

Grenfell Tower residents warn: “People have had enough”

Our reporters
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The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to residents about the fire that gutted Grenfell Tower early Wednesday morning.

Two young occupants, Siar and Mansoor, who were waiting outside police cordons, said, with tears in their eyes, that they lived on the 3rd floor and their uncle and his family lived on the 23rd floor.

Siar described the horrific ordeal they had just suffered, saying, “We were not asleep because we were eating after the Ramadan day fast. That is what saved us. Had we been sleeping we would not have been woken by any fire alarms. The building had none, nor fire sprinklers nor emergency lighting in the corridors showing the way out.

“In the corridors and the stairwell it was pitch black with smoke. The emergency services came up and isolated the building, preventing the surviving residents from helping those trapped inside. Police said that it was all under control.

“My uncle on the 23rd floor was ordered to stay indoors by the emergency services. We don't have any news of him. His wife and son were dragged out of the building and are now in a coma in hospital.

“My uncle and most residents had requested for alarms to be installed in the building. To no avail. Lately the Labour Party campaigned on the promise of installing better safety systems. They said ‘Vote for us and wait until after the election’.

“Up to 800 people lived in the building. We expect the death toll to be much higher. Most media do not want to talk to those residing in the building but only neighbouring tenants.”

A young estate resident told the WSWs, “The council does not care about ordinary people. There are no sprinkler systems... They can't fix the lifts or fire alarms. The windows are not even secured. A little kid

named Christian fell from the 18th floor of Whitstable House a few years back.”

His friend added, “It's the dodgy material that has been used to face the towers and the school next door. It could go the same way. A friend of mine is with the local action committee and he says they have been arguing for years about the fire risk in the tower blocks and always being fobbed off by the council and contractors. He said there would be a catastrophe and now it has happened.”

Gary noted, “It's the fault of the tenant management organisation. They charged £10 million to refurbish Grenfell Tower. What did they do with all the money? The council gives back handers to all their mates. It's corrupt.”

His friend John replied, “It's bigger than that. It's the MPs and government. We have had enough. That showed in the election in Kensington when the Tory woman lost after three recounts and Labour got in. But Labour is not any better. Look at the Labour councils in London that have sold off the management of their estates to private companies, which have done exactly the same. They have clad the tower blocks in the same materials as here. People have had enough. Things are going to explode. I hate to think what will happen when they have the funerals of the people who have died today.”



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