stop Trident replacement is to win the Labour Party to oppose it. A Labour government could then stop it: even short of a Labour government, a solid Labour vote against Trident, which would be joined by Welsh Nationalists, Scottish Nationalists, and probably the Lib Dems, could chip off enough Trident-sceptic Tory MPs to stop it.

It will be a battle to win the Labour Party. The old bloc of right-wing Labour MPs and officials who became entrenched under Blair and Brown are stubbornly resisting the call for change which came from the rank and file with Jeremy Corbyn's landslide election as Labour leader.

Many unions support nuclear disarmament, and are affiliated to

the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Unison, PCS, CWU, RMT, FBU, TSSA, ASLEF, NUT, and NUM.

But the big GMB union stridently supports Trident replacement, on saving-jobs grounds, and the Unite union is equivocal for the same reason. And so far only PCS has made a strong call for members to march on 27 February.

Things will be changed only by tens of thousands of activists assiduously attending their union and Labour Party meetings, patiently arguing with and convincing the other people there, and calling MPs and union leaders to account.

It's a battle which will intertwine with the general battle to transform our labour movement into a force capable of shaping a new society of peace, solidarity, and democracy.

MARCH FOR HEALTH, HOMES, JOBS, EDUCATION

Saturday 16 April 2016, 1pm, Gower Street/Euston Road, London



Join the national demonstration, organised by the People's Assembly Against Austerity.

Information about transport: bit.ly/PAAtransport

Health bloc on the march: bit.ly/healthbloc

Student bloc on the march organised by the NCAFC: bit.ly/studentbloc

Subscribe to Solidarity

Trial sub (6 issues) £7

Six months (22 issues) £22 waged , £11 unwaged

One year (44 issues) £44 waged , £22 unwaged

Name

Address

I enclose £

Cheques (£) to "AWL" or make £ and Euro payments at workersliberty.org/sub
Return to 20e Tower Workshops, Riley Road, London, SE1 3DG.

Or subscribe with a standing order

Pay £5 a month to subscribe to Solidarity or pay us more to make an ongoing contribution to our work

To: (your bank) (address)

Account name (your name)

Account number Sort code

Please make payments as follows to the debit of my account:

Payee: Alliance for Workers' Liberty, account no. 20047674 at the Unity Trust Bank, 9 Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB (60-83-01)

Amount: £..... To be paid on the day of (month) 20.... (year) and thereafter monthly until this order is cancelled by me in writing.

This order cancels any previous orders to the same payee.

Date Signature

Contact us

020 7394 8923

solidarity@workersliberty.org

Write to us: The editor (Cathy Nugent), 20E Tower Workshops, Riley Road, London, SE1 3DG

Solidarity editorial: Cathy Nugent (editor), Kelly Rogers, Gemma Short, and Martin Thomas

Printed by Trinity Mirror