

“We’re the one’s who are suffering—the poor, the working class”

Our reporters
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The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to some of the workers attending the Trades Union Congress demonstration in London.

Asked why she was attending, **June**, a social worker said, “We are here today because we don’t believe in the economic measures that [Prime Minister David] Cameron is taking. There’s millions of youngsters unemployed, they want to attack our pensions and teachers’ pensions, and the austerity measures aren’t working. I’m a senior social worker. I’m losing £200 a month due to the changes that Cameron has forced on the county council. And I’m a single mum as well.”

Sheila said, “I’m in adult day care and I have lost £200 a month as well I’ve not had a pay rise. I live alone and whereas others get help, those on their own don’t get anything. We don’t feel valued and are over worked. They’re taking from the poor and the rich are well off.”

Lorraine said, “They say we’re all in it together and we’re not. We’re the one’s who are suffering—the poor, the working class—and the rich are just milking it for all they can get. I’m earning under £17,000. I haven’t had a pay rise in three years and I’m very angry. I’m an admin worker for local government. I don’t feel that I’m lucky to have a job. It’s not fair not to have a pay rise and I’m totally against what they’re doing.”

Jane, a health worker from Manchester, said, “There are cuts in the mental health trust that have led to caseloads increasing by 20 percent. They are closing hospital accident and emergency departments and we know the next step then is to close entire hospitals. Seven district general hospitals are under threat of having their A&E closed.

“It has gotten really bad in Manchester with mental health. At one time recently there were 11 people in out

of area beds, as there were no places for them. They were sent to beds in Doncaster, in Harrogate. Last week we had to send someone to a bed in Ealing in London. It’s scary what is going on.

“I think there should be a general strike. Then people can all bring these struggles together. Until this government goes, there won’t be any improvement. What is going on now is sending people back to how it was in the Victorian times.

“We are aware that whatever government we get out of the three parties we have in this country, we are going to have to continue to fight. It has to continue for the most vulnerable workers who are being really hit.”

Amelia works for the Department for Work and Pensions in London. She said, “We are having wage freezes, wage cuts, cuts in pensions and cuts in all our conditions. In the DWP, some offices are being closed, staff are not being replaced. We have already protested against this.

“Instead of attacking us, they should be taxing those who don’t pay tax—the rich who find legal ways to avoid tax. You have people on basic wages who are being hit instead. Look at fuel and food prices. Everything is going up and our wages are going down. I’ve had a pay freeze for about five years already. I had a one percent rise this year, but now because of my pension payment increase that has been wiped out already.

“When I joined the department it was on certain terms and conditions. Now there is a free-for-all going on and they are just wiping everything out. Even though we may want to retire, we can’t afford to. Now my colleagues have to work till they are 68, which is a ridiculous age to retire at.”

Dave added, “There is now a proposal for DWP staff

in London to work an extra hour every week. Historically, all London DWP staff have worked a 36-hour-week and the rest of the country a 37-hour week and that has been the case for about 40 years”.



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