

Newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

No to Secret Trials and Secret Evidence!

On April 8, armed police arrested 12 students as terrorist suspects. The Prime Minister boasted of a major terrorist plot being foiled, but three weeks of interrogations and

searches showed no shred of evidence against them and the Manchester police said they were innocent. They were “released” but ten of them, all Pakistani citizens, were immediately re-imprisoned as a

“threat to national security”.

Moved from prison to prison and currently held as Category A prisoners in Manchester, Milton Keynes and Leeds, their hearing began on July 27 at a Special Immigration Appeals

Commission (SIAC), which deals with appeals against decisions made by the Home Office to deport or exclude individuals from Britain on national security grounds.

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SUCCESS TO THE VESTAS WORKERS! KEEP VESTAS OPEN!



The just and inspiring struggle of the Vestas workers is against the right of the monopolies to impose their dictate and for the right of the working class and people to decide on the direction of the economy.

In taking action they have shown the importance of workers getting together to discuss how to safeguard their future and to take a stand in defence of their livelihoods. That their struggle has won widespread and growing

support amongst wide sections of the people and within the workers' movement is a vindication of their initial stand not to be treated as an expendable item in the calculations of the Vestas monopoly.

Their stand has also put into

the spotlight the way the government pays the rich and takes no responsibility for the wellbeing of the working people. Large sums

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Commentary

For an Education System that Serves the Progress of Society

ON JUNE 6, 2009, THE DEPARTMENT FOR INNOVATION, UNIVERSITIES AND SKILLS was merged with the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform to form the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. It is headed by Lord Mandelson.

The move is a further step along the path of integrating of education with business. Additionally, the absence of any reference to universities or education in the name of the new Department illustrates how the government has ceased to be in any way

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No to Secret Trials and Secret Evidence!

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Secret evidence plays a big role in the process, with the appellants not told what they are accused of to justify their deportation. Neither are their lawyers allowed to know this information. Instead special advocates are appointed, who are allowed to see the evidence against them. For some detainees, secret evidence has resulted in over seven years of detention without proper trial or any charge.

Secret evidence is being used in a wide range of cases including deportations hearings, control orders proceedings, parole board cases, asset-freezing applications, pre-charge detention hearings in terrorism cases, employment tribunals and even planning tribunals. Last month, the law lords ruled that control orders breached the Human Rights Act in that the reliance on secret evidence denied the appellants a fair trial.

Secret evidence and secret trials are in contempt of the right to a fair trial under national and international law and must be ended immediately.

An online petition has been set up demanding justice for the Pakistani students and to prevent their unjust deportations. To sign the petition go to:

<http://www.gopetition.co.uk/online/28461.html>

For an Education System that Serves the Progress of Society

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apologetic about the direction it is taking education. It amounts to a declaration that in this time of the crisis they are to entrench the needs of the monopolies; it makes official and overt the agenda to make education serve the aims of big business rather than the progress of society.

Writing about his new Department for *The Guardian* under the heading "Education and business hand in hand", Mandelson dreams up a world where "we" all share the same needs as the monopolies. "At the end of the day," he writes, the needs of business and of higher education "are two parts of a single picture of a Britain that has the knowledge, confidence and character to prosper in a changing world".

Justified concerns

Sally Hunt, General Secretary of the University and College Union, said: "UCU is very concerned that his merger seems to signal that further and higher education are no longer considered important enough to have a department of their own. The fact they have been lumped in with business appears to be a clear signal of how the government views colleges and universities and their main roles in this country."

Such concerns and opposition are fully justified. Furthermore, it is vitally important to uphold that education is a right. This is consis-

tent with the role of education serving the progress of society and entirely opposed to putting education into the service of the monopolies.

In his article, Mandelson mentions the issue of tuition fees, which New Labour introduced over a decade ago. "Over the next few months," he writes, "we will be publishing a framework for the future shape of our higher education system, followed by an independent review on student fees... It will set out how the sector will maintain its contribution to Britain's economic competitiveness in a global economy and extend the opportunity and social mobility that come with education as widely as possible."

Right or privilege?

This was the very argument used to justify fees in the first place: education is not a right, but rather to be educated is a privilege that provides "extended opportunity": education is a privilege for which students should pay. Whether or not the "opportunity is extended as widely as possible", this is the context in which the government views the issue.

For big business, education is there to produce the workforce it requires, while the workers themselves are considered a cost of production. Investment in education and the claims of the workers are negative factors to big business. It is a privilege to be educated, a privilege to work for a "top company". On the one hand, their



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capital-centred view cannot and will not recognise that education is a right, while on the other, recognition of the right to education is a block to the aims of the monopolies to bring all aspects of society under their dictate.

Invest in education

The opposition to the agenda being carried out, the agenda that is destroying the culture of learning in order to fulfil the aims of the monopolies, should stand firm with its alternative vision for education that is available to all at the highest level that society can provide. Investment in education should be increased so that this level is raised, and developed in order to serve the needs of society and not identified with the success of big business and the monopolies.

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Success to the Vestas Workers! Keep Vestas Open!

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of money were handed out to Vestas by the government to set up production on the Isle of Wight. Now that Vestas is being offered more money by, it appears, the US administration to move to Colorado, it is putting forward all kinds of justifications for closing down the plant in Britain, while the government claims it cannot interfere in the workings of the market.

The stand of the workers has also put on the agenda the necessity for workers to get further organised to defend their interests and the interests both of the local economy and of the socialised economy as a whole. It has put on the agenda the necessity for workers to take the lead in putting forward solutions to leading society out of the crisis and to rely on their own initiative.

The workers are right to demand that Vestas keep the factory open on the Isle of Wight. If the Vestas capitalists declare that they must go, then they must be held to account. They must pay back the funds that were doled out to them by the government, and the government must further demand that they put back into the local economy what they have taken out and provide the funds and the plant for the workers to continue to produce wind turbines as necessary for the needs of the economy as a whole.

The stand of the workers has also exposed the anti-worker

nature of the state and the way the legal system serves the owners of property and capital. The Vestas capitalists feel that they are perfectly within their rights to throw hundreds of workers out of production, while the workers have no rights to occupy their place of work or participate in deciding their own future. They appeal to the courts to evict the workers, while the police are intent on protecting property rights while attempting to starve the workers into submission. This cannot be allowed to succeed!

When on July 29, the Vestas management went to court to obtain a court order allowing them to evict the workers, it was in contempt of the principle that as the workers create the wealth for the owners of the factory through their labour and it is the workers' livelihood which is at stake, then the workers should decide. But the occupation goes on, despite Vestas adding insult to injury by "sacking" workers whom they had already made redundant through the sick joke of "pizza delivery".

Workers' Weekly wishes the workers every success in their occupation in order to keep Vestas open and continue the production of wind turbines, and in their determination to thwart the dictate of the Vestas owners of capital.

The Vestas workers are being guided by the decisions of their own collective, and their stand in upholding and defending their rights. This is the essence of being political. They have the support of

class conscious workers and of progressive people not only on the Isle of Wight but nationally and internationally, and can be justly proud of their struggle.

***Stop Paying the Rich!
Keep Vestas Open!
Every Success to the
Inspiring Struggle of
the Vestas Workers!***



Support for the Vestas Workers



Support for the Vestas workers has been growing nationally and internationally. Many rallies, demonstrations and meetings have been held on the Island and nationally.

The Campaign against Euro-federalism pointed out that Vestas is making full use of the "free movement of capital, goods, services and labour" within the EU.

John Rowse, Unite national secretary for manufacturing, said, "We urge the government to match its green rhetoric with action to support green jobs."

Chair of the Isle of Wight Unison local government branch Mark Chiverton explained that the job losses would be "a disaster for the Isle of Wight economy".

RMT pledged full backing including legal assistance. Bob Crow, RMT general secretary, said, "The whole of the trade union and environmental movement should be proud of the courage and determination being shown by the workers at Vestas in the teeth of threats and intimidation. We all have a duty to ensure that they are not beaten into submission." He went on, "If the Government can spend £1.4 trillion bailing out and nationalising the banks then there's no reason why they can't intervene and nationalise Vestas."

Chris Baugh, PCS Assistant General Secretary, said: "PCS members' jobs in government offices on the Isle of Wight are under threat too, so we are showing solidarity with the Vestas workers and actively supporting their campaign to save their jobs."

Members of Umeå City Council, Sweden, wrote into the protest website: "Your struggle is ours."

Athens-based socialist organisation Xekinima said: "What happened to you is happening to workers all across Europe and the globe, with the bosses using the financial crisis to attack workers' rights and to ensure that they can continue to make huge profits. This is particularly the case in our country, Greece, where unemployment, poverty and inequality are skyrocketing."

Members of Gegenstrom, from Berlin, Germany, wrote: "Your collective action is a huge encouragement to those who believe that the way forward to social and climate justice will have to be brought about by people taking their own lives in their hands."

A message from South Korea reads: "In South Korea, auto-workers at Ssangyong Motors are currently occupying the factory to save their jobs. It is the time to show who is really the boss of this world and this system. That is you, the workers, fighting to protect your jobs and lives."

From Australia, a member of Green Left Weekly said: "If the decisions about our future are left in the hands of the big party politicians and companies like Vestas, we don't have a hope. Thank you for standing up and defending your families, your community and the future of the planet in such an inspirational way."

A city councillor of Rostock, Germany, wrote: "We are facing the closure of the shipyards at the moment and the loss of about 2,500 jobs. So your fight can be seen as an example for the workers here in Rostock, too. The Vestas workers, together with those involved in the Lindsey Oil Refinery and Visteon struggles, are setting an important example."

Interview with Secretary of Ryde Trades Council

- Workers' Weekly interviewed Tony Kelly, Secretary of the Ryde and East Wight Trade Union Council on July 27 -

WW: Could you tell us about the role of the Trades Council in the struggle of the Vestas workers?

Tony Kelly: The Ryde Trades Council is a respected body on the Isle of Wight, and has had a role in supporting and uniting workers, trade unionists, political people and the community as a whole. It was the first organisation to hold a public meeting on the issue of the pending closure of Vestas. We invited the Vestas workers to attend the meeting, and at first they were quite nervous of the idea of a meeting. But as it turned out, once they had participated in this public meeting, they gained the confidence to hold their own meeting. They thought of this as their "second meeting". At this, they formed a committee to discuss the situation and to enable them to decide on what actions to take. So although they were un-unionised and the Vestas management is anti-union, once they formed their own committee things moved forward.

The Trades Council is assisting the workers in their struggle and everyone that has come here to support them by, for example, providing facilities, an office, the address for donations and messages of support, an account book, simple things like that. But we don't try to tell the workers what to do, but we give what advice we can and what support we can, both moral and physical. In return, all the young people who make use of the facilities we can provide are very responsible and treat them with respect.

The Trades Council is trying to make a register of all people who have written in support. Cheques to support the struggle are beginning to come in and this is very heartening. One, for example,

which was for £200 just came with a scrap of paper saying, "For Vestas".

We go down to the factory, speak to the people who are there to support the occupation and those workers who are picketing, let them know we are there, and in general show that they do have widespread support.

We are confident that whatever the final outcome, something positive will definitely come of the struggle. We are building a strong core of people who maintain union connections, and who are bound to work together locally in the future.

WW: How are things at the picket?

Tony Kelly: There are banners, and quite good support, though of course we would be happy to have even more people supporting the workers' occupation! We have very good relations with the local RMT union who we have had contact with for many years, and there is a growing realisation that together we can do something which will make a difference.

We have our own Rydes Trade Council banner there, at first on its own, but now with that of the RMT and a number of other banners. Despite the initial interest from the news media such as the BBC, now they seem to be downplaying it a bit.

With all the messages of support we have received, we are forming a wall for people to read.

I would like to mention three councillors who have come down to the factory to make tea, cook meals and so on. This is not to promote the party they represent, which is the Lib Dems, but I just thought that it was inspiring to see one particular councillor who had



the courage to support, pitch a tent outside the factory, and throw himself into the struggle. That is the spirit of everyone outside the factory, who are taking a stand against being intimidated.

WW: Can you say something on the state of the economy on the Isle of Wight?

Tony Kelly: On the same estate as the Vestas plant, there used to be the Isle of Wight Business Enterprise whose object was to attract jobs from the mainland to the island. The Trades Council visited it about a year ago, and it was a showcase for the island. Now it has been closed down. Just before you get to Vestas, there used to be a toy library. This has now closed and the staff made redundant. What we are pointing out now is what will happen to the Island's economy if 600 jobs go? Our stand is that more should be put into the economy of the Island than is taken out.

WW: How do you see things developing in the immediate future?

Tony Kelly: On Wednesday, the Vestas management is seeking a court order from the magistrates court in Newport to evict the occupying workers. RMT is giving legal support. At the same time, it seems as though Vestas may be playing a waiting game.

The £6m that has been in the news that Ed Miliband has announced was, in fact, offered

some time ago. In my opinion, it is an example of paying the rich. It just helps Vestas, keeping people on who are managers, and is an attempt to divide the workforce. In fact, one of the banners outside the factory reads, "jobs for the boys", that is, the managers! The government are trying to use tactics for their own purposes and not to meet the just demands of the workers.

The workers in the factory are all young, as are their wives and kids. For the first time in their lives they are getting involved in real life class struggle. We will see on Wednesday what happens at the court, but whatever the outcome it will be good experience for the community and the workers.

Personally, I am very angry about the way politicians from the big parliamentary parties have washed their hands of responsibility for the economy of the Isle of Wight, and of the country as a whole. When it was suggested that one solution would be for the government to take responsibility for keeping production going at Vestas, it was put forward by these politicians that this is a discredited idea. But what could be more discredited than this political and economic system which has caused massive unemployment, that is full of disgraced MPs, and disgruntled voters! I think that the solutions that the workers themselves are working out are altogether more coherent!

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