

Socialist Equality Party (UK) launches council election campaign

6 April 2011

The Socialist Equality Party (UK) is standing candidates in local authority elections in Sheffield and Manchester to be held May 5. Simon Walker is standing in the Walkley ward of Sheffield, and Robert Skelton in the Ardwick ward of Manchester. The following statement by the SEP calling for support for our candidates will be distributed in the campaign.

Vote Socialist Equality Party

- * No cuts in pay, jobs and services
- * End the wars in Libya and Afghanistan
- * Build international workers unity
- * For a new socialist party

The Socialist Equality Party opposes all cuts in jobs, wages, public spending and welfare. We defend working people against the attacks of big business and its parties—Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Labour.

The claim by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition that there is no alternative to its £100 billion programme of cuts is a lie. Working people are being made to pay for Labour's £1 trillion bailout of the banks, whose criminal actions brought the world economy to the brink of meltdown. Like its counterparts across Europe, the government is using the threat of state bankruptcy to shift class relations decisively in favour of the rich.

For the vast majority, there is to be more unemployment, falling wages, worsening working conditions and the running down and privatisation of health, education and other social services.

Meanwhile, the bankers continue to draw millions in bonuses; corporation tax and the top rate of income tax are to be slashed. And, when it comes to waging yet another war for oil, hundreds of millions of pounds can be found to fund the onslaught against Libya.

The humanitarian posturing used to justify this war

by parties that have left a trail of devastation in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are now unleashing the economic equivalent of “shock and awe” in Britain, should be treated with contempt.

The uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt and throughout the region were only the start of an emerging global opposition to regimes that act solely in the interests of the super rich. The mood among workers in Britain is no less angry or combative. But here too workers confront the same problems of leadership and organisation.

The political system in the UK is just as unresponsive to the needs of working people as those in Tunis or Cairo. All the official parties in Britain function as the instruments of a corrupt oligarchy.

Working people need their own answer to the crisis and their own socialist leadership.

Labour agrees with the government that cuts are necessary, and in the local authorities it controls, is pushing through job losses, wage and spending cuts.

The trade unions have not organised any significant opposition to the attacks on working people, nor will they. All that concerns the union leaders is preserving their lucrative relations with government and the major corporations.

The worsening economic situation cannot be remedied by accepting sacrifices in the short term to bring about a “recovery”. It is a fundamental crisis of the capitalist profit system that—just as in the 1930s—threatens millions with unemployment, poverty and war.

The Socialist Equality Party calls for the formation of rank-and-file committees, independent of the trade union apparatus, in every workplace and community. They must be at the centre of an independent movement of the working class to bring down the coalition government and replace it with a workers'

government committed to socialist policies.

Only the reorganising of economic life to meet social needs, not private profit, can put an end to war and guarantee secure jobs, decent living standards, education, health care and a future for young people.

What we stand for:

The international unity of the working class

Workers must reject all forms of racism and nationalism and link their struggles with workers in Europe and throughout the world.

An end to militarism and war

Stop the war in Libya. Withdraw all British military personnel from Afghanistan, Iraq and wherever they are stationed.

Defend democratic rights

The anti-terror legislation and other measures that have curtailed individual liberties must be rescinded. End all anti-trade union and anti-strike legislation.

Social ownership of the banks and major corporations

Cancel all debts to the international finance institutions, and transform the banks and major corporations into publicly owned and democratically controlled utilities.

Redistribute the nation's wealth

Wealth must be taken off the billionaires and used to provide basic social needs.

An emergency public works programme

A major programme of public works must be undertaken to end unemployment and provide decent paying jobs, free and high quality health, housing, education and social services.

Who we are:

The Socialist Equality Party is the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). We stand in the tradition of the most courageous and farsighted representatives of the international working class, who dedicated themselves to the struggle for socialism against all forms of nationalism and political opportunism.

Our party has its origins in the struggle of the Left Opposition, led by Leon Trotsky, in defence of the perspective of world socialist revolution against the monstrous Stalinist bureaucracy that arose in the Soviet Union. The ICFI continues the work of the Fourth International, which Trotsky founded in 1938.

Together with our sister parties in Europe, North America, Australia and Asia we work to establish the international unity and socialist reorientation of the working class through the daily news and analysis provided by the World Socialist Web Site—wsws.org

We urge all those who support this programme to take part in our election campaign, vote for our candidates and join the Socialist Equality Party.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact