

No to war in
Iraq & Syria
p. 6

Fight Sexism &
Homophobia
pp. 6&7

Education Action
p.2

REVOLUTION

socialistrevolution.org ★ the fighting paper for socialist youth

TAX-RICH
to FUND
Education
for ALL!

ISSUE #115
November 2014
50p/DONATION

2ACTION

100,000 march against Tory cuts

On 18 October, 100,000 people marched through London demanding an end to cuts and calling for better pay. Millions of workers have seen their pay frozen which means they have lost 20% of the value of their wages. Since the coalition came to power more than 600 jobs have been cut every single day. The protest was called by the Trade Union Congress (TUC). There are 6 million people in the unions but the union leadership have got no stomach for a fight. Demonstrations are good but we need to go beyond 'protests with no tomorrow'. **We need strikes & occupations to kick out the government.**

Guns for Kobane!

Members of REVOLUTION in Germany have been involved in a campaign to raise money to support the Kurdish fighters defending the town of Kobane against ISIS. Together with Kurdish organisations they have raised more than £20,000. The heroic defence of Kobane has thwarted the plans of Turkey who hoped that a victory for ISIS would allow them to invade northern Syria and create an open-air prison where they could expel Turkish Kurds and the PKK.

**Solidarity with the PKK/YPG!
Victory to the Syrian revolution!
No to a new war in Iraq!**

no fees, no cuts, no debt strike, protest, occupy Take action for Education!

The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC) has called a national demonstration on 19 November. The slogan is 'No to debt, no to fees - Yes to free education!'

Since the Con-Dem government came to power, education has been under constant attack. Tuition fees were tripled to £9k a year, EMA was scrapped and now schools and universities are being sold off to private companies. The result of the coalition hiking fees to £9,000 per year will mean students finishing university with a lifetime of debt and having no certainty of getting a job when they graduate.

It's not just students whose future is being sacrificed by a government of millionaires who got their university education paid for with state grants. Unemployment amongst 16-24 year olds has reached 20 per cent. One million young people are not in work, education or training. Those who are fortunate to find the few jobs that are going often end up in low paid, insecure work with zero-hours contracts. Young people who can't find work are forced into 'workfare schemes' which make you work up to 40 hours a week in return for your unemployment benefit for companies that make millions in profit each year. Essentially the state is subsidising the profits of the rich at the expense of the poor.

The Tories used their conference to announce that they want to continue with the attacks on the welfare state, they are especially targeting young people even going as far to say that they might completely stop under 24s from receiving unemployment and housing benefits.

Another policy the Tories have promised to continue is the selling off of education to the highest bidders. The growth of 'Free schools' and academies has created a market out of our education system. This means that companies, religious groups and anyone with access to a few Tory ministers can set up a school which they can run as a business, driving down wages, limiting courses and changing parts of the curriculum to suit their ideas. **We think that schools should be run in the interests of the students and not as a scheme for making money out of our education.**

Schools should be places of free expression, learning and critical thinking - not factories for drilling in unquestioning obedience to authority, training up armies of young people with only the qualifications necessary to find work in a low wage, low skill economy.

We encourage all students and young people to participate in the demonstration on 19 November. School and college students were the most radical participants in the students revolt of 2010 - we need them to take the lead once again. **Walk out, protest, occupy, fight to make education a right for all, not a privilege for the few.** BY KD

Wed. 19 Nov 12pm, CENTRAL LONDON



REVOLUTION is a magazine and a democratic organisation of young people. We oppose the rule of the capitalists and the inequality, war and climate chaos their system creates. The billionaires who run the world's governments, media and businesses won't give up their power by protest and votes. If we want to abolish the rule of the elite then we must overthrow them through a revolution which puts control society in the hands of the millions - not the millionaires. This is the struggle for socialism - join us!

Tell us what you think!

**WRITE TO REVOLUTION AT
socialistrevolution.org/contact**

**JOIN REVOLUTION AT
socialistrevolution.org/join**

f like us on facebook/SocialistRevolution

t follow us on Twitter @socialistrevo

e email us at contact@socialistrevolution.org

INEQUALITY 3

Tory Britain: the rich get richer, the poor get poorer

The UK is the world's 6th largest economy. Despite this, the gap between richest and poorest is only getting bigger. Inequality in Britain has spiralled to a sorry level where our five richest families own more than the poorest 20% of our population, as reported by Oxfam earlier this year. We live in a country where the cost of living is on the rise and real incomes are falling - the number of working households living below the poverty line is greater than non-working ones. All workers should earn the Living Wage (£8.80 in London) to combat a situation where being in work doesn't pay. In one of the richest countries in the world, a million people have been forced to use food banks just to survive.

Couple this high cost of living with the government's savage cuts to social security and public services and you arrive at the nasty reality facing many ordinary Britons today. There are people trapped in poverty without a lifeline - made worse by austerity measures enforced by our government to squeeze every last pound they can from those struggling to find a penny.

WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER?

It is the policy of pay cuts and freezes that have struck the poor and the vulnerable and allowing the rich to accumulate more wealth than ever before. The ruling capitalist class of Britain has become wealthier despite the 2008 financial collapse, yet the ordinary folk have been made to shoulder the burden of the crisis. Pay freezes, welfare cuts, the evil bedroom tax and a whole host of Tory nasties have plagued ordinary and vulnerable people in Britain whilst the boss class lives it up with tax cuts and bonuses that could fund a hospital.

It's a depressing reality that Labour refuses to offer serious alternatives to the Tories' austerity. At one end of the chasm, the poor majority bears the brunt of austerity whilst at the other, capitalists are allowed to hoard our country's wealth - despite the system that enriches them being responsible for the financial crash which we are told we "all" have to pay for.

When Labour was last in power they bailed out the banks with £1 TRILLION of our cash. The Tories' have stepped this up by selling off public services - a massive transfer of accumulated wealth that we paid for - all handed over to big business. The economic crisis that set the precedent for this was inescapable. Capitalism always goes through crises because production is not organised according to what we need, but according to what can make a profit. Britain is one of the richest countries in the world and now has more billionaires per head than any other. Despite this, over 1 in 5 of us still live in poverty. The massively unequal distribution of wealth in Britain cannot be solved simply by taxing the rich a bit more and building more schools and hospitals or paying wages. The capitalist system has inequality built into it - which is why all the newspapers, schools and main parties say there is no alternative. Rich people get rich because they skim off the value produced by the people who actually build cars and houses but can't afford them.

To abolish inequality forever we need a socialist revolution to organise society in the interests of the millions not the millionaires.

BY CRAIG

WHAT REVOLUTION socialist youth movement SAYS

Fight For Every Job!
with strikes & occupations

Cut the hours, not jobs!
share out the available work
amongst the unemployed with no loss
of pay

Tax the Rich!
to fund a massive hospital, school and
infrastructure improvement pro-
gramme, providing decent jobs with
decent wages for the unemployed

Nationalise bankrupt bosses!
companies that sack workers or close
down should be taken over with no
compensation paid. They should be run
democratically by the workers them-
selves

Make Labour Fight!
demand Labour councillors vote
against cuts, campaign against cuts,
and MPs commit to reversing all aus-
terity

Unite the resistance!
committees of action in every town
should coordinate in a national demo-
cratic campaign to organise the resist-
ance to austerity in every workplace,
town and city

4fASCISM

Ukraine: self-defence militias resist fascist terror

The government of oligarchs and fascists that seized power in a coup earlier this year is trying to crush anti-government opposition in east Ukraine. Thousands of ordinary workers have joined anti-fascist militias to defend themselves against the army and fascist paramilitaries.

The conflict began when the former Ukrainian president said that he would not sign a free-trade agreement with the European Union. He was trying to play the EU and Russia off against each other to get better terms for the agreement, which would have seen millions of Ukrainians lose their jobs. Ukraine is ruled by ultra-rich capitalists who monopolise political power (oligarchs). They build a mass popular base by playing off the contradictions of Ukrainian society between the Russian-speaking East and the Ukrainian-speaking West.

The pro-EU oligarchs called for protests, promoting the illusion that better relations with the EU would mean greater democracy. The pro-EU protests were called the Maidan Movement, named after the square they occupied. At first they were fairly small but when the government attacked them thousands of people joined in to protest against state repression and violence. A number of fascist organisations were involved in the Maidan Movement, including the Right Sector which is a coalition of neo-Nazi groups. The armed fascist groups were decisive in forcing the president to flee to Russia. Their reward was key positions in control of the police, army and secret service in the new regime.

One of the first acts of this government was to try and pass legislation banning Russian as a state language. A huge number of eastern Ukrainians speak Russian as their main language. Parts of the east and south of Ukraine did not recognise the new government's legitimacy. Crimea held a referendum and a majority of the population decided to leave Ukraine and subsequently joined Russia. The Donbas region has also held a referendum and a majority of the population wanted autonomy from Kiev in order to protect themselves from a nationalist and anti-Russian government. However, the Ukrainian government has not respected the right of Ukrainian citizens to make this decision for themselves. They have used fascist gangs to attack demonstrations in the south and east, including the burning down of the Trade Union House in Odessa where at least 40 people died. Those who survived were arrested, while those who murdered people remain free.

Since then, the pro-EU and pro-Nato government has escalated its attacks on the people living in the south and east, using tanks and bombs to try and defeat the resistance movement. Schools and hospitals have been targeted in a civil war which has killed over 3,000 people. Any groups or individuals in the rest of Ukraine that speak out against the war have been banned by parliament, attacked, kidnapped and often tortured.

But despite the invasion by 50,000 Ukrainian army troops, backed up by fascist militias the rebel areas have held out. The rebels were on the defensive but the tide turned as the army tried to take the big working class cities of Donetsk and Luhansk. As protests against the war and conscription spread across the country the Ukrainian conscript army began to disintegrate. Desertions and mutinies meant that the government was forced to rely on fanatical fascists

"We appeal to you, the workers of the European countries, asking for your help and solidarity: help us break the stronghold of fascism in Ukraine. This will be our common victory!"



who have committed many atrocities in their occupation of East Ukraine.

Faced with disaster, the Ukrainian government agreed to a truce arranged by Russia. Nevertheless fighting has continued.

The ceasefire will not be permanent as the capitalist Ukrainian state will not allow the existence of such a radicalised and profitable area under the control of popular militias from the mines and factories of the Donbas. Despite all the western rhetoric about Russia's support for the rebels it is clear that Putin is trying to reach a compromise with German, UK and US imperialism that would see the working class of the East abandoned in return for a guarantee that Ukraine does not join Nato. If the people of East Ukraine have to accept weapons from Putin's Russia to defend themselves then they should, but they should organise to ensure that they are not forced to become a tool of Russian imperialism. One thing is clear: the USA, the EU and Russia all agree that they do not want a powerful movement of armed workers who hate capitalists and are willing to take over their property.

The workers of East Ukraine need to make a common struggle with those in the West. By appealing to the ordinary people who are being conscripted, or whose family members are suffering from the economic crisis they should organise for all working class people to fight the fascists and kick out the government. The military victory of the rebels will be the common victory of all Ukrainian workers.

But the struggle is not limited to Ukraine as those in struggle say themselves: "We, the residents of Donbas, fight against all manifestations of Nazism and Fascism. We fight with weapons in hand, for our lives and the lives of our loved ones. We have nowhere to retreat - this is our land! We appeal to you, the workers of the European countries, asking for your help and solidarity: help us break the stronghold of fascism in Ukraine. This will be our common victory!"

What can we do about it?

The war in Ukraine is the biggest war in Europe since WW2 - yet the full horror has been almost completely ignored by the British media. Worse, many so-called 'socialist' organisations have abandoned the people of East Ukraine and denounced them as 'Russian fascists' or 'special forces'.

A campaign called Solidarity with Antifascist Resistance in Ukraine has been founded to counter the lies of the capitalist media and promote common struggle and solidarity between antifascists and socialists of all countries.

The campaign is backed by the RMT, Britain's transport workers' union. REVOLUTION backs this campaign because we think this is a question of decisive importance in the international conflict between rival imperialist states and alliances. We are on the side of the working class of Ukraine which is fighting to defend itself against a capitalist offensive supported by the EU, USA and Nato.

- **Victory to the antifascist defenders of Donetsk & Luhansk!**
- **Down with the capitalist-fascist government in Kiev**
- **Nato troops out of Ukraine & Eastern Europe**
- **Fight for a united, socialist Ukraine**

Stop the new war in Iraq

The USA has started bombing Iraq again to stop it losing control over the country and its oil. From the air, B52s are killing indiscriminately and on the ground the USA's Shia Muslim allies are carrying out 'reprisals' against ISIS – in reality massacres of civilians.

Origins of the war

In 2003 the USA and a coalition of western nations, launched a second invasion of Iraq. This was sold on the lie that Saddam held weapons of mass destruction and was intent on using them against the west, of course none were ever found. The imperialists were able to claim that the invasion was successful as Saddam's forces were defeated, he was executed and his state collapsed. However the occupying forces destroyed the state infrastructure and pursued a policy of divide and rule which saw the Sunni minority lose its formerly privileged position. Radical Islamic groups formed the basis of the legitimate resistance to the occupation.

The western forces eventually left Iraq over the coming decade, but they left a legacy of bloodshed and a working class divided along sectarian religious lines.

Regional politics were complicated by the occupation. The USA's allies like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, run by Sunni dictatorships, fear the power of Iran, a Shia state. As a counterbalance to the growing power of the Shia in Iraq they sponsored militant Sunni groups. This is the origin of ISIS.

SYRIA

Across the border in Syria in 2011 the first protests began against the corrupt dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad. The protesters were inspired by similar revolts in Egypt and Libya, all part of the 'Arab Spring'. However, after protesters were shot the protests developed into a civil war. The opposition is a mixture of religious and secular groups. Despite the use of chemical weapons and a more technologically advanced state military, the rebels have not been defeated. In areas under revolutionary control, Local Coordinating Committees were established to take over the functions of the discredited former state apparatus.



From the beginning the revolution included small groups of radical Islamist groups, backed by regional powers like Turkey and Saudi Arabia, who oppose the Syrian regime because it is an ally of Iran.

The extremist Islamist forces, include the Al-Nusra Front (the official Al-Qaeda affiliate) and ISIS.

ISIS intends to establish an 'Islamic Caliphate' under Sharia law across Iraq and Syria. ISIS is the enemy of all progressive and working class people. Areas under their rule witness the suppression of democracy and attacks on the rights of women, religious and ethnic minorities and LGBT people.

The secular and moderate Syrian revolutionaries went to great effort to force ISIS out of Syria last year, but their return has been made possible by the fact that the Syrian government is buying oil from ISIS in return for a non-aggression pact.

WHAT SOCIALISTS SAY

ISIS represent an ultra-conservative strand - that exists within all religions - which uses Islamic scripture to justify their violence (that scripture justifies the killing of apostates). Muslim communities across the globe have spoken out against ISIS but the war against 'barbaric' ISIS to defend Christian minorities, Yazidis etc. and prevent terrorism at home, will inevitably produce racism and Islamophobia.

We are against ISIS and its crimes, but we are also against imperialist wars that the west wage against third world nations, destroying communities and economies and

keeping the people poor and thus exploitable all in order to open new markets for capitalist business. When the western armies marched into Iraq in 2003 they were followed by business executives looking for new workers to put in sweatshops, oilfields and factories.

We see no difference in the brutality of ISIS beheading aid workers and the brutality of the US siege of Fallujah which sees children continue to be born with serious deformities due to the weaponised uranium that has poisoned the city.

A JUST WAR?

We oppose the new war in Iraq because it is a war by an imperialist country whose direct objective is the continued subjugation of Iraq to western imperialism. Its indirect objectives are to secure the cooperation of the Assad regime and to counter Russian imperialism's influence.

One clear consequence of western airstrikes and the inevitable civilian casualties, which have been denounced as ineffective by Syrian revolutionaries, will be to increase the anger of ordinary people against the west and encourage them to turn to the radical "anti-imperialist" Islamist forces.

Instead we support the progressive struggle of the Kurdish forces fighting for self-determination and those forces in Syria who remain committed to the struggle for democracy. These groups have a formidable enemy in ISIS, but the USA and Nato are only posing as their friends while they get them to do the fighting on the ground.

The key to the defeat of ISIS and other anti-working class, reactionary forces lies in the victory of the Syrian revolution.

For this to happen it will be necessary for the Syrian revolution to do two things:

1. accept weapons and aid from the imperialist countries whilst maintaining their political independence, by distributing arms amongst the people and organizing workers' democracy and control over society.
2. Recognizing the rights of the Kurds to a homeland of their own in northern Syria if they wish it, whilst appealing to them to remain part of a voluntary federation to maximize their common resources. **BY JOSH & KD**

GIGBT film review

PRIDE: Lesbians, Gays & the Great Miners' Strike

Pride is an entertaining, powerful and all round enjoyable film. It comes with a powerful lesson that any obstacle and divisions can be overcome by working class solidarity. The true story is set in 1984 and follows the group Gays and Lesbians Support the Miners.

The year is 1984, Thatcher rules Britain, she has 12,000 police mobilised at any one time to occupy coalfields and try to break the back of the miners' - Britain's best organised and most militant workers. But these are not the only people who suffer from the police. The LGBT community is heavily repressed too, homophobia is rampant and this unfortunately even permeates to radicals like those fighting for jobs and livelihoods in the isolated mining communities in

RITZY VICTORY!

Cinema workers at the Ritzy in Brixton joined a union to fight for the London Living Wage - £8.80/hour. After several strikes and a nationwide solidarity campaign, workers have settled for less but won a big increase. This shows that getting organised and fighting back works. The bosses have got the money - it's our wages or their profits!

places like the valleys of South Wales and Yorkshire. The police use this society wide discrimination to persecute the LGBT community further.

It is in these circumstances that a group of gay and lesbian activists, many of them socialists, organise a support group for a mining community (picked at random from the phone book!). They rightly see that the miners face police repression just like they do, that the miners are hated by the Tories and the fascists as much as they are, to put it simply they recognise that the miners' fight is their fight and that the working class, black and white, men and women, gay and straight are stronger together.

The film follows a tremendous transformation as gay and les-

bian activists have to overcome homophobia in their attempt to support working class struggle. Hilarious scenes occur throughout as mining families have to step out of their comfort zone only to realise all the rumours they have heard are not true (not all lesbians are vegetarians apparently!). The mining communities themselves are changed forever as radical class struggle breaks down the barriers that capitalism tries to put up to divide and weaken the working class. At first those involved feel they could not be more different and yet through practical solidarity and the experience of bitter struggle against the real, common enemy they recognise that class binds them together above all else and in each other they can find powerful allies in struggle and caring friends for life.

BY CHRIS

The Fight Against Homophobia

Lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgender people face systematic oppression in our society, with discrimination, harassment, even violence, coming at them from every direction - the police and the courts, school and work, in pubs and on the streets.

Lesbians and gay men are denied fair treatment in housing allocation - "families come first". We are denied custody of our children with lesbian mothers often having to fight in divorce courts to prove their "adequacy" to raise children.

We're often forced to hide our sexuality in the workplace for fear of being fired, demoted, or the target of abuse, and we have no rights against this discrimination. The few businesses with equal opportunity policies usually don't extend them completely to us, much less count our partners as they would heterosexual spouses. As for violence, a recent study showed that a third of gay men and a quarter of lesbians have experienced violence in the last five years as a result of their sexuality.

Think about it. Is it really too much to ask that people should be able to live their lives as they want to? Lots of people are bigoted, but this is because the system promotes this

schools, media, and especially the "decent" women don't have sexuality so churches. But there is a much smaller, more specific category of people who ultimately are behind this system of bigotry, the capitalist class. The struggle for gay liberation is a threat to them and their whole rotten economic system.

Now you're wondering what economics has to do with gay and lesbian oppression. REVOLUTION believes that it hasn't just got something to do with it, but that the economic system actually generates this form of oppression. How?

Contrary to popular myth, gay oppression has not always existed. In ancient Greece, for example, male homosexuality was not seen as "unnatural" but actually glorified by poets and philosophers and widely accepted throughout society. There were no categories, no hetero-versus homosexual. Because of male dominance gay love was looked upon as a higher form of love than hetero-love.

The middle ages saw the rise of Christianity and a highly homophobic society, but one where being gay or lesbian was no different from any other "evil" and so didn't receive special sanctions. Lesbianism in fact was not believed to exist, since the Christian fathers argued that

Capitalism and the nuclear family

It was only with the rise of Capitalism and its family unit that the systematic oppression of gays and lesbians began.

In the patriarchal family of the middle ages, with a father at the head of a household made up of his brothers, their wives, i.e. the whole extended family, the family was a unit of production (peasants and farming). Under capitalism, the family changed its form. Without land to work, the man went out of the house to earn a wage working for a boss, while the woman became responsible for raising children, cooking, etc. In other words reproducing the next generation of workers or looking after her husband, and all free of charge for the capitalist. (Women actually often had a job on top of their family duties, the double burden.)

The capitalists rely on the next generation being raised, but they don't want to pay for it - creches, child income support, the whole lot. So capitalism relies on the hetero-family with its sexual division of labour between man and woman, and this was then institutionalised as Hetero-love and marriage was

labeled "natural". Anything that differed from this was deemed unnatural.

The categorisation of homosexual and heterosexual appeared, and legal penalties were imposed on gay men. A gay subculture came into existence alongside capitalism in Britain (the "mollies"). Famous group trials of gays took place in 1699, 1701 and 1720 where the punishment for being "abnormal" was hard labour in prison or the death penalty.

Gays and lesbians fall outside the capitalist "family" and its reproductive needs. To maintain the family, it needs to be argued for, and alternatives, such as homosexuality, fought against and policed (literally, as the police constantly harass gay cruisers in parks or baths, alongside the whole set of discriminatory laws, such as age of consent laws). So it's not just ideas in the heads of backward individuals, its wired into the system.

While REVOLUTION accepts gays and lesbians of all classes suffer discrimination, we want to build a working class liberation movement. Gays and lesbians from the capitalist class are able to cushion many of the discriminations they may face. For example in housing or jobs. They have no interest in overthrowing capitalism because they have a stake in it.

We believe sexual freedom can only arise with the total emancipation of society from all the economic and ideological chains of capitalism. i.e a revolution. And it is only the working class as a whole of all races, ages, genders, and sexualities that have an interest in and can overthrow the system.

WHAT REVOLUTION SAYS

- **No to discrimination based on sexuality!** for the right to take any job, give blood, marry, etc.
- **LGBT Education in schools** schools should provide open and honest education on the issues that LGBT people face, including sex education and anti-homophobia
- **Organise against Homophobic attacks** The police are a deeply homophobic institution. Many LGBT people have no trust in them - we need to organise to defend ourselves

'SLUT SHAMING' in US High Schools

Dress codes in American high schools have hit the news after the treatment of young women has come under attack by students, teachers and parents.

15-year-old Miranda Larkin - a new student at Oakleaf, Florida - was told that her skirt was too short and that she had to wear a neon-yellow t-shirt and red trousers with the words "dress code violation" emblazoned on them. She called her mum and left the school rather than endure the humiliation of attending lessons in what her mum termed the "shame suit".

"This is harmful practice and it doesn't teach anything," Dianna Larkin told ABC News. "It doesn't have any intrinsic educational value."

Humiliating a young woman by forcing her to wear a neon t-shirt is a disgusting practice that must be stopped.

Students and parents forced the School Board of Noble in Oklahoma to sack their new Superintendent, Rhonda Barrett "Mamma Bear" Bass, for her abusive treatment of young women. She addressed an assembly on the question of dress code and asked "Have y'all seen any skanks around this school?" She later told a KFOR TV reporter that she wanted the female students known as "classy lady bears" rather than "skanks".


Bass denied using the word "skanks" in assembly but was sacked after a petition gained 800 signatures. Before her dismissal, Bass posted the following message on the school website:

"Over the past few years, numerous parents, community members, teachers, administrators, and board members have expressed concern that the culture of our high school students has become too permissive with the dress code. While students will always try to push boundaries, many believe, including myself and the high school administrators, that the boundaries of what is proper attire for the learning environment has been pushed to the point it is disruptive to teaching and learning..."

The whole idea that women should dress more conservatively because otherwise we are "disruptive" or "distracting" is inherently sexist. That a man is distracted by a woman's attire is not her fault. Instead the fault lies in how boys are socialised to view women, to objectify them, and this needs to be addressed through education in schools about treating women with respect and combatting the objectification of women in media as well as everyday life.

There are enormous pressures on women - young women in particular - to look attractive to their peers and conform to media-fuelled standards of beauty. This sexist treatment of women in wider society cannot be fought without first addressing the issue of sexism in schools.

BY REBECCA



Equal Pay for Equal Work!
sack bosses who exploit women

Zero tolerance for Sexism!
fight misogyny everywhere

Our bodies - our choice!
free access to abortion on demand.
for contraception & sex ed. in all schools

Stop violence against women
massive investment in women's
refuges and women's centres.
Occupy to stop cuts & closures

Free childcare for all!
fund childcare & nurseries for all
by taxing the rich

WHAT
REVOLUTION
socialist youth movement
SAYS

E15 Mums take direct action to protest homelessness

Eight young mothers and a group of protesters have occupied a London housing estate that stands empty and is earmarked for demolition.

Newham council has 14,000 people on its Council Housing waiting list whilst 600 homes lie empty. The Council wants to demolish the Carpenters Estate, which is occupied by the E15 campaign, and sell the land off to private developers.

Councils across London are running the same sort of money-making schemes. In one case, a council has moved thousands of people out of an estate near Elephant and Castle so they can demolish it and replace it with yuppie flats and a mere seventy-nine council homes.

The E-15 occupation of the Carpenters Estate is an inspiration and people in all situations - living in hostels, on friends' sofas, with their parents, or on the streets - could organise to follow their example.

BY REBECCA

COMMUNISM isn't dead.

The word conjures up images of a grey world in which everyone is the same, where queues form for everyday goods, no-one can speak their mind for fear of the secret police, and everyone wears boring clothes. It is an image of uniformity, repression and sterility. Since the collapse of the Eastern European states in 1989, the word communism has carried with it another, even more negative, image – the image of failure. But for us, communism means something different. It means fighting the deep-seated injustices of the system we live under today, siding with working class people all around the world when they fight for a better life, and pointing the way forward to a future free from poverty, oppression and war.

We live under the capitalist system. A handful of multi-billionaires own the majority of the world's wealth. While enough food is produced to feed the entire world, farmers are paid to destroy food that cannot be sold at a profit and millions of people go hungry. Every year tens of thousands of us leave school and go straight onto the dole or onto rip-off "training schemes" that have no jobs at the end of them. We are told there is not enough work to go round, but there are homes and hospitals to be built, education and transport systems to be improved, a million and one things that people could be doing to improve life for all of us. Whole countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are held in backwardness, not because these countries have less natural wealth than Europe, Japan or America, but because every decision that is made about what to produce and how to produce it is controlled by the powerful Western banks and companies. All they want is to make huge profits, at the expense of the needs of the vast majority.

Communism is a criticism of the chaos and inhumanity of the capitalist system – but it goes further than that. Some people only want to dream of a better existence. For them there are a multitude of religions, every one of them preaching obedience to authority in the here and now in return for the worst deal ever offered – eternal bliss once you're six feet under. Communists make no such childish promises. Our answer is not to wait but to fight back now.

Communists believe that the most important thing dividing humanity is not race, nationality, sex or religion, it is class. Alongside the tiny handful of profiteers stands the working class. A billion strong and growing, with 100s of millions of industrial workers at its core, the world working class is made up of people with no stake in the capitalist system. While the capitalists own factories, plant, machinery, huge blocks of shares and money to invest all over the world at the touch of a button, the working class have nothing besides a handful of hard earned possessions and the ability to work. Our work produces everything, all the wealth on the planet, but it is owned and controlled by the capitalists.

From the struggle of black workers in South Africa through to the mass campaign against the Poll Tax in Britain, it has been the working class that has come to the fore in the fight against exploitation and oppression. Out of its struggles the working class has pointed the way forward to a new type of society – in which production can be planned to meet real needs, in which all the work that needs to be done can be divided up between the millions of people available to do it.

Many people say communism is undemocratic. But look at the excuse for democracy that exists in this country today. We get the chance to put a cross on a piece of paper every five years, but all the real decisions are made for us by company directors, civil servants, judges, police and military chiefs that no-one ever elected and who come from the families of the rich and powerful.

The struggles of the working class throughout history show that there is a better way, a type of democracy that really puts people in control of their lives. Time and again, workers have formed their own democratic councils, which draw in delegates from the factories, the workplaces, the estates and the unions and which elect representatives who can be replaced at any time, who are accountable to the people they are supposed to be fighting for. It was workers' councils of this type that formed the backbone of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

In the early days of the revolution, the Russian working class had more real control, more power over their own lives than any other people in history. They used it to abolish the profit system and plan the economy for the good of the people.

That is what communists are fighting for today. If the working class was in power, then all the inequalities of capitalist society could be gradually overcome. Instead of being used to throw more workers onto the dole, new machinery could be used to ease the burden of work, shortening the working week. Organising work for need rather than profit would enable jobs that are currently done in the home, such as educating children of pre-school age, doing the washing, cooking and so on, to be carried out in decent nurseries, laundries and restaurants, freeing women from the burden of doing the housework.

This would not be a grey, lifeless society, but one in which real democratic control would bring with it a riot of debate and discussion about the sort of world we want to build. We would have more time for leisure, more variety, more culture, more education, and more freedom. Instead of the vast organisations of state repression that the capitalist minority have to maintain to keep the working class majority in our place, a working class state would need no secret bureaucracy or permanent army set up against the people. For as long as the minority of capitalists still existed and fought to get back control, they could be resisted by the armed majority, organised on democratic lines. But without their private property, the capitalist class would eventually wither away, allowing all the tasks of the new working class state to be taken over by society as a whole.

That is our goal – a communist society without classes, private property or a state. It is possible because capitalism has made it possible by developing industries that can produce enough for all, and alongside it developing the working class, which can organise a new system under which all can enjoy what is produced. It is necessary because capitalism has made it necessary, by reducing the majority of humanity to poverty and desperation.

Communism is possible and is necessary, but it is not inevitable. There are tremendous obstacles to it. The first is the state apparatus. The police and army will be used against any serious attempt to get rid of the profit system. That is what they are there for. In Chile in 1973 the Socialist Party tried to change society along socialist lines through carrying out new laws in parliament. The army soon showed where the real power lies under capitalism, by overthrowing the elected government and murdering tens of thousands of the most determined workers.

That is why communists are revolutionaries. We know that all history shows the need for the workers to smash the capitalists' army, police and bureaucracy through a violent uprising. In their place we want government to be based on workers' councils and the armed working class.

There is another obstacle to communism. It is the nation state. No one country can hope to produce enough for its people by itself. The world economy is international. The Russian Revolution failed in the end because it did not spread to other countries in time. They had to trade and do deals with the West, and a layer of bureaucrats developed who grew rich and powerful from their position as middlemen. These parasites – the Stalinists – abandoned the idea of world revolution and claimed it would be possible to build communism in one country. They smashed the workers' organisations, abolished working class democracy, scrapped rights for women, national minorities, lesbians and gays. They threw real communists like Leon Trotsky out of the Communist Party and murdered them in their thousands. They tried to plan the economy without allowing the mass of the people any say in what should be produced, and they produced low quality goods and a drab existence for the masses. They have ended up restoring capitalism to Russia, with all the mass unemployment, crime, nationalism and despair that it brings with it.

The *Independent on Sunday* got it right in an "expose" of REVOLUTION's involvement in organising the protests on International Workers' Day (May 1) 2001. They said:

"REVOLUTION wants to build a revolutionary socialist mass movement and overthrow capitalism."

Exactly right. We are opposed to capitalism and the misery, alienation, war and environmental destruction it creates.

We fight all forms of discrimination and oppression, whether on grounds of sex, race, nationality or sexuality.

Capitalism is a global system so we have to fight it globally. We want to smash the artificial borders and divisions of nations and move forward to a genuinely global and united humanity, without prejudice, war and class division. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our sisters and brothers in the colonised 'Third World' struggling to break free from the shackles of the IMF, WTO and NATO, and with the working class in the advanced imperialist countries resisting the imposition of austerity which aims to make ordinary people pay the cost of a crisis we didn't create.

We are socialists – we believe the only future for humanity lies in the abolition of capitalism and its replacement with an economy planned to meet the needs of the millions, not the millionaires. But we do not believe that the capitalist elite will allow their wealth and privilege to be voted out of existence. We believe it will take force to take the power and property away from the few and redistribute it to the many – that means a revolution.

REVOLUTION wants young people to participate in radical politics and organise themselves. Young people are often the most radical and willing to throw themselves into the front of the struggle for social change – the anti-war movement, the revolutionary struggles in the Middle East and 150 years of socialist struggles prove that.

We believe a mass movement must be built and based on the support of the majority of the people – the working class. It is the working class that produces all the wealth in this society. The working class has no interest in keeping capitalism going. Only the working class has the power, the interest and the tradition of organisation to bring this rotten system crashing down.

The youth should take a lead in the movement that will shape the future.

The youth are the future, the future belongs to the youth – and the future is socialism!

If you agree, then join us
[@socialistrevolution.org/join](http://socialistrevolution.org/join)