

Bristol marches against home care sell-off 'Main political cliques all support privatisation'

A health care worker, Bristol

"Thank you, you are bloody marvellous," ended Bob Taylor's emotional speech at a Bristol rally on Saturday 3 September against the selling off of home care in the city.

Mr Taylor's wife, Pat, had previously been given two years to live but, as he put it, "they [the doctors] must have underestimated home care". Mr Taylor told the carers at the rally that they were the "blue ribbon" of Bristol care, and said that "profit and care are incompatible".

The rally was held after a short march starting at the Greenway community centre in Southmead, where a council by-election will be held on 8 September.

250 people came out to show that they are against the proposed privatisation, and a city poll showed that 97% of people are against the proposals.

Privatising homecare would put 1,000 vulnerable adults' care at risk as well as 250 jobs. The Lib Dem-led council say that in-house care is costing the council twice as much compared to a privatised service. However, this year Bristol has seen the Winterbourne View care home scandal which showed that privatised care comes with a much higher cost!

Disgracefully, Tory MP for Bristol North West, Charlotte Leslie was given a gushing introduction at the rally by a Unite trade union steward,

but the crowd didn't give her such a warm welcome, heckling about the Tory cuts nationwide.

Kerry McCarthy, Labour MP for Bristol East, attacked the Tories' cuts but got jeers from the crowd asking her "What about PFI?" Labour shouldn't assume that we all have short memories!

'I understand saying don't vote Lib Dem but we're not conned into thinking that Tory or Labour are any different'

John McNally, PCS vice president, spoke on behalf of the Bristol Anti-Cuts Alliance: "There is a consensus between the main political parties that there is no alternative to the cuts. Well that is an absolute nonsense." John called for communities and trade unions to unite together against the attacks on us.

Finally, film director Ken Loach made a surprise appearance. He remembered when welfare, public services and many industries were nationalised: "Think what we had. We had health care, we had housing that was built for and paid for, for the purpose of housing ordinary people, we owned the mines, we owned the railways, then the steel industry. We don't own it anymore, they've ripped it away from us. We



Marching against privatisation photo Matt Carey

need to remember where we were to see how much we have lost."

Ken also spoke about the problem of political representation, saying "the political cliques all support privatisation".

In response to the by-election in Southmead, Unite launched a 'don't vote Lib Dem' campaign (the Lib Dems currently control the council). But, as Ken Loach said: "I understand the tactic of saying don't vote Lib Dem but we're not conned

into thinking that if we vote either Tory or Labour they're not going to do the same thing. Because they will and we know they will."

I spoke to some of the home care workers after the rally, and they all spoke about the uncertainty they faced in their jobs and how they had been under attack for a long time.

But everyone said: "it's about the service users". Carers are committed to providing the best service they can, despite being under attack by

their own council and government.

The demo on Saturday showed that the carers are not alone in their fight and have enormous support from the workers of Bristol.

The Socialist Party demands that cuts are reversed and sold-off services are taken back in house. The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, backed by the Socialist Party, supports anti-cuts candidates standing in elections against the pro-capitalist, pro-cuts electioneers.

Fund the fightback - support the socialist alternative

Ken Douglas

Socialist Party national treasurer

The Socialist Party fighting fund total currently stands at just over £8,000, 32% of the July-September target, with four weeks to go until the end of the quarter. It is vital that the Socialist Party reaches its target so it can continue to fund campaigning to build a mass movement, including a one-day public sector general strike against the cuts.

That's why the Socialist Party is taking part in lobbying the TUC on 11 September - the leaders of the trade union movement have to stop stalling, there is no alternative to fighting these austerity policies.

Members of the Socialist Party are gearing up for a busy autumn of campaigning against the attacks of the Con-Dem government. David Cameron says he wants to mend 'broken Britain'; we say that it is his policies and those of his millionaire Tory and Lib-Dem mates that are breaking Britain.

From opposing ongoing cuts and job losses in local councils, to the attacks on the NHS from the Health and Social Care bill, which will lead to hospital closures as reported on Panorama, we will be out on the streets saying that these cuts and this government can be defeated.

\$33m

Crisis, what crisis?

A nice small pay packet for News Corp head Rupert Murdoch

University and college students will be starting back this month and young Socialist Party members will be amongst them, helping to build the fightback against the education

cuts, the increase in tuition fees and the abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance.

This millionaire Con-Dem government is backed by the likes of billionaire Rupert Murdoch.

Rupert, up to his neck in the phone-hacking scandal, has been given a \$12.5 million 'performance' bonus (part of \$33 million 'remuneration'). His son James, however, decided he could survive without his \$6 million cash bonus in "light of the current controversy". This means he has to be content with just \$12 million for a year's 'work'.

It is the Murdochs and their kind who are the real wreckers of society.

Our backers, on the other hand, are working class people. That's why we ask for donations when we are out campaigning or selling the Socialist. Can you help? Can you make a donation of £10, £20 or more to help fund the work of the Socialist Party. To donate, please use the form below, go to www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate or phone 020 8988 8777.

Boosting Fighting Fund in Kent

Kent Socialist Party members have been busily boosting our fighting fund for the July-September quarter, with regular campaigning activities taking place in Medway and Folkestone.

Public opposition to the plans to use Medway as a pilot area for the Con-Dems' NHS privatisation scheme and to Shepway council's ludicrous decision to cut the number of safety railings on pavements, has seen an increase in donations to the Socialist Party, as working people see us as an organisation challenging all cuts.

To boost our fighting fund further, we are selling copies of *Socialism Today's* forerunner, the *Militant International Review*.

Why not get the MIR from the month you were born - yours for £5? Call 07910 202978 while stocks last!

Jacqui Berry

Smashing the fundraising target

A number of Socialist Party branches have already smashed through their targets - well done to Wirral and Chester, Rotherham, Caerphilly, Plymouth and Dorset.

Is your local Socialist Party branch going to reach its target? Why not organise some extra sales, a social event, a car boot sale or a raffle?

Leyton branch in east London is selling a Socialist Party 2012 calendar featuring the magnificent struggles and uprisings that took place in 2011. Put your plans in place now for the final month of the July-September campaign.

SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	July-September 2011				Deadline 7 October
Eastern	1,200	803	■	■	■	■	■
North West	1,200	661	■	■	■	■	■
West Midlands	2,100	1,009	■	■	■	■	■
Yorkshire	2,900	1,252	■	■	■	■	■
South East	1,000	426	■	■	■	■	■
Wales	2,300	975	■	■	■	■	■
Southern	1,200	455	■	■	■	■	■
East Midlands	1,550	538	■	■	■	■	■
South West	1,400	454	■	■	■	■	■
Northern	600	172	■	■	■	■	■
London	6,100	1,040	■	■	■	■	■
England & Wales	3,450	212	■	■	■	■	■
TOTAL	25,000	8,003	■	■	■	■	■

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