

WORKERS' fight



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"The emancipation of the working class will only be achieved by the working class itself" (Karl Marx)

Our future is in our hands AS ONE WORKING CLASS!

Theresa May's intervention at the Tory party conference was to stress that Brexit was "on its way", that she would not "give up control of immigration again" nor "return to the jurisdiction of the European court of justice".

But she had nothing new to say. Her plan to trigger the Brexit process next March was known. As to her "Great Repeal Bill", it will just incorporate existing EU laws into British law, while stating the obvious - that, once out of the EU, Britain won't be tied by its laws. In fact, all this hot air was just designed to pull the carpet from under the feet of her party's factions. Indeed, these factions have become even more unruly since the referendum, especially her most pro-Brexit ministers, who've been furiously trying to speed up the process, waving the Union Jack.

Smoke and mirrors

In July, May had claimed that her aim was to "make Britain better for everyone, not just the privileged few". It was an attempt at convincing a wide audience that she was planning from break from Cameron's policies.

At the Tory conference, she did reiterate this pledge, but this time only as a footnote, leaving to her ministers the task of giving it some flesh.

The media's take on Hammond's speech was that he was "abandoning austerity". But, in fact, he only said that he was giving up on Osborne's ridiculous aim of a budget surplus by 2020. He also talked about a programme of public investment, including £3bn for housing - although, only £1bn is new money and none of it will go to social housing!

In any case, there was no question of stopping Osborne's planned cuts, nor to stop those which are being phased in - like Universal Benefit - let alone to reverse those which have been made.



Of course, there's May's plan for "workers' representatives" in boardrooms. But while this idea was welcomed by the TUC leaders, the fact that a rogue boss like the CEO of the Sports Direct also endorsed, shows what it's really worth!

In other words, under May the past austerity policies will carry on - with another name! But in addition, there will be a price to pay for the Eurosceptics' politicking and their Brexit.

The workers' party we need

Whoever is in office, we'll be presented with the Brexit bill. And we need to prepare for this if we do not want to foot it again.

Some of us may put their hopes in Labour because Jeremy Corbyn speaks out against capitalist greed. Of course, Corbyn himself may be on our side. But his idea of fighting this greed doesn't go beyond making a stand in Parliament and asking us to vote Labour.

But the Labour party is a rotten body which has been serving British capital for far too long to change. The disgusting way it treated Corbyn shows the hatred of its officials for those who oppose this class system. The coup against Corbyn failed. But this hasn't changed Labour MPs' ambitions to enjoy the perks attached to managing the affairs of the capitalists in office.

According to Corbyn's deputy, Tom Watson, "capitalism is not the enemy". Well, it may not be Watson's enemy, nor Labour's - but it is workers' enemy day in and day out! And this is why, we need a party of our own - against the capitalists, their system and their career-seeking politicians. But we also need this party to unite our ranks behind our common interests, against all those who are trying to drive a wedge between one ("British") section of our class and another ("foreign", "EU", or whatever else) section. There is only one working class, our class! ☐

Labour

Labour leader Corbyn's definitive defeat of rival Owen Smith in the second leadership contest in one year may have been predicted. But he won an increased 60,000 majority from Labour Party members and supporters in the face of an unprecedented campaign against him - joined by virtually all the media, and engineered by a hostile Labour machinery. No politician in British history has ever faced such a concerted barrage. The

• Labour's thought police

The Labour Party has always justified its anti-communism by contrasting its "democratic" traditions to the "totalitarian" purges used by Stalin to eliminate his opponents in the USSR - of course, this was not communism, but never mind! In any case, even this virtuous "democratic" stance seems to have been forgotten today, judging from the purge carried out by the Labour party bureaucracy against

One in the eye for the establishment

anti-Corbyn Labour right-winger and political windbag, Neil Kinnock - who famously celebrated an election victory in 1992 before the final count showed he'd lost, and who the media dubbed "unelectable" at the time - had never before received such media oxygen.

Other Corbyn opponents - who highlighted the "terrifying tweets" which some anti-Corbyn MP's allegedly received from Corbynistas, had

no similar concern for "Jeremy's" feelings. Indeed many of those tweeting in his favour were suspended, like the Bakers' Union leader. To no avail. His vote increased by 49,000 among workers and trade unionists - maybe even *because* of the unanimous establishment hate campaign against him! And that is a reason to be cheerful, even if one should have no illusions in Corbyn himself! ☐

the supporters of its own leader!

According to Labour's official figures, 3,107 members were barred from voting in the leadership election because they failed to comply with the "aims and values" of the party, while 1,616 are still under investigation. There is now even a list of "flagged phrases" that will trigger an investigation if used by any member on social media - for

instance, phrases like "Blairite traitor"!

This purging frenzy even led the Labour apparatchiks to shoot themselves and Labour in the foot by suspending three Bristol councillors, thereby depriving the party of its majority in the council! And these are the people who, all along during the leadership campaign, accused Corbyn's supporters of bringing Labour into disrepute?

Education

Theresa May isn't even pretending to make education more equal. She wishes to reinstate grammar schools (only 164 remain in England), and thus, state-sanctioned selection for high school education, on the basis of an exam, at age 11, 12 or 13, or later.

May argues that selection already occurs because most schools recruit according to catchment areas. She says grammar schools, based on selection by merit, are therefore fairer to parents who can't afford to move house

• The education of the future

Tiny budgets and big cuts have been the plague of the education system, since inception. "Cheap education" is even responsible for the craziness of university entrance A levels which force 15 year-olds into the narrow specialisation of just a few subjects (and the choice is more and more restricted, to cut the cost of teachers) for their last 2 years at school. This generates lack of culture and limits the ability to reason and think independently - something which the French Baccalauréat at least promotes by ensuring that all pupils study the main subjects.

Bad grammar predicted

to be near a "good" academy school. But since children from poor families are notoriously put at a disadvantage in these exams, her so-called "merit" is just another form of social discrimination.

However, while Labour is right to say that grammar schools are elitist, claiming that the comprehensive system is "better" per se, because it comprehensively mixes all children together regardless of knowledge level, is false reasoning. Any teacher knows that a

homogeneous class learns more easily.

So far, working class kids have always had the worst deal and Labour's diversion of funds to create academies only aggravated the situation. What would be needed is a comprehensive plan for fully funded education from the cradle to the grave. But this has never been instituted because it would require the kind of resources no government is prepared to make available. Even if these are "human" resources of which we have plenty! ☐

But, in fact, education should be something else. As an active process, it should really go on throughout our lives, encompassing all fields of knowledge, and not end at a particular age, on graduation. And why should children be confined inside classrooms, at a time of life when their minds - and bodies, moreover - have the most capacity to grow and develop? Let them go outside and learn about the world, first hand, but also let them learn how to contribute to it, with the assistance of all the adults that this requires...



• Gig economy - no buzz

The "gig economy" is only the latest buzzword that the bosses' newspapers have invented to sell increased exploitation. When it comes down to it, "gigs" - such as ferrying food or documents across town for a company - are simply low-paid, insecure and irregular jobs. These workers are not even offered zero-hours contracts, because formally they are

'self-employed'. And so the company gets away with murder - no sick pay, or holiday pay for the workers and it doesn't have to pay National Insurance contributions. But the workers have to pay for their own bikes and even the phone credit needed for their work.

This is not new. The gig economy is only the internet-age equivalent of dock workers who were hired on a daily basis a century ago. In those days, the unions managed to organise

these casual workers and fight to win permanent contracts and workplace benefits. Which just goes to show that there is always the possibility that the bosses won't get away with it this time around, either. The recent strikes at Deliveroo and Uber are a sign of more fights to come, provided workers use the fact of their increasing numbers and join ranks together, across all these gig companies, in order to force the Scrooge gig bosses to capitulate.

Refugees' blood on Britain's hands

Today we are seeing the forced migration of populations on a scale unprecedented in history. As many as 65 million victims of wars are now living as refugees, according to a recent report by the World Bank and the UN. This is the equivalent of the entire population of Britain. Last year, wars forced 24 people to flee their homes every minute! And these figures do not even take into account those who are constantly forced to leave because of dire poverty.

The largest number of refugees come from regions ravaged by the wars in which Britain has most recently bloodied its hands, like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Others are from countries where local warlords have fought it out for the spoils over the corpses of their local populations, acting as proxies for the interests of one or another imperialist power and



Aleppo, Syria

its big companies: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, etc..

This is the only future that Britain

Refugee crisis

and its imperialist partners in crime have to offer to mankind. And this is why their capitalist order must be overthrown! □

• Let the Calais refugees in!

Four months after Cameron was forced to make a commitment to allow 3,000 unaccompanied refugee children from across the camps in Europe to come to Britain, only 30 have actually arrived. At this rate it will take 33 years for the government to carry out this commitment!

But now, under British pressure, the French government is preparing to destroy

Calais' "Jungle" camp and "scatter" its refugees across the country. Over 9000 refugees including 1,000 unaccompanied children will be left to fend for themselves in places where they may face outright hostility. But never mind. The British government is still not even prepared to welcome the 400 of these 1,000 Calais children who are known to have relatives in Britain!

And all this because, neither May nor French President Hollande want to take the risk of being accused of leniency towards the refugees by their right-wing rivals. Despite the fact that their two countries, which are among the richest, could easily afford to welcome all 9,000 refugees from the "Jungle", both children and adults!

• The great wall of Calais

So far, Donald Trump has only talked about building a wall on the border between the US and Mexico. But Theresa May and her French partner François Hollande have already started to build one in Calais. It will be a 1-kilometre, 4-metre high wall along both sides of the main motorway leading to the Channel

Tunnel terminal - as part of a £22 million "security" investment package. Not only is it designed to prevent refugees from boarding lorries on their way to Britain, but also to stop them from staging protests on a motorway used for highly profitable cross-Channel trade - which is the only way they can make themselves

heard!

As if the English Channel hadn't isolated Britain enough, now a concrete wall is required to "defend" Britain against "threatening foreigners"? And where does this stop? Will they build little fortresses all along the coast, like they did 200 years ago, against Napoleon?

• One law for the poor, another for the rich

Increases of up to 500% in court fees for immigration and asylum cases are to be enforced, despite a consultation in which all but five of the 147 responses received, opposed the move. This means that fees for an application to the first-tier tribunal dealing with immigration and asylum cases will increase from £80 to £490 for "a decision on the papers" and from £140 to £800

for an oral hearing.

As if refugees came with truckloads of money! They are fleeing wars and poverty and have already had to pay whatever money they still had to various intermediaries on their way to Europe. As for those immigrants who have been living in Britain, but do not have secure status, they are usually doing the lowest paid jobs, when

they are not banned from doing any paid work at all. Of course, these fees won't be a problem for "highly skilled" migrants or foreigners who are rich enough to invest big sums in Britain, since they are welcome anyway! In other words, this is just another way of pushing poor foreigners out of Fortress Britain, while offering the red carpet treatment to the richest.

• "Apologising" for a war crime

On the May 8th, 2003, the British army caught Ahmed Ali, a 15-year-old Iraqi "looting" a derelict industrial estate. As punishment for his "crime", Ali was pushed into a canal where the soldiers watched him drown.

Thirteen years later, a report has revealed the details of this case as part of the "Iraq Fatality Investigations" - a series of inquiries into controversial deaths

during the occupation of Iraq. The report says that pushing suspected looters into rivers was widespread. Other punishments included destroying carts used to carry stolen goods and writing "Ali Baba" on looters' foreheads. The army has now apologised for Ali's murder. But no action will be taken against the officers in charge and no compensation given to Ali's family. Such apologies cost nothing to the army

and mean nothing for the Iraqi population.

Politicians like Tony Blair have objected to these investigations - the same politicians who justified the invasion of Iraq by the need to get rid of Saddam Hussein, because he was a war criminal. But the murder of Ali and over a million Iraqis are not supposed to be war crimes - simply because they were carried out by the rich imperialist countries?

Brexit

A bright future post-Brexit? They don't even believe it!

The government has been striving to show that, despite the referendum, the economy is doing well - but this is more wishful thinking than fact!

The stock market only returned to its pre-referendum level thanks to a mountain of cash injected by the Bank of England. And one of the side-effects of this medicine is a £100bn increase in pension fund deficits - so that part of the bill will be paid for by future pensioners! Meanwhile, the pound remains at a 30-year low. But, rather than boosting exports, as the Brexiteers promised, this increases the cost of imports - so retail prices are bound to rise.

As to May's capitalist masters, they're not sharing her optimism: 3/4 of the 100 largest companies operating in Britain say they would consider moving all or part of their operations to the EU in case of a full Brexit. Big finance, whose profits are particularly dependent on the EU, has already started making such plans - like Lloyd's, London's

• Theresa's secret

So Theresa May doesn't want her pre-Brexit negotiations made public: "*there will be no running commentary*"... Nobody is meant to know what she is promising EU leaders. And it's not a matter of "not showing your hand", all the better to win, because tough-talker May is really on the losing side of the deal, no matter what. She will have to plead for mercy and access to the single market on behalf of British capital and at the same time try to pretend she's getting

• She may cause a riot

The split between the Tory Hard Brexiters - like Johnson, Fox and Davis - and softies like Philip Hammond and perhaps May herself, is causing May a few problems. And that's not even mentioning the third camp of "Remainers" like Anna Soubry, who keep piping up against the "Brexit 3" - and the PM!

"Foreign Secretary"(!) Johnson of the "Change Britain" group (the successor to the Leave Campaign) dismisses the problems as does his colleague, Trade Secretary Liam Fox, who thinks Britain can go back to 19th century "Free Trade". They would prefer Article 50 to be invoked immediately - but even Johnson knows this can't be done. He repeats the mantra, along with his strange bedfellows in "Change Britain", Labour's Gisela Stuart and Lib-Dem David Owen, that "*Brexit means Brexit and that means ... restoring UK control over our laws, borders, money and trade.*"

But what sort of control, nobody dares to spell out. Johnson and his crowd expect to have their cake and eat it - closed borders and membership of the single market. But as soft Brexiter, Philip Hammond, admits, if any form of access to the EU market is retained, migrants from Europe will have to be given freedom of movement. So, May still has to find a magical



oldest insurance firm, for instance. The big manufacturers are not there yet. But Nissan and Land Rover are now demanding to be compensated by the taxpayer for the losses they expect to make due to Brexit. And they, together with others, are cutting or postponing planned investment - meaning a threat to jobs.

No-one really knows what the

some extra "control" on immigration. And it just won't do, to allow the "public" to see May's tail between her legs...

So how does she "*respect the will of the British people*" as we keep hearing her say, ad nauseam? Well precisely by keeping the real bargaining secret. In fact, this is how governments have always operated. Accountability is kept within strictly narrow limits. Cabinet minutes remain secret for 30 years, because the state cannot allow

way, literally, to disrespect the "people who have spoken", without it showing...

• Japanese reservations

Of course, Britain attracted foreign investment while in the EU because it could act as a gateway to Europe and its single market, while offering a low-regulation, low-tax environment. This is why the so-called Japanese Memorandum has raised alarm. Car companies like Toyota, Hitachi, Nissan and Honda (which now produce almost 80% of all "British" cars), as well as big banks like Mitsubishi accepted Thatcher's and Blair's invitations to come to Britain precisely for these reasons.

Now Japanese companies want assurances that they will still benefit if they stay in Britain. But some of these benefits are threatened, like the "single passport" which allows them to sell their production across the single market, without facing tariff barriers. Then there is the possible loss of the freedom they have to borrow and lend money across the EU, as well as the loss of access to joint research projects.

All in all, without being a gateway to Europe, what attraction does Britain still hold for non-EU companies like the Japanese multinationals? After all, its own market is a fraction of the size and its labour force - without the migrant injection - is relatively poor in skills...

consequences of Brexit will be, whichever form it takes, least of all the politicians, whose xenophobic overbidding produced this situation. But for the working class, the price will inevitably be high - that is, unless, workers go on the offensive to defend their material interests against the irresponsibility of the politicians and the greed of the capitalists. □

the public to know how it legitimises compromises, dirty deals and even "criminal" acts in order to serve the interests of their capitalist masters. And so it will be with the wheeling and dealing over Brexit. The Cabinet is already talking about how it will make the working class pay the extra costs of leaving the EU and how to disguise such theft as a benefit. But we know how to spot a thief.

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May's double speak

At the G20 summit, in Hangzhou, Theresa May ruled out an Australian-style points-based immigration system for all foreign workers which would include those from the EU. The idea of such a points system, which is supposed to admit migrants according to which skills are in short supply, united all the "Leave" heavyweights during the referendum campaign. They promoted it as promising equal opportunity of access to EU citizens and those from elsewhere in the world, particularly the Commonwealth.

May questioned whether such systems actually work to limit immigration. Her statement was ambiguous enough to please the right-wing of her party, as it could be understood as implying that she wants something even more restrictive. But her intended audience was really the other G20 delegates and

• Against all xenophobic attacks

Since the referendum, xenophobic attacks have drastically increased according to the police's own figures, especially in the immediate aftermath of the vote. Obviously, the vicious anti-migrant tone of the referendum campaign reinforced those who had already thought of taking out their frustration on foreigners.

On August 27th, in Harlow, a gang of teenage thugs attacked two Polish workers outside a takeaway, beating one of them to death - 40-year old food factory

• How they make bosses fatter and lazier...

Rich countries around the world are cutting corporation tax - the tax paid by companies on their profits. Eight countries cut their rates during 2015 and several, including Japan, Britain, France



particularly the big multinational companies they represent. She needed to reassure them that whatever immigration policy is finally adopted by her

worker Arkadiusz Józwik. A week later, two other Polish workers were severely beaten after attending a vigil in Józwik's memory. And then a few days later, in Leeds, another Polish worker narrowly escaped being kicked to death by 20 thugs, all of them again, teenagers. How many more similar attacks have gone unreported?

However, these events can't be blamed on the referendum campaign alone: the many years during which

and Italy, plan yet more cuts. Osborne reduced the tax four times, from 28% in 2010 to 21% in 2014. By 2020, it's meant be down to 17%!

For years politicians have insisted that lower taxes result in better tax collection and promised to clamp down on tax evasion and avoidance. But this hasn't happened. In Britain, over the past decade, HMRC's budget has been cut by over a quarter and its workforce by 40%. What's more, to investigate possible corporate abuse of avoidance loopholes it has to get approval from a panel of business people! No wonder its highly publicised agreement with Google after years of avoidance yielded a payment equivalent to a pathetic 3% of its profits.

The aim of all this, of course, is to give shareholders a larger proportion of the wealth produced by workers, while the working class pays for it, through cuts in public jobs and services. It's not acceptable!

Brexit

government, their interests will not be put at risk and their high-flyers won't be stopped from taking care of the profits they make in Britain. □

politicians blamed foreign workers for everything that went wrong in Britain, including the consequences of the capitalist crisis, fuelled an anti-migrant "fear" across some sections of society. Today, it is in the interest of the working class - and it is its responsibility - to react against these prejudices and counter the divisions they threaten to create in its own ranks, by providing foreign brothers and sisters all the solidarity and support they need against these attacks!

A dirty way of fishing for votes

Chuka Umunna recently said that British business should retain as much access to the European Single Market as possible, as part of Brexit, and at the same time, curtail the freedom of movement of EU workers to come to Britain. Umunna wanted to make clear that immigration is his main concern - he would even sacrifice access to the Single Market if, in exchange, the current freedom of movement had to be retained. This comes after a number of other Remain-backing Labour MPs took a stance in favour of axing the freedom of movement.

Of course, Labour politicians have to win over Tory (and Ukip) voters in the run-up to the next general election. These statements are gutless concessions, designed purely to woo these voters. Such MPs have no concern for the interests of the working population, but only for the security of their own parliamentary seats... and since foreign workers can't vote, what do they care?

BMW Mini centre (Cowley, Oxford)**Pensions under attack: yes, we must fight!**

BMW wants to close its final salary pension schemes from June 2017. As many as 53,000 pensioners, 17,000 deferred members and 5,200 managers and employees stand to lose retirement benefits.

This isn't BMW's first attack on pensions. Already, in early 2014, workers' contributions were increased and a new defined contribution scheme was created for new starters - to which it now wants to transfer everyone!

BMW claims the pension fund has a large deficit and that the rising

cost of future liabilities and bosses' NI contributions make this unaffordable. What a cynical joke! BMW is posting record profits - £7.8bn before tax in 2015! And if pension funds do have a deficit, it's largely because, for 15 years, BMW has been recruiting new workers at Oxford and Hams Hall on agency temp contracts - which means they don't contribute to a BMW pension fund.

Unite's national automotive officer Tony Murphy promised that this attack would be fought "tooth and claw" and "by whatever means



possible" and so it should be! But so far he's only announced a "consultative" ballot. He said "we are nowhere near industrial action yet". Except that "strike" is the only language BMW will understand - and the sooner, the better.

- **Did BMW cut corners?**

Fire, rescue and specialist crews were on site for 12 hours clearing up the hydrochloric acid leak on 22 July. By the time the leak was discovered at 2am, 100 litres had gone. Luckily the workmate who breathed in fumes got the all-clear at the John Radcliffe. But what had caused the leakage? Although hydrochloric acid is highly corrosive in industrial concentrations, if it is properly stored and used, it needn't be hazardous. But that means people have to be properly trained to use

and store it safely... [Workers' Fight BMW Oxford 20/9/16]

- **The holiday hit**

A-shift workers on nights on the Friday before the holiday were also supposed to be working nights on the Friday after we came back from the summer shutdown. In the event BMW cancelled both shifts. And of course this meant that agency workers employed by Gi got a hard hit in our August wage packet - just when many of us needed extra cash! [Workers' Fight BMW Oxford 20/9/16]

- **So how does Gi justify this rip off?**

Not only do Gi workers not get a supplement for working a quota of Friday nights, but when we do work overtime, we find in our payslips that we've been paid at a basic rate, £2.50 below the usual! It's not good enough for Gi to say, "That's what we've always done". The agency workers regs say equal pay after 12 weeks applies to overtime. And whoever heard of being paid less for extra hours? [Workers' Fight BMW Oxford 20/9/16]

Ford Dagenham estate (Essex)

- **Whatever it is, we say no!**

Has Ford's European boss, Linda Cash decided to bottle out of facing us with her cuts proposals? She did go to see Bridgend workers, who were told that for now their headcount will stay the same, despite investment halving. But what about their pay and conditions?

And pensions? We suspect the final salary scheme is on Ford's hit list - BMW just announced to its workers that it's coming for theirs'. This is Ford pay claim year. So what's going on behind the scenes? We need to know, and to discuss with mates in the other plants. ASAP. [Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

- **Grand theft auto**

So we stopped work in the Den and went to the convenor's office after we were told (without so much as a "by-your-leave" by Benchpress/Rottweiler) that we were to go double-day shift and lose £100/week! And all because Ford really wants a cheap labour pool!

The convenor finally stopped eating his dinner and has decided to back us over this - along with all the stewards. As for our temp mates - we aren't going to allow them to be shafted either! If Ford wants savings

they can go ask their shareholders or take money out of their cash-pile, not from ANY of us. Permanent contracts for all temps! [Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

- **They must stay!**

Yes enough of this threatening of the temps - Ford can easily take them on perm, but instead keeps them totally insecure by saying one minute they're staying and the next they're going. If Ford tries to get them out we need to barricade the doors. [Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

- **Pay cannot be cut**

What's more, if the Den did agree to any shift change - after proper consultation, and not this rude imposition, (as if we've no lives to live), cutting our wages would still be theft. The time-honoured principle is that while our pay can and should rise along with ever-rising costs - it can and should never be cut!! And the same goes for all the other workers who've lost shift premiums so far! [Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

- **G4S is at it again, courtesy fords**

And here's another one to fight: the G4S mates are being paid just about the minimum



wage (£7.20) and are on 12 hour shifts - without breaks! It's not even legal... G4S is obviously trying to squeeze the most out of the contract - with Ford's collusion - using a skeleton workforce. We can make sure it'll backfire. [Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

- **Burying Henry?**

We thought the managers were digging a grave for Henry Ford - when a big hole appeared next to his statue. But no, they're laying pipes. As for the refurbished DEP entrance - well funny that the old clock has been left alone, stuck at 4 o'clock, as it's been for 40 years! Then again, Ford's inner clock isn't just stuck, it's going backwards, with Tiger's & Panther's hostile, worker-unfriendly set-up. And that's just the line; don't get us started on management...[Workers' Fight Ford Dagenham 28/9/16]

King's Cross railway station (London)**Our first ever strike!**

At last all of us Virgin East Coast workers (except drivers) have the chance to show this very greedy company how angry we are at its cuts disguised as "new delivery plans"!

A first strike planned for the 19th August was called off, much to our dismay, after we'd voted overwhelmingly for it. So the strike for 3rd October, after over a month of company-union talks, is welcome! We totally oppose VTEC's plan and its 195 job cuts - announced at the very time when we are critically short of hands across every category of job, on station and on-train! Worse, though, was VTEC's

aim to remove safety-critical guards and merge their jobs with catering Crew Leaders, eliminating 120 crew leader jobs, and converting the rest into "Senior Hosts" supposedly devoted to 2nd Class. The new guard-come-crew leader would be called a "Customer Experience Leader", with more to do with serving drinks than safety. This amounts to "Driver Only Operation" by another name (something which is being fought on Southern at present), because once the new Virgin Hitachi trains come in, the drivers would be able to operate the carriage doors via a button inside their cabs, making guards



redundant, despite the obvious danger in doing so.

This one-day strike won't be enough, but let's hope it gives Branson and Stagecoach bosses a fright. The plan must be dumped; nothing less than its full retraction and the immediate recruitment of dozens more workers across all jobs will do!

• Strike minus 1...

What's this? First we get balloted for strike action over the GTR ticket office closures - which the RMT calculated would have meant 130 job cuts. 70% of us voted for strike action (and 80% for action short of strike).

Then we have a date, 7 September, when more than 1000 GTR station staff were to go on strike, the same day as the strike against DOO on Southern.

It would've had huge impact! But

the strike was called off. Why? [King's Cross Workers' Platform 20/9/16]

• ... when is strike minus 2?

All we know is that some deal was struck - not to retain all ticket offices and thus avoid any need for "station hosts", but to offer £1000 to anyone who wanted to give it a try! And to bring in some agency workers to help GTR's closure and job cut plans along! Those of us on the ground would never have agreed to this. Is there another ballot? We need one. [King's Cross Workers' Platform 20/9/16]

• Not without a dispatcher!

Why should we drivers 'self-dispatch' these new GTR trains, relying on cameras? Obviously, we can't always see the whole length of the train (particularly the 8-car ones) as a dispatcher could, so it's only a matter of time before a passenger gets stuck in the doors or worse. We say, keep the only safe way to dispatch - with live, flesh and blood dispatchers on the platform! [King's Cross Workers' Platform 20/9/16]

Mount Pleasant mail centre (London)**• Pensions threatened unless we act**

We're all seriously worried about our pensions. And it's no good that the CWU reassures us that it's putting a strong case forward to "defend" the defined benefit scheme and improve the lousy defined contribution scheme (which they agreed to in the first place!). No. This proposed attack by RM and the government needs a concerted response, using all our forces. Yet the union's pushed the few Crown Post Office workers - first in line for the very same attack - to go out on strike alone? THAT is not serious. [Workers' Fight Bulletin Mount Pleasant 20/9/16]

• They were left on their own

Yes, on the day of the Crown Post Office strike last Thurs, even tho' a glossy leaflet was issued telling the rest of us that we should "show solidarity" with PO workers - there was no sign of it on the ground, nor anything actually organised to involve the whole workforce. Certainly not here at HMP, even tho' we've a Crown Office right next door. Next time we'll

know that we'd better go directly to them ourselves, to organise proper "solidarity". Which can only mean striking together. Nothing less. [Workers' Fight Bulletin Mount Pleasant 20/9/16]

• "New" category, new hands

So the Chinese parcels are here to stay? Tiny little packets, hundreds of them per yorke and each with its own address! This amounts to a new category of mail altogether, given the number of these things, and some of the microscopic addresses! And surely it needs a new category of worker - well, a whole number of new workers allocated to sort these things? But of course that's not how management sees it. So we see a great big pile-up looming... [Workers' Fight Bulletin Mount Pleasant 20/9/16]

• Overtime or overworked

And with the Chinese parcels all over the shop (floor), and no proper jobs, let alone OT to cover for them, what's going on in here?! The union officials said RM had met their demands over this hence the withdrawal of the strike ballot. Can they



tell us which demands, exactly, were met?? [Workers' Fight Bulletin Mount Pleasant 20/9/16]

• A grim sound

Indeed, RM must be laughing - when the best we (or rather the union officers) offered as "resistance" to the flood of mini-packets was a threat to strike if there was no OT granted. But of course OT is used by the bosses precisely to avoid taking on enough workers to do a job. Have union officials forgotten the time when the fight was about proper (full-time) jobs and proper pay?! Bring back real such fights and we won't "need" OT in order to make ends meet. [Workers' Fight Bulletin Mount Pleasant 20/9/16]

US elections

A false choice for the working class

The British media are giving wide coverage to the US presidential election, which is due to take place on 8 November. But they only concern themselves with the two candidates: Donald Trump, the billionaire and Hillary Clinton, the seasoned politician. The text below, extracted from the fortnightly paper published by the American Trotskyist group, the Spark, looks at this election from the point of view of the working class.

Donald Trump is now running neck and neck with Hillary Clinton. With much of the electorate sick of both parties, Democratic and Republican, Trump is portraying himself as the outsider, the independent.

In this election, Trump is a Republican (in earlier ones, he supported the Democrats). But the fact that he doesn't appear to be part of the Republican establishment and many of them even oppose him, plays to Trump's advantage. Of course, it is all an act, a scam.

Trump is as much of an outsider as any Rockefeller ever was. For his entire life, Trump has taken advantage of the labouring population in order to add to his own fortune and wealth.

In other words, Trump is an avowed enemy of the working class. So, how could he have gained the support of so many white workers and lower middle class people, not to speak of some Latino workers and even a few black workers?

Yes, part of it is his appeal to racist, anti-immigrant attitudes that some may hold. But the fact remains



that so many respond who ordinarily wouldn't be racist, because they are angry. They are being crushed by the unending unemployment, worsening job prospects, the lack of educational opportunities, the lack of affordable housing. Many had voted for Obama eight years ago, because he promised "change". Now, they rightly feel betrayed, so they don't want to vote for Clinton, another Democrat, because she represents - and is - more of the same.

That leaves Trump as the supposed protest candidate. But whatever Trump says about the lack of jobs and the companies that are cutting them, the worsening schools and neighbourhoods, this grotesque billionaire's proposals would only make things worse. By playing up

the worst prejudices, he is directing one section of workers' anger against other parts of the working class. He spouts the same vile racist and sexist garbage that other politicians, as well as capitalists do, using innuendo.

In fact, this election poses a choice for workers. But not between Clinton and Trump, which for workers is a false choice. It is whether or not workers begin to organise themselves to fight to protect their own class interests against the capitalist class; whether or not workers begin to build up their own class party to confront the capitalist parties in the political arena. That is, whether working people, in their disparate parts, begin to see themselves as part of a single and unified class. □

Fat corporations - only getting fatter

According to a report released by the campaign group "Global Justice Now", of the 100 richest economic entities in the world, 69 are private companies. Only 31 countries make the list.

The concentration of capital in the hands of a small number of multinationals is nothing new, but it is increasing: the combined revenue of the world's 10

largest corporations is now larger than the total combined GDP of the world's 180 poorest countries. Walmart's income is larger than that of Spain, Australia and the Netherlands. These corporations can sometimes entirely control the economy of a poor country. This used to be the case for Guatemala, which was controlled by US giant, the United Fruit Company. It is still the case today for Republic of Congo, which French oil major Total, controls. Meanwhile, in

the rich countries there are companies which have more influence than millions of voters, like the oil majors which got the US and British governments to invade Iraq, despite widespread opposition.

This is why the working class cannot expect any change from the ballot box. As long as these giant companies control countries and whole economies, the social injustices on which their parasitism on society is based, won't be ended.

In addition to this monthly paper, we publish fortnightly bulletins in several large workplaces in the South East, a quarterly journal, "Class Struggle" and the "Internationalist Communist Forums" - a series of pamphlets on topical issues.

If you wish to find out more about our ideas, activities and publications, contact the Workers' Fight activist who sold you this issue of our paper, or write to us either by e-mail, at contact@w-fight.org, or by postal mail at:

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