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Scottish Socialist Voice

SYSTEM CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE



PHOTO: Simon Whittle

POLICIES FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

- Build 100,000 modern green council homes
- Create 100,000 well-paid, skilled green jobs
- Free public transport – to combat pollution, guaranteed travel for all and boost incomes

Stop Climate Chaos march, Edinburgh, Sat 28 Nov



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by Jonathon Shafi

RISE – SCOTLAND'S Left Alliance, is on the cusp of moving on to the next phase of our development. Since our launch at the end of August we have been developing local activist Circles across Scotland. We have started from the grassroots to rebuild the electoral capacity of radical left. And our presence is growing.

Our reports on water privatisation, education testing and land reform have shown how we intend to campaign: with credibility and by providing concrete alternatives. By taking part in demonstrations against the Tories, fracking and the coming mobilisations on climate change and anti-racism we show how we intend to make change: with one foot in the parliament, and a thousand in the streets.

Dynamic campaign

Members and affiliates of RISE will decide the policy platform we put forward in 2016 at our first ever democratic conference on 5 December. You can be there.

Together we will work on new ways of organising and effective community engagement. We will deploy a dynamic campaign in 2016. Your ideas can be at the forefront.

The political situation is fluid and evolving. It needs anchored in the ideas of the radical left. It needs rooted in the people's politics that inspired the independence movement. We have a chance to create a rainbow parliament of diverse pro-independence forces.

We need to ensure that there is a radical block of MSPs that will hold the SNP to account at the same time as agitating for independence. The Scotland

Bill, which excludes the right for us to call a referendum, shows in stark terms the need for a pro-independence parliament. RISE MSPs will make sure we take radical action backed up with a new movement of movements for independence.

Our world is going in the wrong direction. Socialist ideas are not an optional extra. They are necessary. From grinding the war machine to a halt, to preventing catastrophic

climate change, capitalism is a system providing problems that require radical solutions.

Radical change

That's why we continue to build international links.

We want to be part of a global movement for radical change. For us it starts here in Scotland. With your input we will be stronger, with your ideas we will be better equipped intellectually and with your energy we will be a progressive force in every

community. RISE – Scotland's Left Alliance is moving on to the next stage.

Soon everything will be in place and our campaign will hit the streets.

We want you to be part of it. Be there on 5 December and help shape the socialist campaign for 2016.

• Join RISE – Scotland's Left Alliance and register for RISE Democracy Conference (5 December, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall) at www.rise.scot

Conference marks next stage for Scotland's Left Alliance



RISE has highlighted the fact that, for supporters of Scottish independence, people's second 'list' vote would be wasted on the SNP due to the nature of Scotland's electoral system, and that there is a "unique opportunity" in 2016 to create a "diverse, pro-Yes parliament" at Holyrood while still having a majority SNP government. Alan Bissett (pictured) said: "I'll be backing RISE on the list vote in the Holyrood elections 2016, not because I'm a particular believer in tactical voting but because I want to see a strong, socialist pro-indy voice in our parliament"

PHOTO: Craig Maclean

by Colin Fox, SSP national co-spokesperson

ACTIVISTS FROM across the world will join together in co-ordinated protests in their capital cities to highlight the 20th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris next month.

Stop Climate Change Scotland will lead the march through Edinburgh on Saturday 28 November to draw attention to the UN's deliberations. And well they might for the representatives gathered in the Parc des Expositions, Le Bourget, Paris have a miserable record in addressing the issue in any meaningful way.

Naomi Klein's latest book *This Changes Everything* outlines their dismal record since these Conventions began in 1995.

Hamstrung by climate change deniers, right wing governments and big business backsliders, the optimism of climate change activists is repeatedly crushed by the emptiness of 'binding' Treaties.

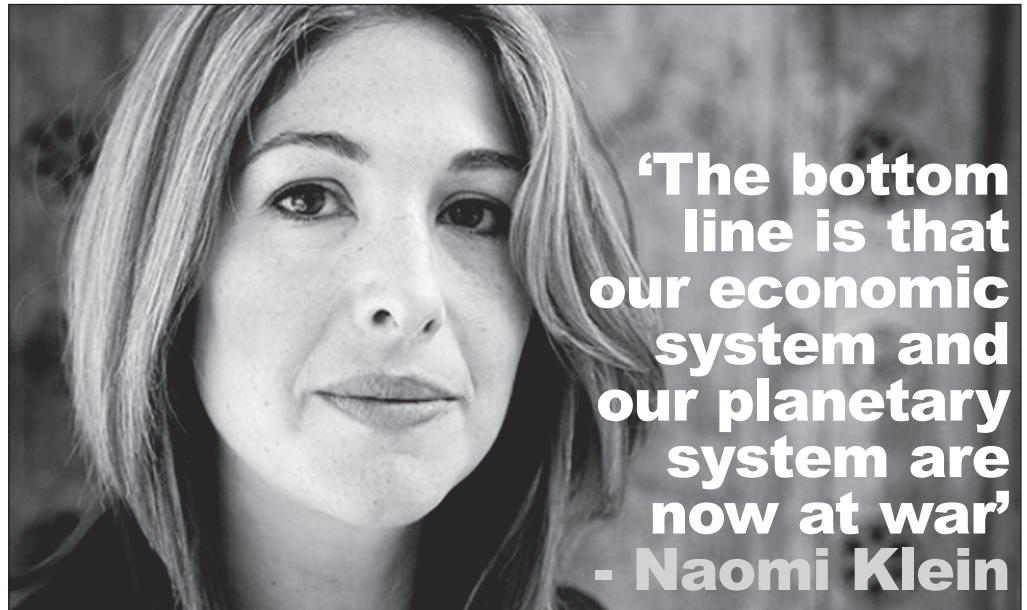
'No one to save us'

The Copenhagen conference was typical. That particular disappointment was one Klein describes as "the moment when the climate change movement realised that no one was coming to save us."

"Climate change has become an existential crisis for the human species," she insists. Why such an apocalyptic conclusion? Because the scientific consensus reached grave conclusions about climate change long ago.

The Ohio State University climatologist Lonnie G Thompson, a world-renowned specialist on glacier melt, found in 2010 that "virtually all the world's climatologists are now convinced that global warming poses a clear and present danger to civilisation."

Climate change is an important issue for the left because the science reveals an enormous challenge. Moreover as Naomi Klein rightly points out capitalism simply cannot solve it.



And the overwhelmingly middle class protest groups are fatally compromised by their touching faith in mainstream politicians and their own material attachment to comfortable corporate capitalism.

They are incapable of leading on this question. Klein even accuses some in the climate change movement of being in bed with big business highlighting "the extent of the collusion between big polluters and big green."

"Our only hope of reaching internationally agreed targets limiting temperature rises to 2°C above Industrial Revolution levels," she concludes, "is for capitalist corporations to cut their emissions by 8-10 per cent per annum."

But as she points out they are still increasing. "The 'free market' simply cannot accomplish the task facing it. The bottom line is that our economic system [capitalism] and our planetary system are now at war."

Klein's frustrations are manifest. "And yet rather than responding with alarm and doing everything in our power to change course, large parts of humanity are, quite consciously, continuing down the same road. What is wrong with us?" she asks.

"The answer," she concludes, "is far more simple than many have led us to believe: we have

not done the things that are necessary to lower emissions these past 20 years because those things fundamentally conflict with deregulated capitalism, the reigning ideology for the period we have been struggling to find a way out of this crisis."

And adding, "the actions needed to counteract the impending catastrophe threaten the elite minority that has a stranglehold over our economy, our political process and our major media outlets."

"The three policy pillars of this era—privatisation, deregulation and lower corporate taxation—have systematically sabotaged our COLLECTIVE response to climate change. How could governments regulate, tax and penalise fossil fuel corporations when all such measures are condemned as principles of the 'command and control' economy and 'communism'?"

Defying evidence

Who then is standing in the way of solutions? The multinational coal, oil and gas lobby in the US, China, Australia and Russia to name but four of the most powerful. The US generates 29 per cent of its electricity from coal the worst CO2 emitter there is. Global emissions rose 5.9 per cent in 2010 the year of the much-hyped UN climate change conference in Copenhagen, the highest annual increase since the

industrial revolution. Big business continues to spew out Carbon Dioxide, Nitrous Oxide and Methane in greater and greater quantities defying all the climatologists evidence.

"The thing about a crisis this big," concludes Klein, "is that it changes everything. Climate change changes everything. It is a civilisational wake-up call. Brutal disasters are headed our way now no matter what we do.

"But it is not too late to avert the worst of them. Is it possible to halt global warming without challenging the fundamental logic of deregulated capitalism? Not a chance."

Climate change is a class issue and so is its solution. It is the poor the world over who suffer most from its devastating impact.

Poor countries and poor people in rich countries need protection now. SSP activists should make every effort to join with thousands of others on the protest in Edinburgh on November 28 and begin to push the climate change movement in Scotland left.

• *The Stop Climate Chaos Scotland protest assembles at Edinburgh Meadows at noon on Sat 28 Nov and marches to Princes St Gardens. Further details: stopclimatechaos.org*
• Naomi Klein's book *This Changes Everything* is published by Penguin

The fruits of globalisation: a world in flames

by Ken Ferguson

THE UNSPEAKABLE horror on the streets of Paris dramatically spotlights the world of chaos resulting from the 30 years plus economic, social and military policies of neoliberal globalisation.

First tried in Chile by Pinochet's US-sponsored thugs and brought into the western mainstream by Thatcher, it was enthusiastically adopted by Blair's New Labour. It is now the economic orthodoxy across the EU which ruthlessly enforces it, as in Greece, the US and "emerging" China and India.

In economics it aims to sweep away public provision of services privatising water, railways and healthcare with the almost religious faith that the "market" knows best in all circumstances.

Hence the brutal privatisation forced on the Greek people and the continued privatisation of water in Italy despite over 90 per cent of voters rejecting it in a national referendum.

Alongside this, policies which ban state aid for say Scotland's closure of threatened steel works make action to save vital industries virtually illegal.

Sweatshops

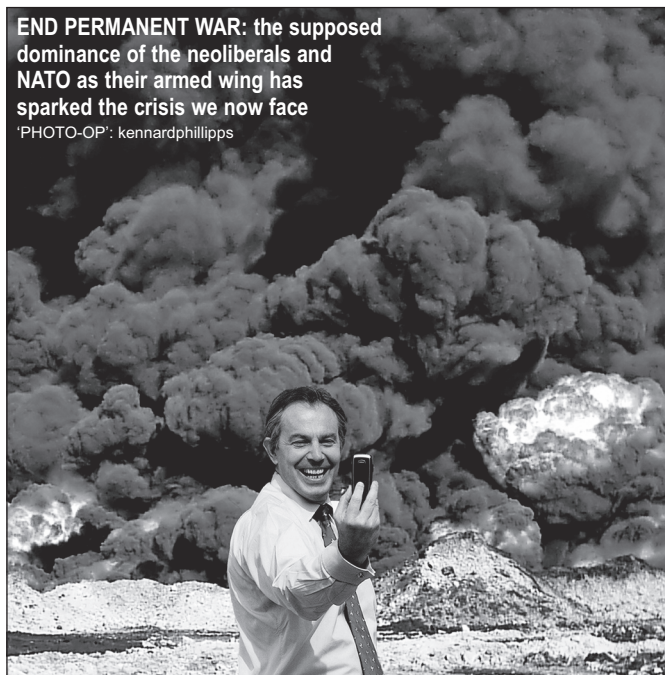
All this represents a relentless drive to replace democracy in the form of elected governments with shadowy committees of self interested "experts" which has played a large part in the so called "voter apathy" as national politicians are revealed as little more than puppets of big business.

Across the globe jobs have been shipped from relatively organised labour in the core EU, US and other states to a low paid, tightly controlled work force in so called emerging economies.

In these countries thousands toil in sweatshops to produce ever more fancy electronic goods

END PERMANENT WAR: the supposed dominance of the neoliberals and NATO as their armed wing has sparked the crisis we now face

'PHOTO-OP': kennardphillipps



which are sold to those whose jobs were exported to these states and are now told they live in a "post-industrial" world.

It is world of precarious jobs, zero hour contracts all enforced with anti union laws to keep them in their place. This new economy is heavily sold 24/7 by those who run it as one of personal liberation, wide choice and a ever expanding paradise of new shiny consumer goods.

The entire package generates a hugely introspective "social media" which, while it can be used for progressive purposes as during the indyref also feeds an individualistic culture which potentially weakens social solidarity.

Environmentally the same process produces lofty declarations on the need to combat global warming from sharp suited functionaries who then go on to further feed the endless mill of production, not for human need, but for profit irrespective of the fact that finite resources are wasted, pollution caused and the future of both planet and people menaced.

The ongoing VW pollution rigging scandal is just one of the more dramatic illustrations of the fact that, despite pious dec-

larations to the contrary the ruling elites remain committed to an economic system which seeks endless growth of production of goods and use of finite resources not to meet human need but to produce ever growing profits.

Put simply this is a circle that cannot be spared if the tipping point of a two degree rise in global temperature—now on recent information just one degree—caused by human activity is to be avoided. The choice is, as the slogan has it system change not climate change.

Contrary to the propagandists of climate change denial such a change can not only save humanity from major climate based disruption it also opens up the prospect of moving towards a economy based on meeting the needs of people and planet rather than the profiteering minority.

The time is now past when it is realistic to think that a just and sustainable society can be built while ignoring the climate change emergency which we are now facing. Reds must now also be Greens.

It is perhaps the third leg of neoliberalism—the military—which

will be uppermost in people's minds after the Paris horror.

Of course the *Voice*, like many others, utterly condemns the Paris terrorism and the ideas behind it, but amidst the drama it is necessary to understand how we got here. The US opened Pandora's box in the early '80s when it backed religious fundamentalists to defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. With the Soviet collapse the academic servants of Wall Street and the City proclaimed "the end of history" and pronounced the market all triumphant. How wrong they were.

Reacting to Washington's arrogant policy of economic and military superiority know by the Pentagon as "full spectrum dominance" opposition movements, often claiming inspiration from their interpretation of Islam grew culminating in the 9/11 atrocities in New York.

NATO

The spiral which resulted saw years of war in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria where the supposed dominance of the neoliberals and NATO as their armed wing has sparked the crisis we now face, most dramatically with the rise of ISIS barbarism and the huge refugee crisis sparked by the war and terrorism sweeping the Middle East.

Simply put, the new imperialism represented by the neoliberals has forced its model of economics for the rich through political pressure, as most recently in Greece, and in a seemingly never-ending war which has taken us to the state we now face.

Only a clean break with the economic system of profit over people and planet can open the way to a change which delivers economic justice, ends permanent war and deals with the gathering climate change emergency offers any real hope of change in Scotland, Europe and the planet.

by Jenni Gunn

THE WOMEN'S Equality Party (WEP), launched late this October, aims to further the goals of gender equality in the UK and intends to stand in next year's Holyrood elections.

Founded by broadcaster Sandi Toksvig and writer Catherine Meyer, the WEP has stated that "Equality for women isn't a women's issue. When women fulfil their full potential, everyone benefits. Equality means better politics, a more vibrant economy, a workforce that draws on the talents on the whole population and a society at ease with itself."

No argument from me. As a feminist, the thought of a party putting gender at the heart of their programme not only caught my attention, but inspired some cautious optimism. Here was a party putting the goals of gender equality at the centre of their modus operandi.

Disappointing

One of my own laments about party politics in Scotland has been the designating of feminism and 'women's issues' as niche. Particularly as a woman on the left, I all too often hear from comrades that the struggles of women are supplementary, even secondary, to the "bigger" and "more important" struggle of the working classes.

The left has struggled to see feminism as an integral part of the struggle against capitalism, often favouring class consciousness over perceived "identity politics." The tide is turning in this regard, particularly within the left in Scotland.

However, we still have a way to go before our movement centres feminism right at its core. I looked forward to hearing WEP's vision for tackling patriarchy in our society. I was disappointed. The WEP has floated the idea of standing



WOMEN BEAR CUTS BRUNT: the non-partisan nature of WEP does little to acknowledge the lot of women in the UK today and how we are disproportionately suffering under the worst excess of ideological austerity doled out by a dangerously right wing Tory government

Will Women's Equality Party put gender at the heart of politics?

joint candidates in next year's Holyrood elections to maximise the number of candidates elected supporting the WEP's objectives. This would, for example, mean standing a candidate on an SNP/WEP, or even, a Conservative/WEP ticket.

The WEP has declared that "the party is non-partisan and seeks to push matters effecting women's equality into the agenda of mainstream politics."

Whilst I think the aim of putting women's equality at the heart of our political discourse is not only admirable, but essential, the non-partisan nature of WEP does little to acknowledge the lot of women in the UK today and how we are disproportionately suffering under the worst excess of ideological austerity doled out by a dangerously right wing Tory government.

Why? The struggles of class and of gender inequality are intrinsically linked. Austerity has become a feminist issue—and little wonder. Reports have shown that the current cuts coming from the Conservative government are hitting women twice as hard as men. For those of us on the left, austerity is little more than social violence—but austerity represents an economic and cultural backlash

against women in particular.

Primary care givers—72 per cent of whom are women—are struggling to look after families with additional needs children whilst making ends meet, with 23.4 per cent of cuts affecting social care budgets.

According to the Women's Budget Group, one in five women have average incomes consisting of benefit payments—by freezing child benefit for three years and cutting child tax credit, women are facing the brunt of brutal austerity measures.

Austerity's targets

Between 2011 and 2017, we will see 30,000 job losses from the public sector across the UK. Women account for two-thirds of employment within the sector, once again illustrating how Tory austerity is targeting women, their incomes, independence and standards of living.

This backlash is also cultural. Women are facing discrimination through the benefits system with the proposed Tory cap of child benefit to two children. Not only is this a further economic assault upon vital benefits for women, but it sends a clear message to women from low-income households: having multiple children in a work-

ing class household is no longer an option.

The whole discourse surrounding Britain's "dependency culture" is intrinsically linked to the role of women as producers of would-be welfare dependents: also known as children. Women are consistently and subtly being portrayed as drains on the public purse. All this despite the fact that the vast majority of unpaid carer roles are filled by women, saving the NHS billions every year. So whilst the aims and objectives of the WEP are commendable, the lack of ideological perspective misses the point.

There is a link between unbridled capitalism, austerity and gender inequality. The left has the solutions to these problems: but first, we need to recognise that the struggle against patriarchy cannot be separated from the class struggle.

Those struggles are one in the same. As James Connolly once said "the worker is the slave of capitalist society, the female worker is the slave of that slave." Once we realise that our struggles are the same, we are that much closer to real equality for all genders, and one step closer to the real meaning of social justice.

Building whose future?

by a PCS member

MANAGEMENT IN HMRC tax offices have announced plans to cut up to 25 per cent of the jobs in the department and to close around 90 per cent of the offices; leaving the workforce facing the most devastating reductions in the history of the organisation.

The proposals will mean the closure of all except 35 offices in the next five years, with the ultimate objective of retaining only 17 offices across the UK—just two in Scotland. These closures are being accompanied by yet another cynical round of job-cuts, which will see a quarter of the workers in the Department losing their jobs.

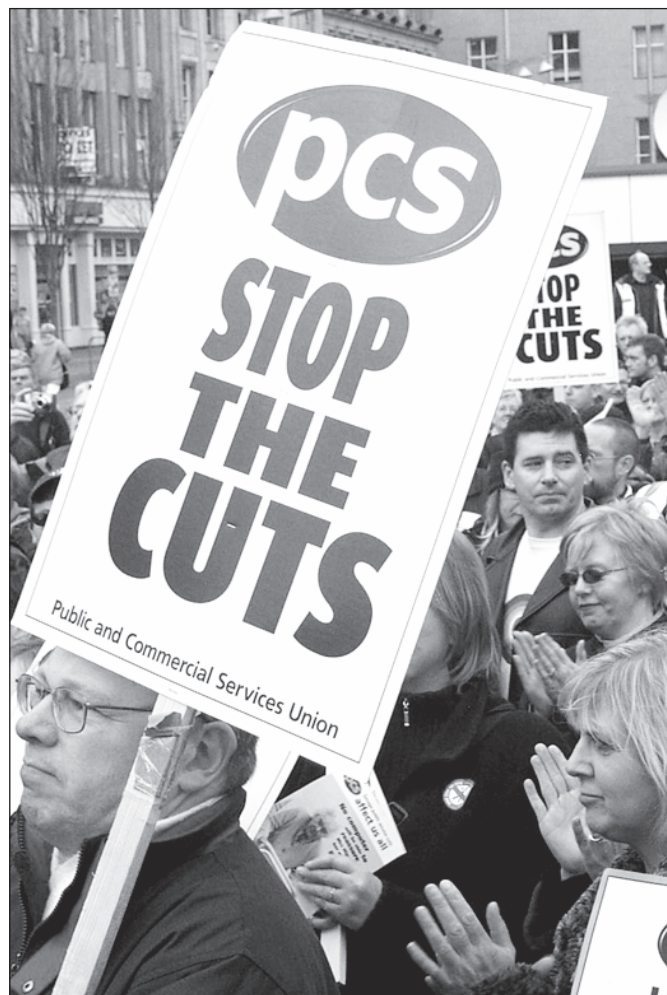
Previous cuts have already seriously damaged the level of customer service in the department; leaving HMRC facing the severest of criticism by Parliament's Public Accounts Committee. The Committee pointed out that in the first part of 2015; 50 per

cent of calls weren't answered at all, and of the remainder, only 39 per cent were answered within five minutes.

Rather than accepting that the inadequate resourcing needs to be addressed, HMRC responded that the need to address the customer service problems—clearly caused by chronic understaffing—should be “balanced by the cost of doing so”.

So clearly we're already dealing with a management philosophy that places little or no emphasis on the quality of service we are in a position to provide to the public. It is no surprise then that under management's latest plans, they will be all but ending the provision of local services to the public—unless you happen to be fortunate enough to live in one of the major cities where the relative handful of surviving offices will be housed.

Under the proposals, the situation will be even worse for staff and members of the



PCS: committed to fully supporting members in the fight to defend jobs

Building our fightback

WITH SO many jobs and offices in jeopardy, it is essential that we move quickly. We can safely anticipate that management are unlikely to be particularly sympathetic towards any PCS attempt to block their draconian job-cutting plans; so ensuring that we can contact members quickly and effectively, without relying on systems of communication that are controlled by the Department. Therefore

there are a number of things members you can do to build the campaign to defend jobs and offices:

- Make contact with your nearest PCS Branch to find out what you can do to help. Our Scottish branches are based in Aberdeen/Inverness; Glasgow, Edinburgh; Cumbernauld; Dundee; East Kilbride http://www.pcs.org.uk/en/revenue_and_customs_group/contacts/regional-

[contacts/Scotland.cfm](#)

- Raise motions of support via your local trades council
- If you're on social media, you should also make sure that you have signed up to the PCS Revenue and Customs Group accounts on Twitter (@PCSRCGroup) and Facebook (PCS R&C Group)
- Support the demands and contact your MP and MSP to ask that they support the demands for a parliamentary enquiry at

Westminster, a debate at Holyrood, full public consultation, negotiations with the union and an embargo on implementation of the closures whilst all of the above is implemented

Obviously though, the most important thing that workers can do to help build the campaign is to talk to their workmates and, if they are not already a member of PCS, then get them to join now.

“In Scotland, where new taxation powers are now on the cards, management are planning to dismantle their ability to handle them...”

public living in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

With only two main offices planned for the whole of Scotland (Edinburgh and Glasgow) and only one each for Wales and Northern Ireland (Cardiff and Belfast), it looks like someone in Parliament Street has just written down the only places outside England that they’ve heard of.

So in Scotland, where new taxation powers are on the cards, management are planning to dismantle their ability to handle them. In Northern Ireland, the customers are to be told that if you live in Derry or Enniskillen, you couldn’t be much further away from your tax office. In Wales there are also cultural issues: the largest percentage of Welsh speakers can be found in Gwynedd and Anglesey in the North; but under the plans, the only office will be in Cardiff, on the other side of the country altogether.

New sites

With so many job-cuts planned, management are doubtlessly going to have concerns about the possible size of any redundancy bill.

So with the ink still wet on the proposals, management have already announced that they are planning to declare a train journey of an hour and a half to be reasonable travelling distance, when it comes to being moved to one of the new sites. Additionally, we would not be surprised to see management being even more ruthless in applying

their hated Performance Management system, in a cynical effort to ‘manage people out of a job’.

In an initial response to management’s proposals, PCS General Secretary Mark Serwotka has already made it clear that “no one should be in any doubt that, if implemented, these proposals would be absolutely devastating for HMRC and the people who work there” and that “closing this many offices would pose a significant threat to the operation of HMRC, its service to the public and the working lives of staff”.

Defending jobs

So let’s be in no doubt: PCS are opposed to the job-cuts and to the vast wave of office closures; and we are committed to fully supporting members in the fight to defend jobs and services in HMRC—politically and industrially.

We will be meeting with members to explore how and where we will target that opposition. At these meetings we will also be seeking membership endorsement of a comprehensive statement—one demanding both public and parliamentary scrutiny of management’s plans.

Armed with that membership endorsement, HMRC management should be in no doubt that they will be facing an unambiguous PCS campaign of opposition to cuts in jobs and services.

This is the fight of our lives: we can only win this with your support.

What HMRC tax office workers can expect...

by John Miller, Secretary of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Trades Council, and office secretary of PCS in Cumbernauld HMRC (personal capacity)

- Cumbernauld tax office is the biggest employer in town. 1400 clerical and around 200 IT agency, cleaners and catering staff
- Workforce approximately 70 per cent female 30 per cent male
- 65 per cent of staff are on alternative working patterns—term time to fit in with school holidays, partial retirement, four day week. Fits in with caring responsibilities
- Plan is to move everyone with exception of lowest grade considered unsuitable. The vast majority are expected to travel. There are no exit packages on offer. With additional travel costs and personal circumstances people will be forced to leave voluntarily
- HMRC has cut 10,000 in five years. In same period since 2010 they have had 2,600 names of individuals with secret Swiss bank accounts. Only eleven have been taken to task
- Only two sites in will remain in Scotland one in Glasgow and one in Edinburgh. They are scheduled to open in 2019-20. East Kilbride, Centre One, will stay open till 2025 due to nature of work. Most sites including Cumbernauld will be rundown and shut by 2019-20
- HMRC claim costs for sites in central Edinburgh and Glasgow will be cheaper. This may be due to tenancy agreement with company called Mapeley over past 20 years as they are based in Caribbean and pay no tax to United Kingdom
- Inverness, Aberdeen, Bathgate and current sites in Glasgow to close by 2019-20. East Kilbride, plaza tower to close 2021 and staff to move to Centre One
- HMRC plan digitalisation of work into direct online payments with taxpayers accessing sites
- They are closing offices and cutting jobs before ensuring systems work
- The reliability of Tax advice online currently is being questioned as it was designed for a reading age of 11 ignoring complexity of tax. Plans are afoot to make payment charge if individuals wish to challenge incorrect advice given by tax authorities
- PCS is calling for a stop to the process until it has been subject to parliamentary and public scrutiny
- Local branches launching individual campaigns to save sites. Calls are being made for a national dispute and indicative ballot on strike action and action short of striking
- Cumbernauld branch holding meeting on Friday 27 November with local MP Stuart McDonald, John Davidson PCS revenue and customs general executive council, Wilma Wheatley branch secretary and John Miller Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Trades Council secretary to discuss launch of campaign to save site

WORKPLACE FOR DEFIANCE – NOT DESTRUCTION

by Richie Venton, SSP
national workplace
organiser

YOU COULDN'T make it up! David Cameron, Tory MP for West Oxfordshire, recently wrote a letter to the Oxfordshire Tory council leader, berating his local authority for “cuts to front-line services—from elderly day centres to libraries to museums.

“This is in addition to the unwelcome and counter-productive proposals to close children’s centres across the county.”

The MP, claiming “shock and outrage”, goes on to demand why the council leader hasn’t looked at “back-office savings”—a euphemism for sacking council staff.

The Tory council leader replies to the Tory MP that his council has already sacked 2,800 staff, that the cuts they now plan are the only ones left to make, and caustically corrects Cameron’s claims in his letter by stating: “I cannot accept your description of a drop in funding of £72million, or 37 per cent of our budget, as ‘a slight fall’.”

Tory axe maniacs

And of course David Cameron, the Tory MP desperate to express feigned concern at cuts to frontline services, is the same David Cameron, the Tory Prime Minister, whose hatchet-wielding Westminster government has hacked the 37 per cent off the local council in the area where he needs to curry favour with voters.

Cameron, and his companion in crimes against working class communities, George Osborne, are swinging the axe like maniacs. Osborne’s Autumn Statement on spending plans for the next three years looms large and ugly. On top of the £35billion cuts last July, it’s likely to detail the target of cuts to departmental



RESERVOIR SNOBS:
George Osborne and
David Cameron are
swinging the axe like
maniacs

budgets averaging 30 per cent, a mind-boggling horror story for millions of people who depend on the public sector either for a job, a vital service, or both.

One of the multiple cuts the Tories will impose is that to the Scottish block grant. And that comes on top of successive years of budget cuts. In the words of SNP Finance Secretary John Swinney, “since 2010 Scotland’s overall budget has been cut by 9 per cent, and its capital budget by 25 per cent.”

The crunch question that follows this savagery is stark: what will John Swinney and the SNP government do about it?

Will they just do the equivalent of writing a letter of complaint before passing on the cuts, delegating the dirty work to further education college boards, Scotland’s 32 local councils, and similar public sector services?

Or will they kick up a storm of resistance, uniting workers, communities and students in a mass movement to stop the Westminster Tory butchery? Past experience of the SNP gov-

ernment’s reaction are not encouraging. They’ve rightly condemned Westminster cuts every year, but then meekly passed them on, to the tune of well over £3billion over four years.

This year, they’ve even delayed the Scottish Government’s Spending Review from its usual September slot to the dead of December or early January, claiming this is because they won’t know the amount in Scotland’s block grant from Westminster until Osborne’s pronouncement on 25 November.

Defiance Budgets

Some people suspect it’s also an attempt to hide the consequential cuts to jobs and vital services from intense public scrutiny and organised opposition, made harder to build in the deep mid-winter.

If the SNP government seriously wanted to carry out its mandate, showing in deeds what they claimed in words about being anti-austerity, they could even take advantage of Osborne’s timetable, by setting out their budget for Scotland, without a

penny cut to jobs, pay, capital investment or services, and then mount a full-frontal campaign of the Scottish people to demand sufficient funding off Westminster to balance the books.

It can be done. It has been done. I was at the heart of the struggle by the socialist council in Liverpool in the mid-’80s, when we organised mass meetings of council workers, communities and college students, called demos of up to 50,000, organised regional 24-hour general strikes—all to pound the hard-faced government of Maggie Thatcher into conceding the funds to build thousands of council houses, jobs and expanded services.

We won back over £60million in 1984, through the defiance and mass struggle of one city, led by socialists and socialist councillors. Imagine that method applied to a whole nation—led by a government with a sweeping mandate to ‘stand up for Scotland’, as the SNP promised to do during elections?

The same points apply to every local council in the land.

They face a stark choice: defy the cuts or destroy the services and jobs of hundreds of thousands of people who elected them to oppose the Tories.

Labour and SNP councils alike are declaring mass butchery of jobs and frontline services, in a shameful refusal to stand up for the working class who elected them.

Trade unionists, user groups, workers and students should pound these politicians to find a collective backbone, set No Cuts Defiance Budgets, and join in a massive movement to 'win back our stolen £millions', off Holyrood and Westminster.

All five council workers' unions in Glasgow city council have adopted the fighting policy of setting a No Cuts budget. Union branches across Scotland should emulate this. And socialists in the SSP will stand four-square with council staff, the trade union movement, user groups and other anti-cuts campaigners in demanding that councillors choose defiance rather than destruction.

Empty talk

Labour councillors have been advised by their party leader Jeremy Corbyn to 'resist Tory cuts'. The SNP won a landslide by claiming to be 'anti-austerity'.

In both cases, let's see the colour of their money. Empty talk won't save jobs or protect services. But a serious campaign to win back some of the £billions robbed off Scotland, and the £millions stolen off local councils and colleges, would ignite a movement of hope and determination to change the way we live, on a par with the enthusiastic Yes movement during the referendum.

Defiance or destruction: that's the choice facing MSPs and councillors. The SSP knows which side we are on. Join the battle to make the politicians in power fight the Tories—or stand aside for those of us prepared to do so.

JOE HILL EXECUTED 100 YEARS AGO

'Don't mourn – organise!'

by Ken Ferguson

THIS EDITION of the *Voice* comes off the press exactly 100 years after the execution in Utah of union organiser, socialist song writer and activist of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)—the famous "wobblies"—Joe Hill.

Hill had been a leading activist in the IWW which advocated "one big union" for all workers as means of winning working class power and heavily involved in leading industrial battles.

Arrested after the shooting of an ex-policeman turned grocer JB Morrison police seized on the fact that Hill had been treated for a gunshot wound on the same night, 10 January 1915, as the Morrison murder and arrested Hill.

Hill refused to disclose where he had been at the time and claimed that he had been shot in a quarrel over a woman.

He was tried convicted and sentenced to death by firing squad. A US-wide and international labour movement campaign for a retrial was refused by Republican Utah governor William Spry who said he wanted to use the case to "stop street speaking" as part of the bosses campaign against the IWW.

Hill's response was to tell the IWW leadership "don't mourn organise" and after he was shot by a firing squad on 19 November 1915, his ashes were scattered to the winds in every state in the United States.

Joe Hill might well have faded from memory but for the famous *Ballad of Joe Hill* which has made him familiar to successive generation of union and socialist activists.

One hundred years on, his message still rings true: "Don't mourn organise!"



JOE HILL

'The Ballad of Joe Hill'

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night
Alive as you or me
Says I, "But Joe, you're ten years dead"
"I never died," says he
"I never died," says he

"In Salt Lake, Joe," says I to him
Him standing by my bed
"They framed you on a murder charge"
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead"
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead"

"The copper bosses killed you, Joe
They shot you, Joe," says I
"Takes more than guns to kill a man"
Says Joe, "I didn't die"
Says Joe, "I didn't die"

And standing there as big as life
And smiling with his eyes
Says Joe, "What they forgot to kill

Went on to organise
Went on to organise"

"Joe Hill ain't dead," he says to me
"Joe Hill ain't never died
Where working men are out on strike
Joe Hill is at their side
Joe Hill is at their side"

From San Diego up to Maine
In every mine and mill
Where working men defend their rights
It's there you'll find Joe Hill
It's there you'll find Joe Hill

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night
Alive as you or me
Says I, "But Joe, you're ten years dead"
"I never died," says he
"I never died," says he

SSP APPEAL FUND

CASH VITAL TO DEFEAT TORY ATTACKS AND WIN CHANGE

by Jim McVicar,
SSP national treasurer

IN RECENT weeks, we have seen the announcement from TATA steel condemning the Scottish Steel industry to death, and the announcement of millions of pounds in cuts to local council budgets putting thousands of jobs at risk and threatening the vital services needed by so many vulnerable people in Scotland.

We have seen in the House of Lords recently, un-elected Tory peers like Coe, Weber and the ironically-named 'Lord Livingston of Parkhead' voting in support of George Osborne's proposal to cut tax credits to the hardest hit and most vulnerable in society.

Living standards

Not since the worst days of Thatcher's government in the 1980s have working class people and their communities seen such a concentrated attack on their living standards by a Westminster Tory government.

In every community the length and breadth of Scotland, every section of the population is suffering one way or another from the austerity-driven policies of the Tories.

The Scottish Socialist Party totally rejects the myth that

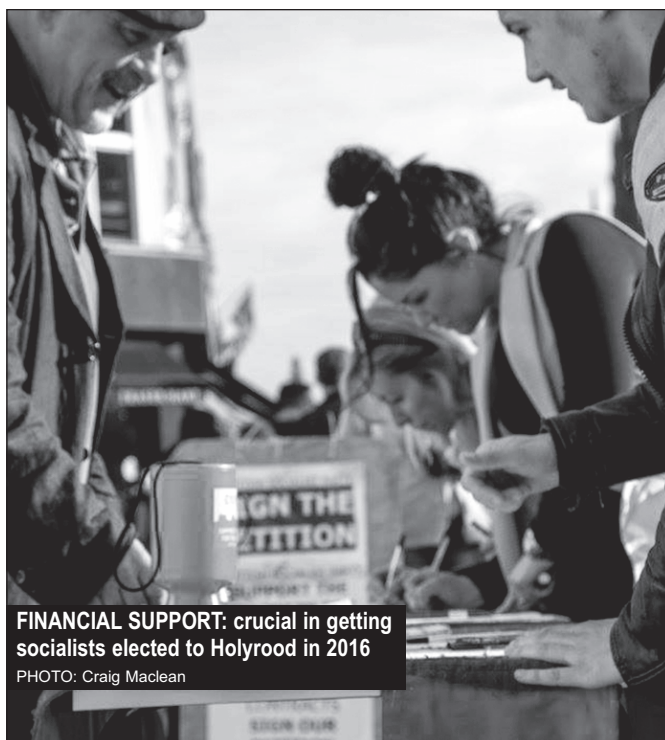
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You can make your donation in the following ways...

On our website: scottishsocialistparty.org/donations

By cheque or postal order payable to 'Scottish Socialist Party':
SSP, Suite 370 Central Chambers, 93 Hope St, Glasgow G2 6LD

By bank transfer: SSP Appeal Fund Account, Co-operative Bank,
Sort Code 08-92-99 / Account No. 65094637



there is no alternative to Tory austerity, job losses, cuts in services and attacks on working class people, and we firmly believe that a broad based anti-austerity campaign can be built, both inside and outside of parliament, to defend our communities from the worst Tory attacks.

The Scottish Parliament elections in May 2016, gives us a real opportunity to show David Cameron and his unelected, unrepresentative Tory government what working class people in Scotland think of them by electing socialists to the Scottish Parliament.

RISE, Scotland's Left Alliance—which the Scottish Socialist Party is a constituent part of—will be campaigning and standing candidates in all eight Scottish Parliamentary regions taking the anti-austerity message to every corner of Scotland. This type of national election will cost in the region of £100,000 and, as part of RISE, the Scottish Socialist Party will not only bring its election experience, its campaign work, its branches and activists to the campaign—we will have to raise money to help finance the campaign.

No rich friends

RISE, like the Scottish Socialist Party, has no rich friends or benefactors but relies solely on the financial support of its members, and we need the financial support of every member of the Scottish Socialist Party to donate to the 2016 Scottish Parliament election fund.

I am appealing directly to you today to make a donation now! If like us you believe we need socialist represent in Holyrood pleas make a donation to the SSP.

Your support is crucial in getting socialists elected to Holyrood in 2016, and is much appreciated by the Scottish Socialist Party.

Scottish Socialist Voice

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by Bill Bonnar

ON RADIO Four it was describes as an act of mindless violence. The terrorist attacks on Paris on Friday November 13 were certainly violent; mindless they weren't. This was a cynical act of provocation aimed at provoking the most reactionary elements of French society to turn against the Muslim minority in that country and in return to provoke a counter-reaction from that same minority.

Sadly there have been plenty of occurrences where this seems to have happened. In France, left and progressive forces have called for unity; not in the abstract; rather the unity of all French people including French Muslims to resist the agenda of these reactionary forces. These forces have been building for some time. On one side is the Front National. With its heady mixture of right wing nationalism, racism, authoritarianism and xenophobia it has developed mass support among all sections of French society.

'Enemy within' myth

It continuously peddles the narrative that all France's problems are caused by the 'enemy within' mostly the large Algerian Muslim population. When they talk of unemployment, crime, violence, strains of public services and now terrorism; they link that to this easily identified minority much in the same way that the Nazis in 1930s Germany laid all the blame for society's ills on the Jews.

On the other side is this large minority often living on the margins of society suffering high unemployment, racism and treated as second class citizens. For some the simplistic appeal of Islamic fundamentalism can be attractive although it is an ideology every bit as reactionary as that proposed by the Front National. However, if you are a young unemployed poorly educated French Algerian living in one of the bleak housing estates that surround Paris the message can sound attractive.



Paris: only radical political change can stop terrorism

What we are also witnessing is the continuous outflow from events in the Middle East. The western intervention in Iraq leading to the collapse of that country as a functioning state has created an almost never-ending civil war situation with no foreseeable end.

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism in that country and the growth of the kind of international terrorism witnessed in Paris can be traced directly to that western attack. The phrase 'you reap what you sow' has never been more apt. Just as the refugee crisis cannot be resolved by tightening up border controls in Europe so the terrorism crisis cannot be resolved without finding a political settlement in countries like Iraq, Syria and Yemen. We must also challenge much of the narrative emerging from governments and the media. One is the definition of terrorism. The United Nations defines terrorism as a 'military assault on a defenceless civilian population for political ends'. By this definition 99 per cent of all terroristic acts are carried out by governments including those now condemning the events in Paris.

When French aircraft indis-

criminally bomb areas in Syria controlled by ISIS killing hundreds of innocent civilians trapped in the fighting is that not an act of terrorism as defined by the United Nations? Likewise when Israel bombarded Gaza last year killing hundreds of defenceless men, women and children. Or is it only an act of terrorism when European non Muslims are the victims?

Muslims outraged

In Scotland, the Muslim population will be as outraged by the attacks in Paris as everyone else; more so because it was carried out in the name of their religion.

They will also be fearful of a backlash from our own reactionary elements which should be resisted with absolute vigour.

In this light the First Minister should be congratulated on taking the principled stance of marking the one minute silence from the Central Mosque in Glasgow standing shoulder to shoulder with leading Scottish Muslims in condemnation of the attacks.

The kind of terrorism witnessed in Paris can only be defeated by tackling its causes. There is no

military solution; certainly not military strikes in Syria. Western intervention in the Middle East and North Africa and the West's unconditional support for the biggest terrorist state in the region, Israel, has fuelled and continues to fuel terrorist attacks on European countries. Stopping this will do more to dissipate the threat of terrorism than any armed response.

In the 1970s and 1980s the IRA conducted a terrorist campaign in mainland Britain far in excess of anything carried out by Islamic extremists. This campaign ended because there was a political settlement in Northern Ireland; not because of enhanced security arrangements or military campaigns. In Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya only negotiated settlements which end these conflicts will have the same effect.

One last word from the late Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat after a bombing campaign by a small Palestinian splinter group. He condemned them but with this proviso; 'if you brutalise and terrorise an entire population you can expect that some of those brutalised terrorised people will become brutal terrorists'.



SSP fights back in Lanarkshire

by Richie Venton, SSP regional organiser

THE SSP is on the streets of Lanarkshire fighting all forms of job loss, all versions of vicious attacks on the working class. We've staged numerous street stalls and street meetings demanding nationalisation of the steel industry to save every job, keep the invaluable skills of the workers, and retain steel production for socially useful projects—like a massive social sector housebuilding programme; fleets and infrastructure for expanded public transport; and a whole new green industry around renewable energy production.

We've held public meetings seeking to unite steelworkers with council staff and communities facing devastation by the cuts threatened by the two Labour-controlled Lanarkshire councils. We were a major part of the two excellent demos by steel workers and North Lanarkshire Fights Back in recent weeks. We are at the heart of building opposition to the slaughter of tax workers' jobs in Cumbernauld and East Kilbride. Labour has tried the low trick of distracting attention from their axe-wielding at council level by calling a demo on steel where they excluded speakers from any other party.

The SNP government has spoken warm words about "leaving no stone unturned" in seeking a new buyer for steel to save the jobs, but so far ignored the blatantly obvious and rational solution of nationalisation to harness the knowledge of steel workers and scientists to draft a plan of useful local production, as an integral part of a job-creating industrial strategy for Scotland.

The SSP, including our Blantyre council by-election candidate Sean Baillie, has clear socialist answers to the jobs crisis sweeping the area, and the commitment to fight around those principles, seeking unity in action to stop the completion of the social vandalism started by Maggie Thatcher 30 years ago.

Only an SSP councillor will defy Tory, Labour, SNP cuts

by Sean Baillie,
SSP candidate, Blantyre
by-election, South
Lanarkshire Council

IN SOUTH Lanarkshire, we have a Labour majority council who have proposed to cut hundreds of jobs over the next few years. Our services are going to be crippled and stripped apart through under funding and privatisation. The blame for these cuts to some extent land at the feet

of the three parties of power in the three levels of government: Labour, the SNP and Tories. Not one of our representatives within these parties has stood up and said 'no, it doesn't have to be like this'.

There's only one party standing who's party line is simply to defy all cuts, and that's the SSP. That's because setting a No Cuts budget is in our national interest, while Labour and the SNP dance around working tax credits and worrying about voting against the

party line in the council so as not to give the other an advantage.

We are currently seeing the fantastic impact the North Lanarkshire Fights Back Campaign is having on the council there, with councillors scrambling over themselves to come out against cuts and rumours of relative revolt against their respective party line.

We only have to look at the great work being done by SSP councillor Jim Bolland over in



West Dunbartonshire to see what difference having a socialist councillor can make.