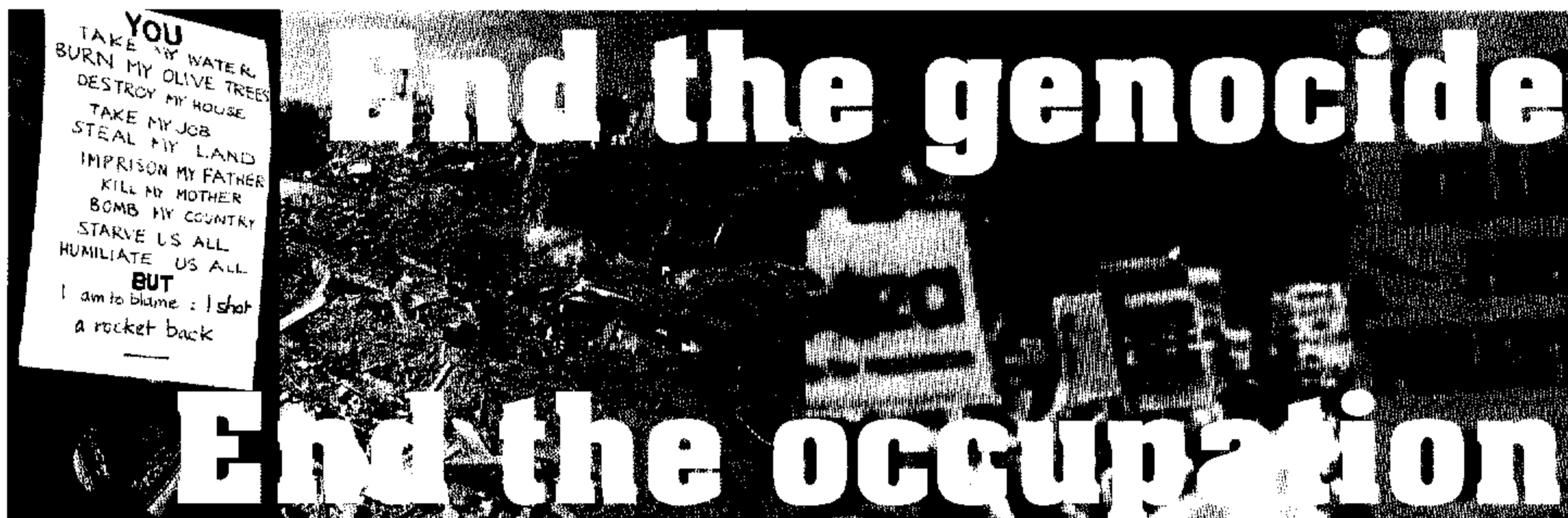


# SocialistVoice<sup>★</sup>

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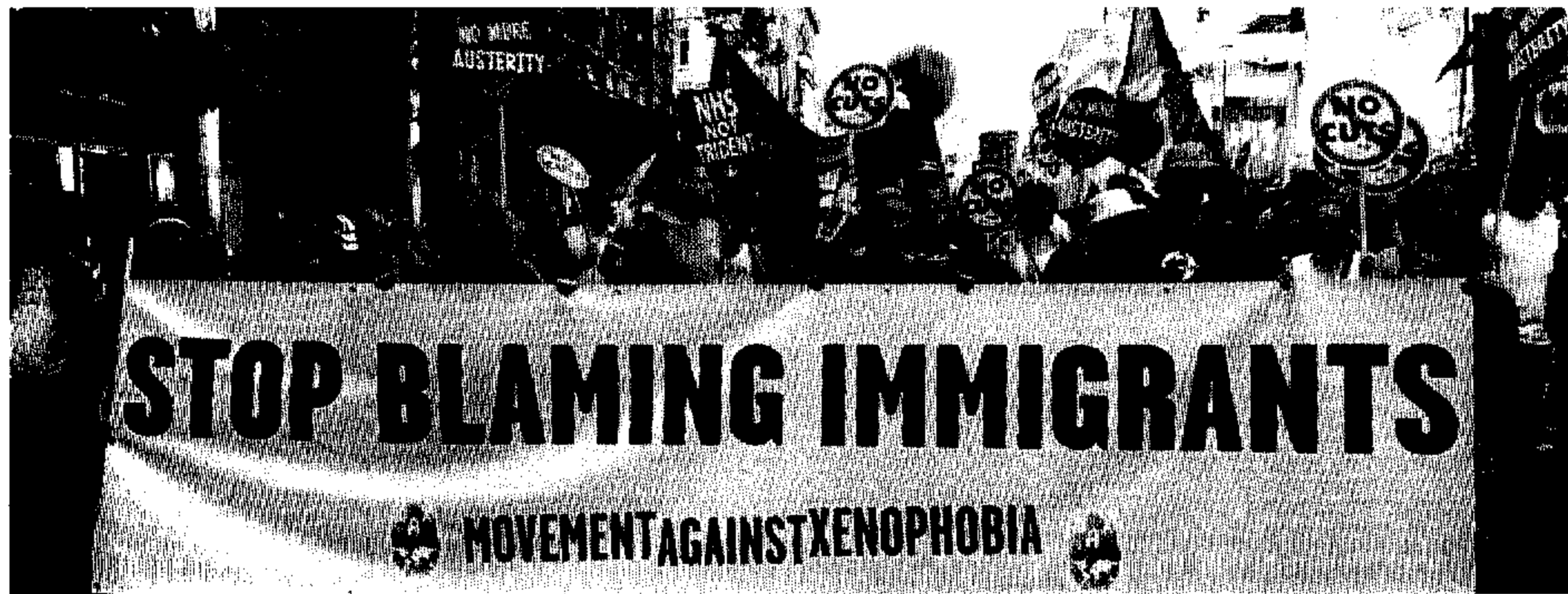
Children are killed every day in Gaza because of the Israeli bombardment from the land, air and sea. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government says they bomb "only military objectives", but they have created a blood bath by killing children, women and old people and bombing homes, hospitals, and four young boys playing on the beach.

The Israeli government want to destroy any possibility of negotiating with Gaza and the West Bank. Only those who support, or are blinded by the Ideology of Zionism approve this

genocide. Many Jews in cities across the world are protesting "Not in our name", including some inside Israel alongside with their Arab neighbours.

Israeli actions are supported by the British government (and the US and EU). They say Israel has the right to "self-defence". In the name of "self-defence" Israel is attacking the people of Gaza and destroying towns reminiscent of the carpet bombing that destroyed cities in the 2nd World War. This is not "defence" it is genocidal atrocity.

(continues on page 3)



After the May elections the rise in the UKIP vote caused concern and raised questions about how issues of racism and fascism can be challenged and defeated.

Most trade unions and trade unionists actively and consistently campaign against racism and fascism, and would not tolerate a system that denied access to services such as health care, housing, or welfare support to anyone purely based on colour, religion or racial origin. However, immigration controls do just that as they discriminate and deny access based on the

immigration status of an individual and their family. It is therefore essential to ensure that the trade union movement addresses the brutal reality of immigration controls to workers, and not allow worker to be turned against worker.

Despite the rhetoric contained in the election propoganda and media hype, successive governments and the laws they pass are not soft on immigration and our borders are not uncontrolled, the reality is the opposite. Thousands have died just trying

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# Life of our parties

**O**n 28 and 29 July 1974 in Peru, during the military dictatorship of General Velasco Alvarado, a congress in Lima of workers and student activists founded the Socialist Workers Party (PST). After 40 years of uninterrupted struggle alongside the working class, we have proven we are here to stay.

PST members do not look for political careers as offered by bourgeois parties and labour bureaucrats. When someone joins the PST they contribute to building a combative, independent and truly working-class political organisation.

The PST is in daily struggle and tries to win the best and most determined activists. In the PST militant workers are not an extra, as in some parties of the "left", but they are our greatest asset.

Young people entering the PST work within the class and to organise their lives for the construction of the party.

Our daily battle is no small thing, we have to wage a fight tooth and nail against the employers, the government and its institutions. For good reason we declare them our bitter enemies because, as often happened in our history, they repress, persecute and imprison us.

We are against all the bureaucratic

apparatuses of conciliators, and traitors, such as Patria Roja in SUTEP and the PC in CGTP, because they try to block the real struggles and democratic, independent organisations of workers and youth.

The PST fights capitalism because it exploits, but also because it oppresses. We are champions of the struggle for women's rights, against sexism and gender violence. We educate on these concepts and apply severe sanctions against those who commit offenses of this type. That is the only way to build the party as a tool of struggle against capitalism and sexism, and build a unified working class movement to end all forms of exploitation and oppression.

The ultimate goal of PST is the conquest of a workers' government to end the capitalist hell by building a society without exploiters or exploited, that is socialist. Socialism has to be based on the exercise of power by democratic organisations of workers, opposed by the abominable dictatorial regimes that developed in Cuba, the USSR and China.

We build the PST as part of an international organization, the International Workers League-Fourth International as the means to our aims.

## For a working class alternative to austerity

**M**any different sections of the working class, especially the most vulnerable and poorest, are being brutalised by the continuing and deepening cuts. That is why there is a growing mood to oppose Labour councillors in local elections.

One such class struggle candidate was Martin Ralph, representing Old Swan Against the Cuts (OSAC) in Liverpool and who achieved 8.5 per cent of the vote in this year's local election. The group has been campaigning consistently against the government and local council cuts.

A new member said recently:

"Old Swan Against the Cuts is an interesting group of people. They are a group of people, I'd say, who aren't traditionally involved in politics (and are mostly working class) who are being kept involved and feel there is a place where they are being nurtured politically.

"I know people (voters) want to believe in something and someone better. I think you've established with OSAC a vibrant grassroots, working class group as well as a genuinely earned profile well before these elections and it won't be a case of 'here today and gone tomorrow' and working class voters particularly want to believe that's true."

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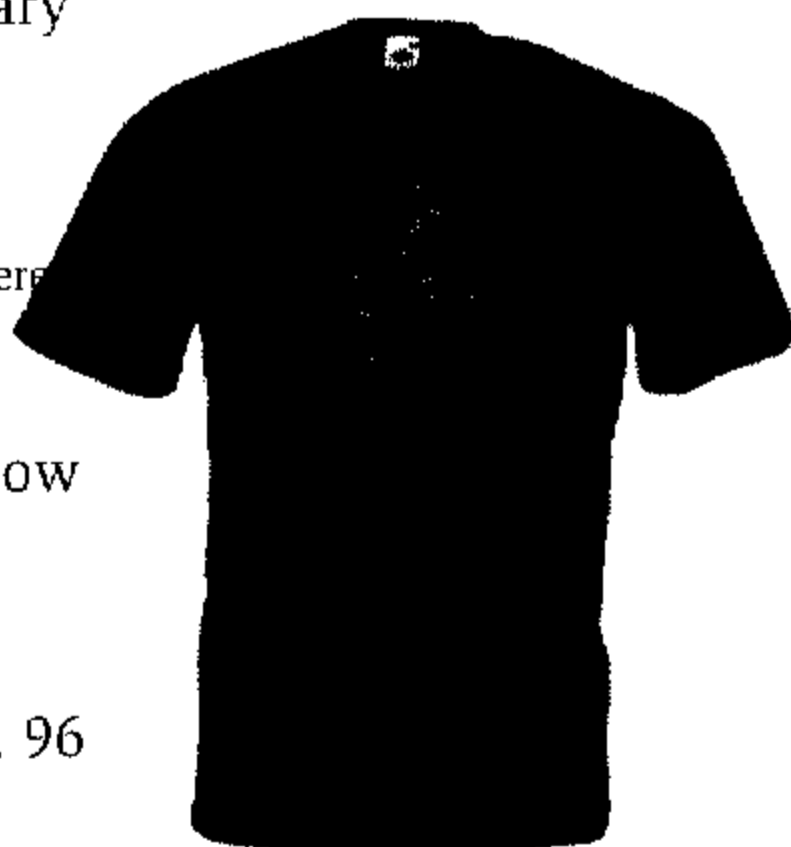
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**EDITORS**  
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(continued from front page)

## End genocide and occupation



We also condemn the BBC's bias, which is giving cover to the Israeli murder machine.

USA defends Israeli bombing, as always, in order to maintain its "own base" and foothold in the region. Israel is that foothold. The State of Israel was created in 1948 as an imperialist military enclave in the Middle East. Since then and up to the present day, the history of Israel is that of permanent expansion and aggression against the Palestinian people so as to occupy of their land.

### Free Palestine

The only real solution is the construction of a single, secular, democratic and non racist Palestine of the entire historic territory. A Palestine with no walls or concentration camps, a free Palestine to which the millions of evicted Palestinians can return, and at the same time a country where all the Jews who are prepared to coexist in peace and with equal rights can do so.

### Build the international campaign

We condemn this aggression of the Zionist state and once again we express our solidarity and our support for the Palestinians. International isolation of Israel (as the real aggressor) is essential.

Mass demonstrations of solidarity with Palestinians are taking place in the Arab world (but not the Arab governments), and across the world to demand their government take action to stop Israeli's genocidal atrocities.

We also call on the trade unions (who have done very little), anti-cuts and social movements to support the actions and campaigns to condemn this bloody assault on Gaza and its people.

We demand that the British government put pressure on Israel by imposing an arms embargo, ending diplomatic relations and stopping trade agreements.

## Co-ordinate two day's national strike action

*Socialist Voice comment*

Unison and other unions are planning to organise strike action at the end of September and all union members should join push their unions to join this national strike action and extend it two days.

Union members' pressure in the public sector forced seven national unions to co-ordinate public sector strikes on 10 July with over a million on strike but it needs to be done again on a wider basis. No worker believes a one day stoppage will force the employers and government to think again.

At the strike rally in Liverpool the teachers union, the NUT, put forward a motion for a two day general strike and the vote was unanimous. The fight for another joint national strike needs to be discussed at branch level with the building of links between unions at branch level. The strike movement needs to be built from below.

### Workers build the rank and file

After the November 2011 strike, workers wanted to know "when are we next out"? But the union leaders let them down. Today those lessons must to be learnt or there will be no general strike if it's left to union leaders and the TUC.

An example is the powerful Unite union which delayed balloting health workers over striking for a pay rise. This meant they could not strike on 10J, even though Unite council workers struck.

Branches in every union have to build rank and file movements as was done in the past (see the archive written by Bill Hunter on the back page).

### Unity with employed and unemployed

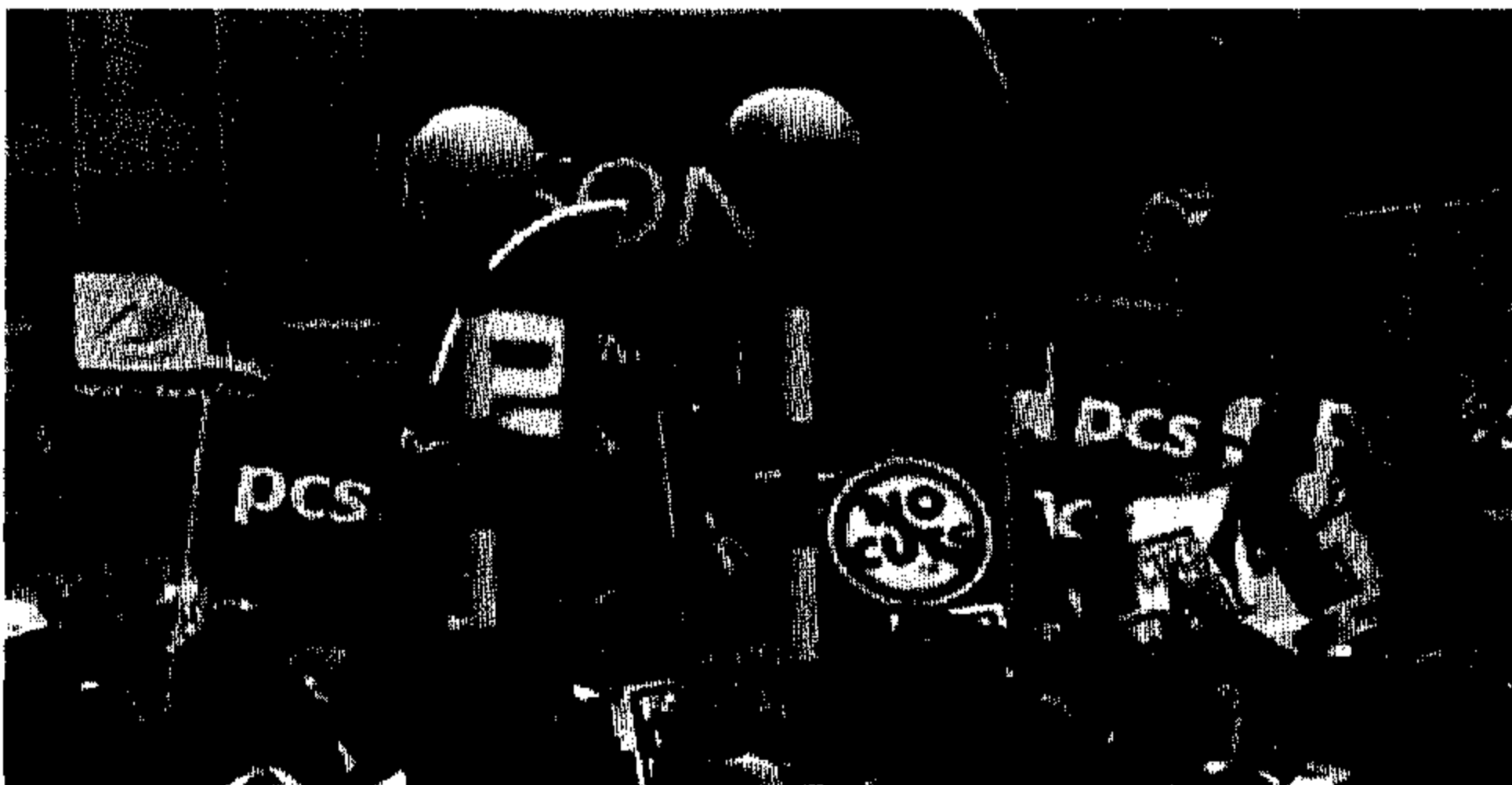
The slogan of the 10 July strike was "Britain Needs a Pay Rise", and the teachers and firefighters were striking to restore their lost pension benefits. But the unions also need to fight for those not in work. They must demand the reinstatement of the welfare safety net and stop the sanctioning policy, otherwise food banks will become the norm, dignity lost and homelessness will continue to rise. We need an alternative decent welfare provision, with equal access to all.

### Defeat Labour's plans fight all cuts

The leaderships of the two largest unions, who organise a total of 2.5 million workers, support the Labour Party. Len McCluskey (Unite's General Secretary) stated at the recent policy national conference that Unite would support the Labour Party to the hilt from now until the general election with millions of pounds. Yet the leader of the Labour Party, Miliband, publicly stated that he was totally against the strike.

Workers fighting austerity must go beyond seeing the government as the only enemy, the fight must also be against Labour's support for austerity and the Labour councils who are implementing the brutal cuts.

Those union leaders who refuse to fight the implementation of Labour's austerity plans will have to be replaced. The unions need to develop a programme to defend the working class and the welfare system with a programme of action to unite public and private sector workers and service users.



# Fight racism, fight immigration controls

Margaret McAdam, International Socialist League

to reach safety through drowning at sea, suffocating inside containers or falling from lorries.

Those who do reach 'safety' are not welcomed with a generous handout, the false image painted by the media, in particular the Daily Mail and Daily Express, and mainstream politicians do not even attempt to portray the issue honestly.

Thousands upon arrival are imprisoned in detention prisons. Thousands are made destitute – with no right to money, no welfare, no home, and no right to work. Thousands are brutally deported back to the very place from which they fled.

Those seeking asylum who receive support get £35 per week if single and £72 for a couple, which is way below the level of Income Support (considered to be the poverty line, but in reality below that).

The media carefully ignores this. The media are also careful not to raise concern and awareness of super exploitative employers who use the strict immigration regime to keep their workers as modern day slaves in inhuman and brutal living and working conditions. Immigrants are conveniently the forgotten poor.

## Immigration controls are brutal

Immigration controls are brutal and total they reach into and control every aspect of the life of an individual. Furthermore, they encroach more and more on lives of many workers who are being drawn into the role of immigration police officers in their work place, with laws that require the checking of a person's immigration status to identify entitlement – this includes health care, welfare support, social and private housing and the right to work itself.

## Immigrants do cause cuts

Undocumented workers are not the reason the working class is facing an assault on their services and quality of life – immigrants are not responsible for the passport queues; the housing shortage; cuts in public spending; nor for the problems in the NHS, education or welfare system.

The austerity offensive has led to a deterioration in living and working conditions of the working class and was a product of the 2008 economic crash which was caused by the greed



Immigrants who died in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach a safe place

and corruption of speculators, bankers, and big business. The very people who created the financial crisis now seek to recoup their losses and enrich themselves by stealing public money and privatising all public services. This is the cause of job losses, cuts in services, cuts in pay and conditions, and hence deterioration in living and working conditions.

There could be plenty of work for all if there was a programme of public works and services - such a building and maintenance of social housing, of which there is a massive shortage due purely to under investment. There is no shortage of building expensive apartments and housing for the very rich and wealthy real estate speculators.

## UKIP uses Labour's racism

Immigration is explicitly and obsessively used by UKIP to turn worker against worker. In doing so they also increase the level of racism and encourage fascist groups.

However, rather than counter the lies and myths that are being used to stir up anti-immigrant feelings, both Labour and Tory shift their policies further to the right. Consequently all of this boosts the confidence of racist and fascist groups, who return to our streets propagating hatred and raising fear in our communities.

UKIP were able to build their campaign by adopting the very same scapegoating

and scaremongering tactics about immigration that have been used by Labour and Tories for decades, and which go back to the end of the last century when opposition developed to Jews escaping pogroms in Eastern Europe. Opposition to Jewish immigrants fleeing Nazism in the 1930s was also raised by the press and government. Today is no different to then.

In 2013, Labour MP David Blunkett created a moral panic over the Roma community "congregating on the streets" of Page Hall, Sheffield. He has also talked about asylum seeking children "swamping British schools" and suggested that they be educated in "accommodation" prisons, words and sentiments reminiscent of Margaret Thatcher claiming that Britain was being "swamped by an alien culture".

It is therefore important to look at the origin of immigration control which is "a system of law built historically on fascist activity and can never be humane". (S Cohen, *Standing on the Shoulders of Fascism*, 2006).

Agitation by fascists groups, by the BNP, by UKIP is and always has been used as an excuse to enact further immigration controls.

At the same time as the Trades Union Councils conference was being held, the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict was being hosted by Foreign Secretary William Hague and Angeline

# Socialist Party turn their back on immigrant workers

Margaret McAdam and Martin Ralph

Jolie in London. Women who tried to tell their stories to the summit were denied the right to speak so a demonstration was held outside which was organised by the Black Women's Rape Action Project.

Those seeking safety in this country but face a system that is permeated with a culture of disbelief. That disbelief is an even greater for women who have escaped murder, rape and sexual violence.

Once these women tell their harrowing story they are treated as being guilty of a crime, taken and held in detention prisons where many have then been subjected to further racist and sexual abuse by the guards in those prisons, such as Yarls Wood.

And many have been deported back to the terror they had fled after reporting this abuse.

The trade union movement must stop looking the other way and actively campaign against immigration controls. The Trades Councils, representing grass roots trade union activists, can start by adopting a common programme to fight against these brutal controls by countering the lies and rhetoric that leads to a division of workers, and furthermore leads to an increased level of racist and fascist activity.

- The right to stay for all
- No restriction to work or services based on immigration status
- The right to work for all
- Oppose work place raids seeking to arrest detain or deport workers
- No to detention or deportation
- End slave labour
- Better pay and conditions for all
- Unionise all workers - including the undocumented
- Full, decent and equal access to all services for all
- Full, decent and equal access to all welfare support for all
- Support workers who refuse to collude in the oppression of immigrants

**Workers of the world  
unite, we are all one  
working class.**



The demand No One Is Illegal is spreading across the world the picture shows a Canadian demonstration

The International Socialist League is opposed to the position of the Socialist Party on the question of immigration control. The aim of control is to divide workers and hit the most oppressed, all revolutionary Marxists must stand in defence of and for the most oppressed.

The British perspectives document adopted at the SP 2014 congress. <http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/18345> said, "We have to stand in defence of the most oppressed sections of the working class, including migrant workers and other immigrants. We staunchly oppose racism. We defend the right to asylum, and argue for the end of repressive measures like detention centres. However, we cannot make the mistake of dismissing workers who express concerns about immigration as 'racists'. While racism and nationalism are clearly elements in anti-immigrant feeling, there are many consciously anti-racist workers who are concerned about the scale of immigration".

The SP 2013 congress document stated, "At the same time, given the outlook of the majority of the working class, we cannot put forward a bald [sic] slogan of 'open borders' or 'no immigration controls', which would be a barrier to convincing workers of a socialist programme, both on immigration and other issues.

"Such a demand would alienate the vast majority of the working class, including many more long-standing immigrants, who would see it as a threat to jobs, wages and living conditions.

Nor can we make the mistake of dismissing workers who express concerns about immigration as 'racists'.

While racism and nationalism are clearly elements in anti-immigrant feeling, there are many consciously anti-racist workers who are concerned about the scale of immigration."

There can be no socialist programme without including the fight against the laws that disorganise the class and ignore the essence of Marxism, that the working class is an international class.

The SP is caught in a contradiction. They say they cannot use the demand "no immigration controls" because it would "be a barrier to convincing workers of a socialist programme", but by doing that they do not present the workers with a socialist programme, because they avoid saying how they think immigration control should be fought.

The SP rests on what it perceives to be the moods and feelings of workers and not on what must be fought for. That is, they adapt to the low level of consciousness of some workers instead of fighting to raise it to the level of a

## **No One Is Illegal, politically taking hold more than ever**

Dave Landau, No One Is Illegal

**T**he Right to Remain (campaigning organisation for immigrants) turn up at events with placards declaring, "No Human Is Illegal". Movement for Justice are mounting successful demonstrations against detention centres and chant, "All migrants have the right, here to stay here to fight". There is a movement now which challenges raids.

The idea of defiance not compliance has a resonance in various places and there are networks like "docs not cops" emerging. Left Unity has adopted pretty well the whole of the No One Is Illegal programme. The Independent Socialist Network has been fighting for NOII positions inside the TUSC (Trades Union & Socialist Coalition).

NOII politics are out there and there is a hunger to fight against the tide of anti-immigrant filth.

(continued from page five)

**Socialist Party turn their backs on immigrant workers**

Lenin with  
Trotsky  
to his left,  
May 1920.

vanguard worker. Ever since imperialism developed, capitalism has used immigration laws against workers. Some workers' organisations even proposed immigration laws.

**A voice from the immigrants**

In the 1890s the TUC passed several motions in favour of immigration control including at its 1894 Cardiff conference. The union bureaucracy thought too many Jewish workers were coming to Britain and at that time the trade union leadership was part of the agitation for control.

Jewish people suffered persecution in Tsarist Russia and Eastern Europe and were forced to flee in increasing numbers in 1890s and anti-Semites had responded by agitating for entry restriction to the UK.

This was fought by Jewish workers and others. A pamphlet opposing the "anti-alien" motion of the TUC 1894 congress, "A Voice from the Aliens" was launched at meetings in London and Leeds where the main speaker was Eleanor Marx.

In 1892 more than 40 labour movement bodies, including Trades councils in London, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester, adopted resolutions calling for restrictions on immigration, especially by East European Jews.

Manchester Trades Council's statement was typical:

"It is time that workers of this country . . . rose up and protested with firmness against the continuation of this curse [of Jewish immigration]". No Borders Wales, noborderswales.wordpress.com. Such were the anti-internationalist feelings then in many trade union bodies.

Certain trade union bodies opposed immigration control such as the London trades council in 1895 and by 1903 Manchester trades councils was involved in local protests against immigration legislation.

By the 1960s black immigrants' self-organisation against restrictions had started and in the late 1970s the fight

against immigration control and for the rights of the undocumented had spread and entered trade unions.

**Immigration controls divide workers**

Anti-immigration, xenophobia and anti-working class oppression has always been fought against by revolutionary Marxism.

The fight against immigration controls became part of the outlook of the 3rd International under the guidance of Lenin and Trotsky.

"In view of the coming danger, the Communist Parties of the imperialist countries - America, Japan, Britain, Australia and Canada - must not merely issue propaganda against the war, but must do everything possible to eliminate the factors that disorganise the workers' movement in their countries and make it easier for the capitalists to exploit national and racial antagonisms.

"These factors are the immigration question and the question of cheap coloured (sic) labour". November 1920, 4th Congress 3rd International.

The resolution goes on to say, "The Communist Parties of America, Canada and Australia must conduct a vigorous campaign against restrictive immigration laws and must explain to the proletarian masses in these countries that such laws, by inflaming racial hatred, will rebound on them in the long run".

The SP position is therefore contrary to the position of the 3rd International before Stalin took control.

If the SP say it is impossible to assert 'no immigration controls', then what controls do they support?

**Oppose all immigration controls**

Not to oppose oppression based on the immigration status of one sector of the working class means it will be impossible to end our own oppression and exploitation.

A Marxist perspective document must establish where a party stands. If a party is not against all immigration controls then the most oppressed, sector of the working class will be left isolated and undefended.

How can we clarify confused workers, if we do not establish the reality of such controls?

We need a programme to fight against immigration controls in the organisations of the working class, one that seeks to unite all workers, especially the most oppressed, and not divide them.

**UKIP:**

The UKIP success in the local elections and European elections sent a shockwave through trade unions, left organisations and many workers.

People from a range of backgrounds voted for UKIP. Some were fascist, right wing bigots and Euro sceptics but the greatest number of votes came from the frustration and anger felt by the working class and middle class over economic problems: declining pay and conditions, increasing zero hour contracts, and increasing anxiety over the future coupled with a general disgust at the sleaze and hypocrisy of traditional parties.

However, UKIP are no different.

**London lowers their vote**

Euro elections results were: UKIP 27.5%, Labour 25% and Tories 24% (34.17% of the electorate voted).

Local elections: in 2013 UKIP received a national average of 23 per cent of the vote, which in 2014 went down to 17 per cent because of the London vote.

In London UKIP polled 7 per cent. The majority of London's population is now Black and Ethnic Minority and more than 40 per cent of Londoners were born overseas. It seems the more cosmopolitan a population the less inclined to vote for UKIP.

**UKIP aims to divide workers**

UKIP claim to be a people's party, but populist issues are highlighted to conceal the party's hostility to public sector jobs, public ownership and workers' rights.

UKIP policies are aimed at dividing workers by deepening the attack on the democratic rights of minorities, in particular EU migrants, immigrants, women and the LGTB communities.

While UKIP use patriotic sound bites their policies give support for de-regulation of finance and big business, and curb the rights of workers.

"UKIP would put an end to most legislation regarding matters such as weekly working hours, holidays and holiday, overtime, redundancy or sick pay etc. and provide a statutory, standard, very short employment contract template". (Small Business Manifesto, 2013). This manifesto is no longer available from the UKIP web site,

**VOICE FROM THE ALIENS**

About the Anti-Alien Resolution of the Cardiff Trade Union Congress.

Jewish workers opposing all immigration controls

We, the organised Jewish workers of England, taking

# A party for the privileged

Martin Ralph, International Socialist League



Anti-racists opposing Nigel Farage

but it can be found at [bit.ly/1qiC06S](http://bit.ly/1qiC06S).

Also their 2010 manifesto promised to, "Encourage County Health Boards to put out to tender key NHS services ranging from Long Term Care to local hospitals and GP surgeries".

UKIP's anti-immigrant propaganda draws on the anti-Jewish, anti-Irish and anti-Black propaganda that has increased racism and divided workers since the 1930s.

They argue that immigration is to blame for economic and social problems, but the reality is that banks and speculators have driven the financial crisis we all face today, as happened in the past.

Cameron's austerity package has reinforced anti-immigrant feelings. Labour are also responsible as they do not oppose austerity and they court the anti-immigrant rhetoric.

## The real Nigel Farage — a privileged life with very wealthy backing

Farage was educated at Dulwich College private school and was active in the Tory Party from his school days.

In 1982, he worked in the City of London, trading commodities at the London Metal Exchange. He moved to Credit Lyonnais Rouse in 1986, Refco in 1994, and Natexis Metals in 2003.

Farage left the Tories in 1992 and UKIP was formed in 1993.

The main donor was Paul Sykes a property developer whose wealth was estimated at £650 million. <http://bit.ly/U37jI8>.

Sykes donated almost £1,500,000 towards UKIP's advertising campaigns for the 2004 European Parliamentary elections, making him their primary source of funding.

Then in November 2013, Sykes stated that he would do "whatever it takes" to help make UKIP successful in the 2014 European Parliamentary elections.

## They want to deregulate the banks

UKIP defends the dominance of the banks and calls for de-regulation. Farage told the Independent in January 2014, "I know it might still be trendy to 'bash the bankers' but this crash was entirely predictable. It was Gordon Brown handing over regulation of the banking industry from the Bank of England who, since 1694 has done a pretty good job, and handed it over to the tick-box bureaucrats in Canary Wharf".

He has a direct link with the City of London, big capital, private equity and financiers. These are the very institutions that created the 2008 financial crash which is the real reason behind the current austerity attacks hitting the working class.

## Open door to fracking

UKIP published early this year an energy policy pamphlet, where they vowed to "end wasteful EU and UK subsidies to 'renewable energy scams', such as wind turbines and solar farms."

According to the new Statesmen, "Most strikingly of all, it recommends

'a re-think' to allow the UK to exploit its remaining coal reserves, claiming that the local impacts of mining can be avoided by 'emerging technologies enabling energy to be recovered from coal by underground combustion.'" <http://bit.ly/1ppXjEg>.

## Media helps UKIP

UKIP received a high level of media coverage during and after the elections. This led to an unprecedented 1190 complaints to the BBC about giving too much time or bias to UKIP.

## Others follow UKIP racism

The UKIP success will inevitably push other parties further to the right, in particular to mount attacks on all immigrants.

The Labour Party and Miliband have repeatedly apologised for Labour's lenient approach to immigration in the past, which in reality has never been lenient.

The success and populist rhetoric of UKIP has also given confidence to fascist groups and thugs to attack and harass racial minority communities and individuals.

## For a free socialist European Federation

UKIP utilise popular anti-European Union and anti-EU migration to the UK to support what would be brutal policies. They want Parliament and EU deregulation for big business to allow for unrestricted policies that will attack workers' interests.

The EU can only be removed by workers' struggles across Europe fighting the bosses and their institutions which are destroying southern Europe today.

Our aim is to build a Free Socialist European Federation to unite all European workers by defeating and establishing a workers Europe and power against European capitalism. Because the EU cannot be reformed into such a body, it will have to be built by the struggle of European workers.

## A danger to the working class

UKIP is a great danger for the working class and a fight against their policies must be waged by the unions, social organisations and the revolutionary left.

# Fracking: the shale revolution threatens desolation and devastation

Dave Truman, Cheshire And Wirral Action On Fracking, [www.cawaf.org](http://www.cawaf.org)

The last two years has seen a rise in controversy in Britain over fracking. On the one hand, the Government, under the stewardship of disgraced former BP Chair Lord Browne, has shown a singular determination to implement fracking technologies in a so-called "shale gas revolution," at all costs. Set against this powerful alliance of corporate, media and governmental interests is a growing band of opponents, who have drawn on grass-roots information about the adverse environmental and health effects of fracking.

The burgeoning opposition movement to fracking is disparate and diverse but it is lacking in any centralised structure. Local groups have formed in opposition to specific test drilling initiatives, (Protector Camps) such as those at Balcombe, and more recently at Barton Moss. They consist of local people, farmers, landowners, small business people, trades unionists, environmentalists and householders.

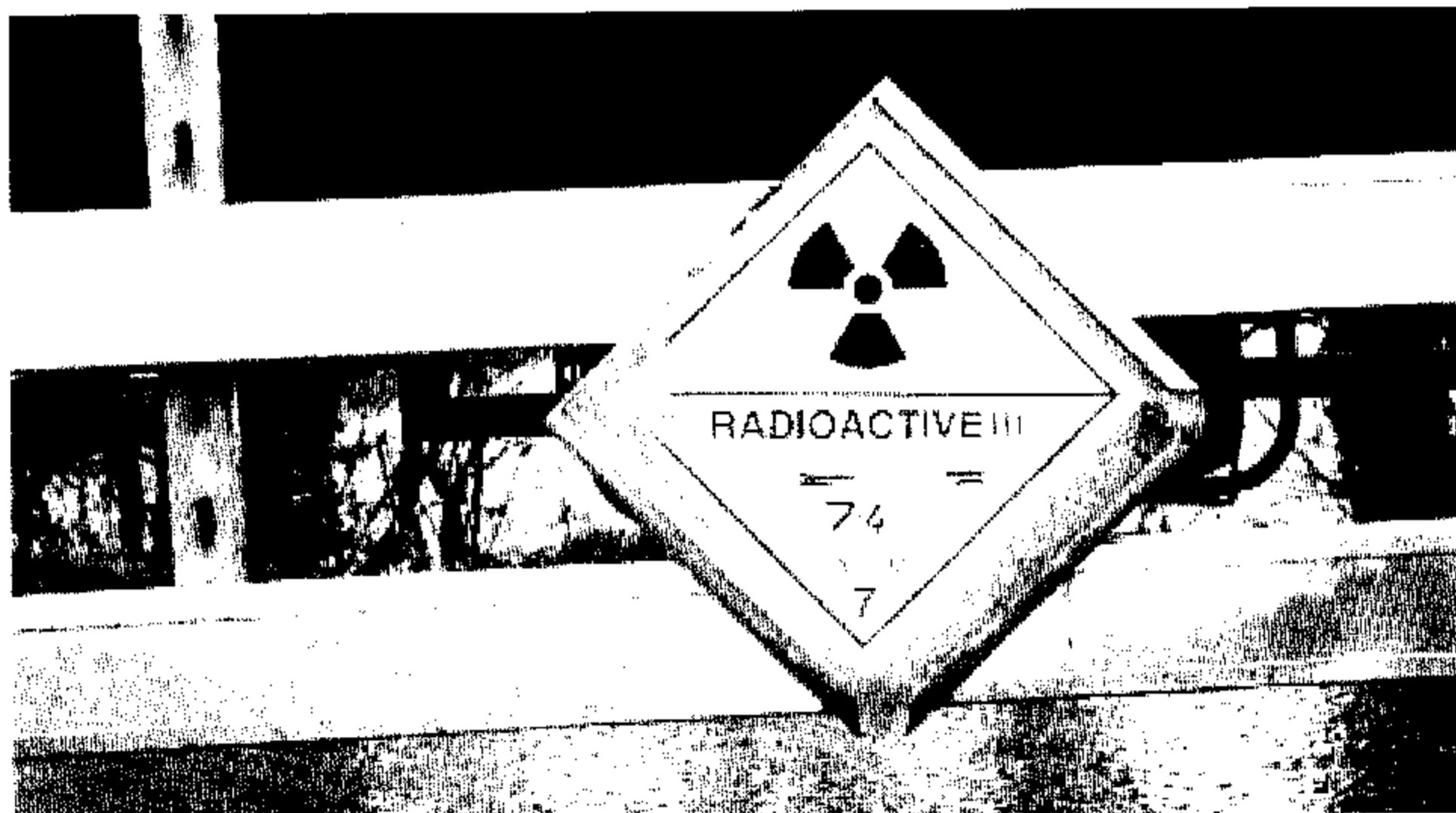
The scene is set in Britain for a struggle of epic proportions. The steadfastness of opposition is rooted in the firm conviction that fracking is just plain wrong. It is wrong for a multitude of reasons, not all of which are necessarily about health or the environment.

## What is fracking?

It is probably more accurate to call what is popularly known as fracking unconventional gas and oil drilling. Recently, the Government and its corporate and banker allies have been pushing to introduce three distinct, but similar, technologies in Britain:

**Fracking (or hydrofracking)** is the word used by the oil and gas industry for a process called hydraulic fracturing. It extracts gas or oil from shale strata many thousands of feet beneath the earth. The process fractures the strata and then forces a mixture of water, sand and a cocktail of toxic chemicals into the rock at high pressure. This releases the gas or oil contained in the shale, but it also destroys the integrity of the shale strata.

**Underground coal gasification (UCG)** involves drilling an injection bore into



Radioactive hazard sign on a lorry entering the Barton Moss fracking site identifying the cargo as Caesium-137 and Americium-241/Beryllium sources

an un-mined coal seam, which is usually found closer to the earth's surface than shale beds. Air, oxygen, or steam is then pumped in to the coal through the injection bore, which sets the coal on fire while it is still underground. When on fire, coal beds can reach temperatures of anything between 700°C and 1,500°C. The burning of the coal releases numerous gases (carbon dioxide, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, methane, sulphur oxides, mono-nitrogen oxides and hydrogen sulphide), which are brought to the surface, through a second bore hole, for processing.

**Coal bed methane extraction (CBM extraction)** is a way of extracting methane from coal seams underground. It relies on something called adsorption (not absorption!) to do so. Coal seams underground are naturally under high pressure and, at these pressures, methane gas "sticks" to the surface molecules of the coal. In CBM extraction, water is pumped into the ground to lower the pressure on the coal seam. This causes the methane that is "stuck" (adsorbed) to the coal to be released as a gas, which is then piped to the surface.

On Merseyside, and in the North West more widely, much of what is commonly known as fracking will actually be either UCG drilling (at West Kirby/Dee Estuary), or CBM extraction (around St Helens and the Mersey Estuary) – at least in the early

stages of this initiative. This does not make either of these technologies safer or more environmentally sound than fracking proper. They are at least as bad, and are arguably worse. However, the Government-corporate controlled media have singularly failed to communicate even this rudimentary information to the people of this country.

In my view, this is a deliberate strategy based on the notion that knowledge is power and the less we the people know, the better things are for the ruling elites. It also allows supposedly public bodies like Chester and West Cheshire Council (the leader of which, Mike Jones, is a propagandist for fracking) to proclaim that there are no current proposals to frack within the Council's boundaries. Well, no, but there are plenty of proposals to exploit the coal seams beneath our feet through UCG and CBM.

## So why is unconventional drilling so bad?

In an article of this length, it is impossible to do justice to the plethora of health and environmental problems caused by these technologies.

Anyone with access to the internet can simply do a search, on You Tube, or with a search engine, to find a mountain of information about the adverse effects of fracking on ordinary people's lives.

In short, these technologies are inherently unsafe and lead to the following:



**Pollution of natural water courses** with methane released from the shattering of rock strata at all levels between the fracturing and the surface. Over a 30 year period, half of all well casings will leak;

**Release of benzene, methane, toluene, formaldehyde** and other substances into the atmosphere around well heads;

**Radioactivity** in the form of radon gas is released by fracking. The disposal of radioactive fracking waste water is now a major problem in the USA. In addition, Halliburton, one of the companies that make fracking equipment, has patented the use of depleted uranium for its drilling equipment;

**Cancer clusters** have been found around fracking wells, probably caused by benzene or toluene pollution;

**Birth deformities and still-births** are also more common than normal, in human and animal populations, in fracking areas;

**Respiratory problems and nose bleeds** are suffered by many people who live near fracking wells. In one US study, 81% of people living near wells reported breathing problems;

**Each fracking well uses 5 million gallons of fresh water** during its lifetime. 80 per cent of that water can never be returned to the water cycle because it is too heavily polluted.

In the North West, United Utilities has already agreed to offer fracking companies a discount on the water they consume. This effectively means that local people and small businesses will be subsidising fracking through their water bills;

**Earthquakes and tremors** have increased considerably in fracking areas. A recent study by Columbia University showed that when fracking waste water is disposed of underground, it continues to fracture and destabilise rock strata. The land is then vulnerable to reverberations from earthquakes that may happen anywhere on earth;

#### **Land and property values fall.**

In Pennsylvania, house prices fell by an average of 22 per cent, in other parts of the US they have dropped by 90 per cent. The inherent value of agricultural land drops, because polluted land cannot produce wholesome food.

#### **But fracking will create jobs!**

Local MPs and councillors are often keen to proclaim this in the media. Experience



West Sussex Council unanimously rejected Celtique Energie's application for an exploratory fracking

from the US and Australia tells a rather different story. In Ohio, estimates said that 100,000 jobs would be created.

In fact, there were only 10,000; even this figure did not include the jobs lost in tourism and farming. With a 50 per cent decline in the productivity of most wells within a year and a 95 per cent reduction in five years, fracking cannot provide long-term employment.

What is more, the structure of the industry, which relies on sub-contractors and short-term contracts, tends to favour non-unionised labour.

It is also an industry that has a much poorer health and safety record than conventional gas and oil drilling. In the Texas shale field alone, 216 workers died between 2008 and 2012.

#### **Crony capitalism and the "market economics" of fracking**

In Britain, we have to ask the question, why are the political elites of all the major parties so keen to embrace the environmental suicide that will result from fracking?

The current coalition Government has welcomed the former BP Chief Executive, Lord John Browne - also the Chair of fracking company Cuadrilla - into a key position in the Cabinet Office and it is no coincidence that a whole raft of pro-fracking policies and legislation have followed on the heels of his appointment. They include:

- defeating proposed EU legislation that would have applied more stringent regulation to fracking.
- abolishing the ancient common

law rights of property owners, so that fracking companies cannot be subject to prosecution for trespass if they drill horizontally under someone's home, or land.

The latter is rather paradoxical for a mostly Tory Government that is keen to trumpet the rights of private property owners.

However, it does betray something of the real forces at work behind the rhetoric that is crafted for public consumption.

Nowhere was this more evident than in George Osborne's budget of March 2013, when he announced a 50 per cent cut in the tax that fracking companies pay - effectively a huge public subsidy for them.

The answer lies in the faux economics of fracking, or as I prefer to call it, the scam inherent in fracking's "business model."

In essence, small companies are set up to do the drilling, surveys are conducted that announce huge reserves of gas and oil.

The companies' share prices therefore go through the roof in a stock-market bubble. Early investors make a killing by selling their shares.

Coincidentally, after five or so years, many wells are found not to be as productive as first thought, so share prices crash. It is a classic stock-market bubble, but this one leaves a toxic residue that destroys the land after it bursts.

One thing is certain: Browne, Osborne, Cameron and their City of London friends are well acquainted with this "business model."

# FIFA World Cup: the workers' struggle did not stop

Marcos Margarido is a member of the Brazilian United Socialist Workers Party (PSTU section of IWL-FI)

**B**razil took a break to watch FIFA's World Cup. In a country that loves football and where the TV networks were broadcasting every Cup match, this was normal. Nevertheless there were strikes by many workers' unions that fought for better wages and working conditions.

On the eve of the World Cup, the subway workers of São Paulo struck for five days, the strike that shut down the city. On a day the Brazilian national team beat Chile, the construction workers of Fortaleza went on strike for a week. Workers at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) are on strike for a wage increase and an end to the privatisation of public education.

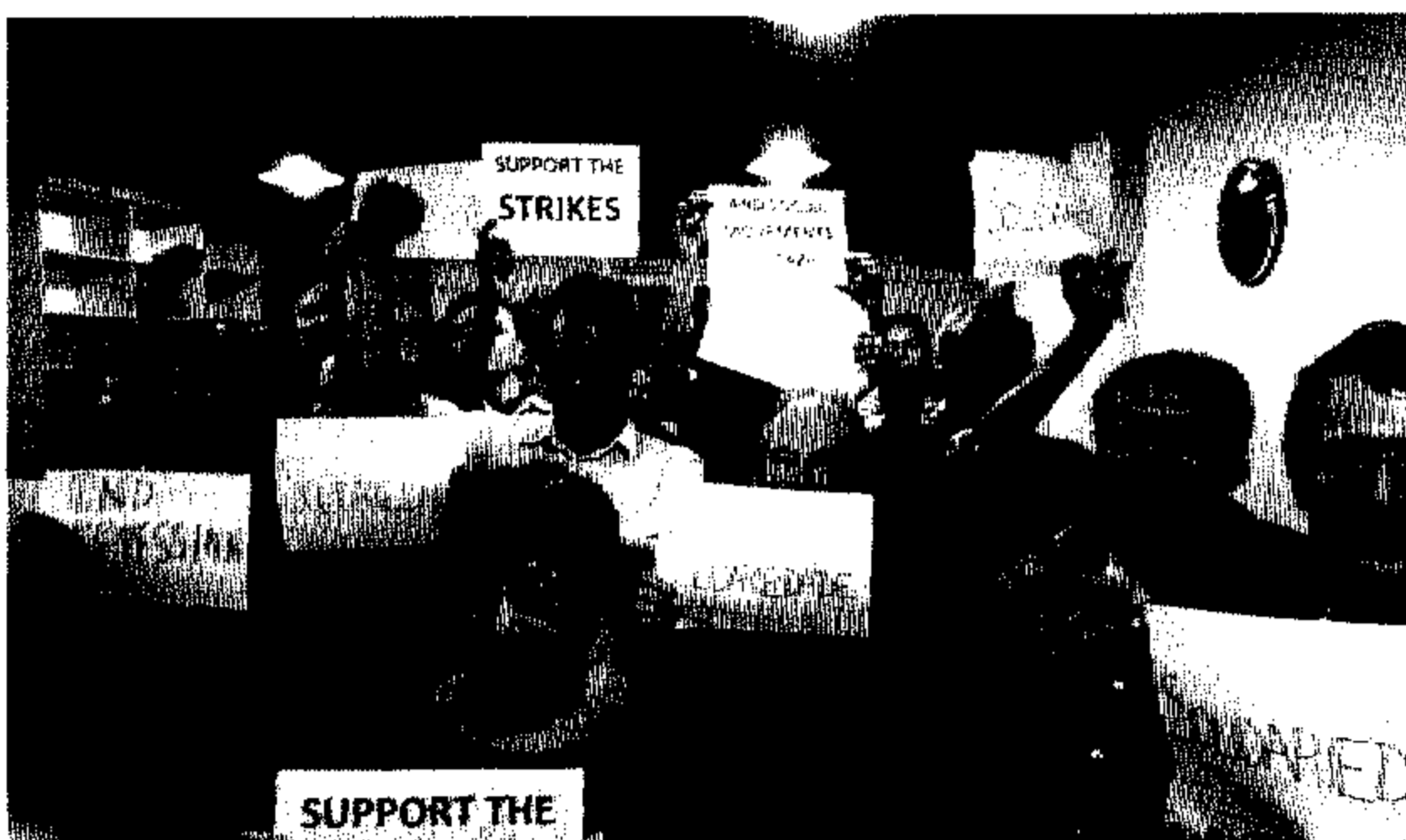
Social movements also organised and fought. The homeless organisation, MTST, held a camp outside the City Hall in São Paulo to pressurise councillors to pass the Strategic Master Plan (SMP) of the city, which would provide better living conditions for the poor people of the capital.

## **Brazil's president booed**

President Dilma Rousseff was booed in the opening game of the tournament because large numbers of Brazilian people are opposed to the government's use of finance for the World Cup that should have been invested in health, education, housing and transportation.

The slogan, "In the World Cup there will be struggle", agreed and publicised by the United Action Front, became a reality, even if there were not the huge demonstrations like those in June 2013 because of police suppression and repression.

United Action Front was a trade union and social united front movement which included CSP-Conlutas, and was supported by the Brazilian PSTU.



A London meeting showing support to the Brazilian struggle during the World Cup

The World Cup in Brazil had an expenditure that exceeded the total cost of both world cups in Germany (2006) and South Africa (2010). US\$ 11.5 billion was used in direct spending and in more hidden ways. The Brazilian state provided 84 per cent of the finance.

State of the art stadiums were built at inflated prices costing two or three times their price, some of them, such as in Manaus, Brasilia and Curitiba will be virtually useless after the World Cup.

In South Africa today they are discussing the possibility of demolishing several of the stadiums that were built for the 2010 Cup, because they are no longer used due to high maintenance costs.

The main beneficiaries have been the big contractors, who are closely linked to the government of the Workers Party (PT) and who make the biggest contributions to their election campaign funds.

But there was another cost. Nine workers were killed in accidents during the construction of the stadiums as a result of the increased speed of work and the deterioration in working conditions that builders imposed in order to meet deadlines and reduce costs. Another

tragedy was the collapse of an unfinished overpass that killed two people when it collapsed on a bus and other vehicles.

## **FIFA, a sport multi-national**

Even former footballers, such as Romario, said that FIFA became a "second government", as it imposed control over the operation of stadiums and airports, security measures and prohibited the sale of products other than those FIFA authorised, within a few miles around the stadium on match days.

According to its statute, FIFA is a "non-profit organisation". This is a lie. It is actually a sort of "sport multinational" that manages concessions and franchises.

FIFA's assets come from more than 900 trade agreements, 60 per cent of their income comes from the sale of broadcasting rights to TV networks, and another 40 per cent from marketing. Thus, FIFA accumulated over US\$ 4 billion in Brazil, achieved with the help of the Brazilian government, which doubled what was made in Germany. FIFA is free from paying any taxes (estimated so far at US\$ 500 million).

The government argues that the World Cup will leave a positive balance in infrastructure for the benefit of the country and for the people. It's another lie. In post World Cup Brazil, hospitals, schools, affordable housing and quality transportation for workers will remain missing.

In social and economic terms, one thing is certain which is that, FIFA, the multinational sports goods manufacturers, and big contractors are the winners over the Brazilian masses.



Sao Paulo metro workers demanding strike action

(continue from page 10)

## Struggle from below 1950s dock workers' victories

A mass meeting on 29 April agreed to resume work and fight the expulsions through the union.

The dockers did not gain the reinstatement of the expelled militants in the union, but they had not been totally defeated for they prevented the removal of their unofficial leaders from employment on the docks.

The docks employers later tried to victimise Constable by a general policy of not hiring him at the "call".

For a time after his expulsion from the union he was ignored by the employers' agents at the morning and afternoon call when men were hired. His fellow dockers decided on action.

One morning when the hiring began in the control all the other dockers stepped back and left Constable standing alone. When the employers' agents called dockers, they replied one after another: "If he don't go; we don't go".

For two or three calls Constable was not hired and none of the dockers went to work. Eventually the employers settled and hired Constable; the attempt to victimise him had been defeated.

After a campaign for membership in the TGWU Saunders and Constable eventually joined the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers - the "Blue Union". At a conference in 1958 Harry Constable spoke about the pressure put on militant unofficial leaders by the union officialdom:

"In the Transport and General Workers Union I was summoned by Deakin and told to turn it up. Many people, members of both the Communist Party and the Labour Party, have been told to turn it up or be thrown out.

They offer you compromises - trade union jobs as officials, and reform from within.

The TGWU has brought in many militants and told them to toe the line. But we refused to compromise, knowing full well that we would be expelled - and not only expelled, but arrested".

He told how "together with a member of the Communist Party" (Saunders) he had wanted "to fight things out" and had worked for four years in the docks industry without a union card. "But we are recognised by the workers as trade unionists", he declared, "Wherever we go, we are respected. People recognise us. We are not fighting as individuals or for ourselves".

Constable was not suggesting that trade unionists should go forward and ask for expulsion, but there could be no compromise on principles.

He ended with what he would have called a piece of "docksology": "You must make your base, and fight your case".

### Fight for dockers charter

In February 1951 the Birkenhead Portworkers' Committee called a mass meeting of Birkenhead dockers and the meeting decided to take strike action. Like the National PWDC, this Birkenhead committee had been fighting for the Dockers' Charter.

It consisted of a group of young and active dockers who were in touch with Harry Constable. They had set up a committee which met regularly and published a paper which sold 1,500 copies an issue.

They raised the money to purchase a small van and loudspeaker and used it for meetings at dock gates in Liverpool and Birkenhead. The strike was against a wage agreement that had been signed by the dockers' unions.

The union leaders, led by Deakin and the TGWU, had agreed to a wage increase of two shillings a week. The strike against the wage agreement spread to Liverpool and Manchester. London dockers came out on strike.

### Unofficial leaders prosecuted

The Labour Cabinet decided on the prosecution of dockers' unofficial leaders. On 9 February the police raided a public house in East London where the PWDC was meeting to discuss ways of spreading the strike.

They arrested four unofficial leaders from London - Constable, Timothy, Cowley, and Dickens one from Liverpool - Crosby and two from Birkenhead - Harrison and Johnson.

They were charged, under a war-time regulation against strikes, with conspiracy to "incite dockers to take part in strike in contravention of the Employment and National Arbitration Order 1305".

Immediately 7,000 dockers stopped work in London and another 11,000 on Merseyside. Later they returned to work with a decision that they would take 24-hour protest actions each time the unofficial leaders appeared in court.

"In the court Timothy made the best speech. It was a class speech. Harrison I remember said how he had thought it was a land of Hope and Glory but he found out that it wasn't.

The TGWU officials were the main prosecution witnesses. A chief witness was Liverpool District secretary."

The Attorney General Sir Hartley Shawcross prosecuted, Shawcross's address to the jury sought to appeal to all the prejudices against the unofficial movement. Indeed, he repeated the accusations about violence that the state and the employers have resorted to ever since the time of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. He declared:

"Members of the jury, it was the technique of the unofficial strike, and it is important that this should be realised - the technique of lies and of threats and of fears to get men to come out on strike against the advice of the appointed leaders of their union as a whole".

Most of the prosecution's case rested on evidence from police officers. One plain clothes detective declared that he had not missed a portworkers' meeting since 1945.

### Unofficial action releases jailed dockers

On the day of their first appearance in court 17,000 dockers stopped work throughout Britain. After that London dockers came out seven times on 24-hour protest strikes. In the end the jury could not agree on the first charge against the men and they were acquitted.

In all 8,000 dockers went to the court on 17 April to hear the verdict. Dockers picked up the released leaders and carried them shoulder high. Mounted police charged the gathering and a number of dockers were arrested.

The Liverpool leaders were met with a similar demonstration of support from dockers when they arrived at Lime Street station. The Attorney General was forced to drop the prosecution.

It was the end of Order 1305 which the Government immediately repealed. The dockers had won a victory for all workers. But it was a victory that had been won despite the opposition of the Transport and General Workers Union apparatus.

Throughout the whole campaign, however, the NAS&D had given its support to the imprisoned dockers.

# Bill Hunter's Archives

## Struggle from below

### 1950s dock workers' victories

This the third and final part of extracts from Bill Hunter's book on the Unofficial Committees of the dock workers after the Second World War. It shows how, in the early 1950s, dockers' rights and union democracy had to be fought against the State's attempts to prevent strikes, while employers tried to Blacklist dockers and get them removed from the industry.

The then Labour government used the army and imprisoned strike leaders such as Harry Constable, while union and Communist Party leaders tried to force militant dock workers to curb strikes.

Over seventy years later the same forces of the State, government and union leaders continue to try to hold back the type of prolonged strikes that are necessary to defeat austerity.

The ISL advises all workers to arm themselves with an understanding of the class battles of the 1950s in order to build the struggle against austerity today.

## Letter from India

I would like to give this note of thanks to Bill Hunter for writing such an excellent account of the dockers' struggle. I got this book a few years back and I have been studying it ever since. As you know New Wave Bolshevik Leninist is taking a leading role in organising the contract workers at BSNL (a telecommunications company).

The book has been an inspiration to us and gave us many ideas for rank and file organisation. In particular I appreciated the way the struggle for the Blue Union was carried out despite its defeat. The initial success of building a rank and file union to break the stranglehold of the bureaucracy was brilliant!

The contract and temporary workers of the docks worked under conditions which mimic accurately the conditions of the majority of the workforce in India today. The big question for labour organisation now is how to build a strong fighting organisation for these workers.

Comradely yours,

Adhiraj Bose

New Wave Bolshevik Leninist

The first meeting of the state Official Committee on Emergencies, was on 13 April 1950 to discuss the possibility of a dock strike following the expulsion from the TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union), one of the unions that formed the current Unite union) of three leaders of the 1949 unofficial dispute — Constable, Saunders and Timothy.

The union's special committee that recommended the expulsions also declared that the unofficial Port Workers' Defence Committee (PWDC) and its newspaper, the Port Workers' News, were subversive bodies and any union member associating with them would be liable to severe disciplinary action. When the three men's appeal against expulsion from the union was rejected on 18 April the unofficial committee called an immediate meeting. The 3,000 dockers present resolved to strike from the next day, 19 April.

The Ministerial Committee on Emergencies met for the first time in 1950 that evening in the Foreign Secretary's room in the House of Commons and, anticipating that the strike was going to spread rapidly, authorised the Home Secretary, Chuter Ede, to request service ministers to make preparations for troops to be available from Monday 24 April. At the next day's Cabinet meeting, Ede reported that 1,000 troops could be available from 24 April and that military officers in "mufti" (plain clothes) would be visiting the docks on 23 April to plan the work of the troops.

Also on 21 April, with 8,000 dockers on strike along the Thames, the PWDC held another mass meeting. It offered to end the strike if a ballot of all port workers was organised so that every worker could express their opinion about the expulsions. The TGWU leaders rejected this and 1,000 troops were sent into the docks. On 24 April, 12,000 dockers were out. The Committee on Emergencies decided to increase the number of troops by 1,000 each day until by the end of a fortnight 20,000 would be at work, "the maximum effort which they could make". On 26 April, with 14,400 dockers on strike, and over 3,000 troops at work,

bus crews and tug operators considered sympathetic action.

The London Dock Labour Board, however, issued a threat to the strikers on 27 April that if they did not return to work by Monday 1 May they would be expelled from the industry.

(continues on page 11)

## If Harry Don't Go

Alan Parry



Alan Parry wrote this song in 2010 after hearing about the 1950s dock workers' struggle and Harry Constable

If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
The docks were at a standstill

His mother was of Irish stock  
His dad and granddad worked the dock  
To hear him speak the men would flock  
Cos Harry was no traitor

And every docker filled with pride  
When they had Harry on their side  
In London or in Merseyside  
No honour could be greater

The boss men broke into a sweat  
This Harry is an awful threat  
When you're hiring don't forget  
Leave Harry in the pen

If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
The docks were at a standstill

They were smart in how they fought  
They waited first until the port  
Was crammed with cargo to import  
Then demanded Harry

Did you think we'd go ahead  
Take your coin and bow our head  
As you rob our brother of his bread  
You'd be better bring back Harry

The bosses knew they must agree  
Their game was up and they could see  
There's no beating unity  
And all because they said

If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
If Harry don't go then I don't go  
The docks were at a standstill