

Workers in Britain speak on May Day rally

Our reporters
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Audiences in Glasgow and London listened to a live broadcast of the International May Day online rally, organised through the *World Socialist Web Site*, organ of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The rally was at the centre of the campaign waged by the Socialist Equality Party in Britain for the general election on May 7. In Glasgow, SEP candidate for Glasgow Central, Katie Rhodes, made introductory remarks, while David O'Sullivan, SEP candidate for Holborn and St. Pancras, did the same at Camden.

Shahid Baloch met the campaign team on Argyle Street. He is a community worker for the Balochistan Culture Society and a part-time chef studying for a master degree in Social Sciences. He said, "I was really interested in the report about China. I have always disagreed with those who say China is a socialist country. In actual fact it is not for equality. China is oppressing lots of countries in South Asia. I want to see equal rights for all workers in the world. Your party's analysis is spot on. The so-called war on terror is being used as a tool to justify wars throughout the Middle East and now in Russia and China.

"Julie Hyland noted the comments of *Sun* columnist Katie Hopkins on the drowning of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea, which were disgusting. US imperialism started the wars which are now leading to people fleeing to safety by any means possible and dying in their thousands doing so."

Ash is a food scientist who met the SEP on a campaign in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. He purchased David North's *The Russian Revolution and the Unfinished 20th Century* and has helped out with the election campaign. "It's good to hear David North speaking," he said. "It's good to feel that there are others out there internationally who feel the same way as I do."

"I was particularly interested in hearing the ICFI's

view of immigrants and refugees," Ash added. "Julie Hyland's speech really impacted me the most. She explained the reasons why immigrants have to travel because of oppression and extreme poverty in their countries and why workers are being displaced. It is because of the capitalist profit system not meeting the basic necessities of life in various countries around the world. We only hear about the hundreds who die, not the thousands and thousands who make these perilous journeys on a daily basis.

"I also learnt about the Egyptian Revolution from Johannes Stern and how that revolution failed because capitalism was able to stabilize itself due to lack of revolutionary leadership."

David, a tree surgeon from Paisley, said, "It was a powerful experience to witness and be part of the May Day rally. To hear such conscious leaders from across the world lay out the current global objective situation reflects the need for an international movement of workers to overthrow capitalism and lay the path for change towards a fair and peaceful society, based on human need and not profit, where mankind can flourish."

Emma is 17 years old and originally from Aberdeen. She lives in Glasgow and is looking for her first job. "In school we were taught that capitalism was the only system that worked and you couldn't question it," she said. "I never believed this and I started to look for explanations of other systems. This is when I came across George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and some writings on anarchism.

"I felt closer to the idea of socialism. I've been looking for an alternative party to the main parties because I don't see any difference in them in this election and think there will be no difference whoever is elected. When I met your party it felt good that someone thinks the same way as I do.

"Peter Schwarz's speech was very interesting,

especially when he spoke of the Second World War and how they said it will never happen again. The propaganda against Muslims, refugees and African Americans being killed by the police in Baltimore are all indications to me that a World War can and will happen again. From what I learnt at the rally, I believe your party represents what I think and believe.”

In London, John, a former Camden council worker, said, “All the speeches were remarkable, really informative and inspiring. I follow world politics and when the US sent all those troops to Australia it was a sign of growing American antagonism towards China. I believe myself there is a threat of a Third World War.”

Shirin is from Iran and lives in London. She said, “When I got home I told my daughter that the meeting was fantastic. At last, I have heard a political party that tells the truth about what is happening in the world, which is always concealed. It was time well spent.

“It was true, what Julie Hyland said about the migrants that lost their lives at sea. The imperialist powers went into the Middle East, ruined their societies, caused chaos, and now they, the cause of their misfortunes, are turning them away from Europe and leaving them to drown in the Mediterranean.

“I will certainly vote for the SEP and I have been telling my daughter and my friends to do likewise. I have been challenging the political views and statements of my friends.”

Alice is a student at the University College London who has applied to join the SEP. She said, “I think the May Day meeting was a very important occasion to set out our message to people around the world. It explained a socialist worldview. I think it’s incredible that we managed to speak to people in 60 countries.

“I was particularly impressed by Julie Hyland. She explained that the problems in the Mediterranean with immigrants who are drowning is happening because governments are giving authorisations just to let people drown, rather than to help them.

“I liked the speech by Tom from New Zealand about the US ‘pivot to Asia’ and what this actually means. It’s a war against China, it’s about encircling China. They are trying to dominate the Pacific, to dominate Asia, trying to get global hegemony. It’s a massive threat of global war.

“It’s against Russia as well. Nobody else seems to address that as an issue and it’s threatening the future

of humanity. You can see the parallel between what’s going on now and what was going on before the First World War and the Second World War.”

Alisha is a Sri Lankan student from Bournemouth. She said, “I thought it was all really interesting and informative. I really liked Julie Hyland’s speech and it made quite an impact because she was talking about the immigrants from North Africa who had recently drowned in the Mediterranean.

“I really liked the last speaker, Joe Kishore. It made me think about all the propaganda that is promoted. In our school everyone says they are really proud of the army.”

Constantin Antid explained, “I come from Romania and I have been reading wsws.org for almost two years now. As soon as I read some articles that offered a critique of psychoanalysis and the Frankfurt School, I knew I came across something big. The site became my main source of news. Before that, I was prey to all sorts of pseudo-left ideas.

“I also became aware of the importance of learning more about the Soviet Union and, implicitly, the supposed ‘communist past’ of my own country. The search for historical truth laid bare the old prejudices, distortions and lies. I hope the web site will make more and more people aware of the necessity of a world socialist revolution. This May Day rally is a great way of showing that people around the world share this idea, no matter the nationality. It is a wonderful feeling to be part of this community.”



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