

The Birmingham Worker



MORE COUNCIL CUTS

= MORE RATS

Support the bin men!

**Stella Manzie,
City Council CEO,
earns £180'000pa**

**Bin men face
pay cuts of
£4-6'000pa**

**122 cleaning
jobs to be axed**

**The rich get
richer while the
poor get
poorer ...**

**Strike dates:
3rd, 11th 19th, 27th July
and 4th August
2hr stopages
starting at 6am.**



CLASS AGAINST CLASS

As the rich get richer..

Our society is a capitalist society. A tiny number of people own all the wealth, while the rest of us have to work for them to make ends meet. In capitalist society, it's okay for the rich to rob the poor – to give us bad wages and poor housing, to take away our education and benefits – but it's illegal for the poor to take from the rich.

There are two main classes in capitalist society: the working class and the ruling class. The working-class have to find a job in order to have a life. If we don't get into education or work we don't have a future. We don't have houses we can rent to other people, we don't own factories or shops, and we can't invest our millions on the stock exchange in London like the wealthy sons and daughters of the rich.

It doesn't matter what Alan Sugar says on The Apprentice, it's not possible for us to become multimillionaires – we just don't have those opportunities. Our 'choice' is more likely to be between a life of poverty and a life of crime. But there is an alternative to this system; there is a change we can make. **The change we need to make is called socialism.**

Not only is the capitalist system inherently unfair, it has a catastrophic flaw built into it: economic crisis. Capitalism runs on profits – essentially, nothing gets made or done unless someone can make a profit out of it. So here's the problem: the only way to keep making profits is to sell more and more goods to the masses, but the best way to keep production costs down is to employ fewer people on lower wages.

It doesn't take a genius to see that if people's wages are reduced and the numbers employed go down, there will be fewer people who are actually able to buy the stuff that the capitalists are trying to sell. And since capitalism went global, we now have a global economy, so the crisis isn't just here, it's everywhere. Vast masses of people are being pushed out of work because they can't afford to buy all the stuff they made and the capitalists are trying to sell back to them!

This leads to a vicious downward spiral, where people aren't buying enough goods, so capitalists go out of business, leading to more job losses and fewer people able to buy – which leads to more job losses, and so on. In this crazy situation, food and essential goods of all kinds sit uselessly in warehouses or are destroyed, while the people who need them starve and go without.

Celebrate the achievements of socialism

Under the guidance offered by the teachings of Marx, Lenin and their disciples, socialism liberated fully one third of the world's territory in the 20th century.

We believe that these teachings, and the experiences of a quarter of humanity who have known the benefit of living in socialist socie-

ties free from capitalist exploitation and oppression, hold the key to achieving a secure, meaningful, cultured and productive life for all.

We support socialist countries, both those that are newly emerging and those that were able to weather the counter-revolutionary tide of 1989.

Educate ourselves and our fellow workers

No movement in human history, despite all temporary reverses, has known such rapid gains and successes as those of the communist (third) international, and brought to so much of humanity such a peaceful, secure, cultured and enlightened existence.

The lies and slanders that surround our most glorious achievements are a deliberate attempt on the part of the capitalist ruling class to demoralise workers and keep them ignorant and enslaved. The ruling classes and their governments are terrified of workers acquiring this knowledge, for they fear it will lead to mass revolutionary action, the only weapon capable of bringing an end to their tiny clique's tyrannical orgy of destruction and self-enrichment.

Oppose all attempts to make workers pay for the capitalist crisis

This includes all attempts to destroy the remnants of the social wage (social services like the NHS, council housing, free state education, pensions and care for the elderly, library facilities, etc) through cuts on the one hand, and accelerating privatisation on the other.

Only a socialist society can guarantee social justice and prevent gains such as these from being stolen back from future generations. As long as capitalism exists, such gains as the workers achieve will only ever be temporary, taken back whenever the needs of the bankers (finance capitalists) require it, and workers are too disorganised to stop them.

Divide and Rule

It's obvious that the capitalist system isn't in the interests of the vast majority of people, so how has it survived for so long?

On top of having a huge state machinery of coercion – police, courts, prisons etc – to keep people in line, the capitalists also control the media. From school textbooks to BBC and Sky news to the Sun and the Guardian, their ideas are pushed onto us every day: a way of looking at the world that teaches us that this system is inevitable and logical, and that cuts and wars are necessary to defend 'our way of life', as opposed to protecting their profit margins.

One of the biggest lies we are told is that the problems we face – lack of jobs, cuts in public services, no access to education or housing and so on – are caused by immigrants putting a 'strain' on Britain's resources. But long before there were large numbers of immigrants in Britain there was mass unemployment and capitalist crisis!

Labour's slogan "British Jobs for British Workers" and UKIP's broken promises to fund the NHS with Brexit pretend to be addressing workers' problems, but by reinforcing the lies about immigration being the root cause of those problems, what they actually do is help the capitalists stay in power and keep the working class divided and weak.

Communists are opposed to colonial wars

It seems that the ruling class gets all the benefits from war, while workers get nothing but injury or death. Films, TV and games glorify war and make it seem exciting, but the reality is different.

When you join the army you don't get to learn a skill or do any of the really exciting stuff like fly a helicopter – that's too important for the likes of us. All those cushy jobs go to the rich kids like Prince William, who are automatically put in charge. They're the 'officers' whilst we (the 'squaddies') are expected just to take orders and do all the fighting – and dying.

They make us fight our foreign working-class brothers and sisters so that they and their ruling circles can plunder and steal all the wealth and natural resources (like oil) of the countries we attack. But why should we do their dirty work for them? Why should we steal and plunder other people's wealth? If the rich want to steal the oil, let the prime minister and the bankers send their children to get killed while we stay here and look after our own interests.

In fact, if you think about it, we have more in common with the working-class youth of foreign countries than we do with the rich youth in Britain. When our foreign brothers resist imperialism they are teaching us by example. We need to unite with our class brothers regardless of their nationality in order to defeat our common enemy – the ruling class – and build a happy, prosperous and cultured existence, free from endless poverty and war. That future society is called Socialism, it is the lower phase of the classless society that shall come to pass on earth, the Communist future of all mankind.



Support the bin men!

Birmingham City Council was once the single biggest local authority in Europe, but a workforce of 20,000 has been slashed in half and the plans which are being implemented by Labour Councillors this year seek to reduce this number to 7,000 by 2018. They blame it on the Tories but they ALL play the same game, it's called capitalism, where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. That's why Chief Exec Stella Manzie earns £180,000pa whilst the bin men are to lose £4,000-6,000 a year and see 122 jobs axed.

The City Council is in a deep economic crisis, the result of both cuts from central government and their own mismanagement which has cost £11.9m. The Chief Executive and Council leaders are seeking to heap the burden of this crisis onto the backs of workers whilst plundering services provided for Birmingham's rate payers, including those essentials which keep our streets clean and free of disease. Dirty streets means rats and disease – but Stella doesn't care, when you're on £180,000 a year you're unlikely to do your shopping in Handsworth, Balsall Heath, Castle Brom or Lozells.

Bin men under attack - again

Refuse workers are vital to society; they do a job most people don't want to do. Just because they work with rubbish they shouldn't be treated like rubbish. In meetings held in March with Council refuse workers it was announced that bin men are expected to take a £3,000 per annum pay cut, for some that figure could be £4,000-6,000. Workers are also expected to work an increase from four to five days a week.

The longer a bin man has been employed the more his pay will be cut, such is the logic of this Labour Council. Leading Hands (Supervisors) on collection crews will be abolished putting the public at risk of fatal collisions with bin lorries and traffic. Safe working procedures, fought for by trade unions will be compromised. These are the serious consequences Fleet Waste Management face by axing Grade 3 positions in the service.

A statement by Unite the Union in June says:

"Unite regional officer Lynne Shakespeare has written to the city council's chief executive Stella Manzie calling for talks under the auspices of the conciliation service, Acas, as since the council was informed about the industrial action, management has refused to talk to Unite to resolve the issues.

"Commenting on the dispute, Lynne Shakespeare said: 'The council's actions have managed to combine financial incompetence in the waste management team and now they have started bullying our mem-

bers as the bosses attempt to cut full-time jobs.

"The council wants to axe 122 waste collection jobs after a woefully inadequate consultation with the unions.

"The process was a sham, bordering on a farce – and that's why Unite members will be taking strike action to protect services to the public in the UK's biggest local authority.

"Unite also wants to preserve their jobs from an unnecessary cuts programme which has also seen a sharp increase of agency staff replacing permanent workers which is of no benefit to anyone.'

"In her letter to Ms Manzie, Lynne Shakespeare said: 'This situation cannot go on any longer hence our action ballot. I would invite you to join with us in non-binding conciliation with Acas as otherwise we shall have no alternative but to increase our action and fight this campaign on the streets, in the media and in the courts, if we need to.'

"Unite members voted by 90 per cent for strike action over proposed job cuts to the city's waste and refuse service and attempts by council bosses to tear up long standing agreements with the union covering staffing levels and working patterns. The workers also voted by 93 per cent for industrial action short of a strike.

"The ballot results came on the same day as council bosses announced that they intended to make 122 waste collection staff redundant by the beginning of July which is about 20 per cent of the actual refuse collection squad."

What can we do?

Bin men and others who turn out on strike will need to come out determined to win. The bin men should find creative ways to ensure lorries do not leave depots, that tyres are bereft of air, that wagons have ignitions but no keys, that entrances and exits are barricades and scabs from the Agency don't do Stella's dirty work. The public can help! Any wagon that makes it out must be persuaded not to complete its work and pressure must be piled upon the Council from the rate payers, who can take their rubbish and heap it upon the steps of the Council House for Labour Party leader Clancy and his gang to clean up, better still take your rubbish to the neighbourhood offices of the local Labour Party and they can feel what it's like to live amongst the filth and the mess.

What's wrong with Britain?

Too many people in this country are waiting for all the cuts to magically come to an end but capitalism is in a crisis and no lasting

recovery is possible. The future is socialism - common ownership of the means of production by those who do the work and an end to the riches concentrated in the hands of a greedy few.

Whether it's the privatisation of the NHS, the cost of endless foreign wars of aggression which only create jihadi's who come back and attack us, or the seven year long freeze on public sector pay - it's time for British workers to draw a few simple conclusions from all too apparent observations:

Council Cuts = dirty streets, more rats & disease

Labour or Tory - it's the same old story

Capitalism means economic crisis, racism and war

Its class against class – rich against poor

Join the Communist Party

Poem: "Men of England"

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed and clothe and save
From the cradle to the grave
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow, another reaps;
The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed—but let no tyrant reap:
Find wealth—let no imposter heap:
Weave robes—let not the idle wear:
Forge arms—in your defence to bear.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells—
In hall ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

With plough and spade and hoe and loom
Trace your grave and build your tomb
And weave your winding-sheet—till fair
England be your Sepulchre.

Weekly Marxist-Leninist Study

The CPGB-ML currently run discussion groups every week in Birmingham, on Mondays, Thursdays and Sundays.

Theory is the experience of the working class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with practice, but practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illuminated by revolutionary theory. Marxist theory is revolutionary because it serves the poor and not the rich.

If you'd like to be put on the mailing list to be kept up to date on these events email birmingham@cpgb-ml.org or fill in and return the slip at the bottom of this page.

Monthly advice for the unemployed

12-2pm

The Birmingham Claimants Union meets the second Thursday of every month at 274 Moseley Rd, Highgate, Birmingham, B12 OBS.

This is a place for the unemployed to get help and advice from fellow claimants. Anything from sanctions, workfare, council tax benefit charge and the bedroom tax and any worries you have while signing on.

Proletarian TV

Educational videos: news, working class history, philosophy, class politics, art, music and culture are all available at Proletarian TV, the official YouTube site for the CPGB-ML

www.youtube.com/user/ProletarianCPGBML



Read Online

For more articles, analysis, news, proletarian culture, leaflets and information about the CPGB-ML visit www.cpgb-ml.org

The "Internationale"

Song of the International Working Class

Arise ye workers from your slumbers
Arise ye prisoners of want
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Now away with all your superstitions
Servile masses arise, arise
We'll change henceforth the old conditions
And spurn the dust to win the prize.

Refrain:

So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.

No more deluded by reaction
On tyrants only we'll make war
The soldiers too will take strike action
They'll break ranks and fight no more
And if those cannibals keep trying
To sacrifice us to their pride
They soon shall hear the bullets flying
We'll shoot the generals on our own side.

(Refrain)

No saviour from on high delivers
No faith have we in prince or peer
Our own right hand the chains must shiver

Chains of hatred, greed and fear
E'er the thieves will out with their booty

And to all give a happier lot.
Each at the forge must do their duty
And we'll strike while the iron is hot.

(Refrain)

About the CPGB-ML

An understanding of society (theory) and a way of uniting to change it (organisation) are the two things that we need to make a socialist revolution. Ordinary people in Britain have everything to gain by getting involved in this process sooner rather than later. This world isn't working for us and we deserve better!

Not only do we need to campaign against the bad conditions and lack of prospects for working-class people in Britain today, but

we need to work for a completely different type of society – one where people's needs decide everything.

So many problems face this world: environmental catastrophe, poverty, disease, racism and war. They'll never be solved while capitalism remains, but they could all be sorted if society was set up for the benefit of the majority rather than the private gain of a few billionaires.

Our party is different because we consist-

ently apply Marxist science to all areas of our work, and we're not scared to tell it how it is. We refuse to be intimidated by the barrage of lying propaganda that fills Britain's mainstream media. It is the capitalists' job to try to stop us from building a socialist society; it is our job to do it anyway!

Challenge your ideas – challenge their propaganda – seek the truth – serve the people – change the world!

Contact the CPGB-ML to find out more.

return this form to :: 274 Moseley Road, Birmingham, B12 0BS

Get in touch with local activists, find out more about the party and join the struggle!
Send us this form or email birmingham@cpgb-ml.org and we'll contact you:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____