

SEP election teams speak to workers in London, Glasgow: “Revolution is the only way we are going to change things.”

Our reporters
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Socialist Equality Party campaigners in Glasgow Central and in Holborn and St. Pancras, London, have spoken to hundreds of workers and young people about the issues raised by next month’s General Election in the UK. The SEP is standing Katie Rhodes in Glasgow and David O’Sullivan in London.

In Glasgow, Andy Shields, a retired public-sector worker, said of the Scottish Socialist Party, Solidarity Scotland and similar pseudo-left organizations, “What kind of socialists throw their weight behind nationalism?”

Last autumn’s referendum on independence for Scotland, which ended in a majority “No” vote, “caused nothing but division,” Shields said. He continued, “In Glasgow, the vote went ‘Yes’ and for me that was totally based on disaffection against the Labour Party, who have abandoned the working class. It’s going to be harder [for Labour] to get the working class votes in this election.”

Andy came to Glasgow city centre last Saturday to support what he thought to be a Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament march against retaining the Trident submarine nuclear missile system, “but the nationalists stole it,” he said. “I couldn’t believe the number of Saltires and ‘Yes’ banners. I didn’t want to be associated with that lot.”

On the threat of war, Andy said, “The Americans are the biggest single threat on the planet. I watched [Secretary of State John] Kerry doing an interview the other week. He sees the USA as the new Roman Empire. It’s frightening. Its industrial hegemony no longer exists, so it’s looking to dominate by bloodying everyone’s nose. The danger is they are such dunderheads, they are dangerous.”

Outside Caledonian University, Kayleigh, a political science student, said, “I got your manifesto yesterday. I went onto the web site [wsws.org] and I agree one hundred percent with you that the Scottish National Party (SNP) is a right-wing party.”

Dania, at Glasgow University, was particularly concerned with the debt crisis and, after hearing about the International May Day Meeting bought three tickets.

Laune, a political science student, after taking a manifesto, came back. After a discussion, he said, “I am against the SNP because I am a socialist, which means I guess I am an internationalist.”

A young council worker said he had “looked at the Scottish Socialist Party.” He continued, “Their ideas don’t make sense. I am strongly against independence. I’ve been looking for a socialist party and it looks like I have found it in the SEP.”

Ewan said, “I did vote yes in the [independence] referendum, but I’m becoming more attracted to internationalism.”

SEP candidate for Glasgow Central, Kate Rhodes, spoke to Davie, a postal worker and trade union rep in Royal Mail. He said of Solidarity Scotland leader Tommy Sheridan’s call for a vote for the SNP, “Tommy Sheridan isn’t a socialist anymore, he is just looking for a cushy job in the Scottish government.”

On the SEP manifesto’s opposition to war, Davie said, “I am worried about the future, but how do you get young people to see how serious things are and go from where we are now to revolution?”

Lews, an unemployed catering worker, said, “At the moment I don’t know who to vote for, but I do know the SNP and Greens are useless. I agree we need a new

party.”

Christina, from Ireland, has been in Britain for over 30 years. She told the team, “I have voted Labour all my time over here, but they aren’t for the working class. I’m going to read your manifesto and then send it to my daughter, who studies at Dundee University.”

Speaking to SEP campaigners in Kentish Town, London, Joe, a student, explained, “ Growing inequality is a huge problem. More needs to be done to protect the rights of the workers and to ensure they are paid fairly, treated fairly, not abused by the employers and paid more than the minimum wage.

“The minimum wage is currently not enough to live on. We see rents rising. Many people are struggling to survive, even if they work as hard as they can.

“The politicians always talk about opportunity, but many people don’t have an opportunity. The system does not allow them to thrive and prosper. Poor people live in horrible conditions, despite working as hard as they can.

“I do not know what weapons a third world war will be fought with, but it will be a massive disaster for mankind. We saw how things escalated in Ukraine. It spirals out of control sometimes. It is a real danger to our civilization.

“I think intrusion of our privacy by GCHQ, MI5 and MI6 is completely unwarranted and against our personal rights. We live in a society where everything you write or say online is monitored without any consent.”

Unemployed Kaylee said she would not be voting for anyone at the election:

“Me and my mates don’t believe any of the promises they make. They don’t understand what real life is like for people like me. If I can get a job, the money is bad. They make you work all the hours possible in a day and then fire you when they feel like it. It then takes ages getting benefits and somehow you have to keep paying the rent. I’ve had enough and so have my friends. I think a lot of people have.

“When I first saw you I thought you were just like the rest, but when you started talking about revolution, you got my attention. Revolution is what we need. That is the only way we are going to change things.

“You are right about the danger of another world war and how any small incident could spark it off. There was a lot about the war in Ukraine last year, but you

don’t hear anything about it now. I suppose they are trying to keep it quiet before the election.

“I hate political parties, but I suppose you are right that only a new party that looks after the working class can organise a revolution. I will try and come to your meeting on May Day and tell my friends about it. I guess I ought to stand up and start doing something.”

John, a retired teacher, explained, “I always voted Labour until the election before last. It was not socialist.

“I became very disillusioned with the party when it introduced tuition fees and austerity and kept waging war. The Middle East is up in arms because of Britain and Europe and their former imperialist control. We shouldn’t be messing in other peoples’ countries.

“It was the same with the unions. I am a retired member of the University and College Union, but the sell-out of the pensions dispute was appalling. The pension is a pay-off for the years of hard graft that teachers do. It is much harder work being a teacher than most people think.”



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