

Black Matters

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- They told us it wasn't down to the greed of the bankers, yet every month new scandals of fraud and corruption emerge from our financial industry.
- They led us to believe that these austerity measures were only temporary, but essential public services including the health service and policing are being handed over to unaccountable corporations.

AUSTERITY ISN'T WORKING

Our country faces long-term economic problems. But our political leaders have failed to face up to them.

In our communities we see rising unemployment, closing businesses and disappearing public services every day. Unless policies change the economy will not grow, incomes will not rise, and there will be almost no new jobs.

If the government keeps on with big spending cuts and austerity we face a lost decade. Even on their own terms government policies are failing. To close the deficit we need a healthy growing economy that generates tax income. But austerity has led to a vicious circle of decline.

A FUTURE THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Instead of just letting the banks go back to business and bonuses as usual, we need policies that promote new and old industries.

We need an alternative that will

- Force companies to pay decent wages, penalise big bonuses and invest in training and new industries.

COMMENT



On Saturday 20th October the TUC is organising a national demonstration to demand a change to the current government's economic policies.

- They told us that there is no alternative to austerity as we have to pay off the deficit, yet the policy of cuts has resulted in the longest economic downturn since the 1930's.
- They told us that we are all in it together, yet every day we see the leaders of big business pay themselves enormous annual bonuses which an ordinary person could live on for a lifetime.

- Crack down on tax evasion by big companies and the super-rich.
- Tackle the growing inequality between the super-rich and everyone else.

Rather than deep, rapid spending cuts, we need to reverse our decline and build an economy that works for ordinary people.

Join the demonstration and demand a better future

JOIN US IN LONDON
SATURDAY
 20 OCTOBER 2012

Assemble at 11am – 21,30pm
 For march to Hyde Park Rally

IT'S TIME TO DIG DEEP



At this year's TUC Black Workers Conference, General Secretary Brendan Barber launched a Trade Union Fundraising Campaign for the Stephen Lawrence Centre. The centre was originally set up to help disadvantaged people into architecture

and urban design - a dream that Stephen himself had before he was killed. It now works with up to 2,000 people a year, providing training, support and projects. So far it has provided 100 bursaries for architecture students that have resulted in eight qualified architects graduating.

The Stephen Lawrence Centre is more than a charity to help young people. It is more than a monument to help us remember the tragic death of Stephen. It symbolises the struggle against institutional racism in our criminal justice system and in the rest of society. Its legacy is that it provides a focus for the continuing struggles of black communities against public

institutions whose structures and processes inevitably resulted in racist outcomes.

Now that legacy is under threat through lack of funding. The Trust and Centre have been funded through the Big Lottery, local authority grants and charitable donations. However, in common with all charities, donations have declined significantly as a result of the recession, and public sector spending cuts. This has left the Trust short of income and with a need to raise £200,000 in order to continue their current activities.

The TUC Race Relations Committee has set a target of raising £100K to help the Centre survive, but this will not be reached without the active participation of black trade unionists. It will take more than emailing the information to mailing lists or circulars from trade union general secretaries. It needs practical intervention from activists who are prepared to submit motions to branch and regional meetings calling for donations, talk work colleagues and fellow trade unionists into donating and badgering family and friends until they have made a donation through the website or by texting on their phone.

The reality is that for government and public policy makers, race is off the agenda. It is only through our own efforts that we can ensure that the need for anti racism stays in the forefront of public discussion and the survival of the legacy of Stephen Lawrence is fundamental to this.

It's up to all of us to rise to the challenge set by Brendan Barber who said when launching the appeal ***“let's dig deep within our unions, let's publicise the appeal right across the movement and together let's ensure that Stephen's legacy lives on for generations to come.”***

Unions can donate to the appeal by sending a check made out to the TUC (indicating that it is for the Fundraising appeal). A model motion is on the TUC website to use at branch and executive meetings and trade union members can donate to the appeal through the TUC website at <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-20962-f0.cfm> or Text TUCS99 followed by the £ symbol, then the amount to 70070

UK POLICE SERVICES PLC



The TUC Race Relations Committee issued a statement at this year's TUC Black Workers' Conference, about racism in the police. The statement highlighted the increase in the use of stop and search powers against the black community,

the outrage of black deaths in custody and at the hands of the state and the allegations that police corruption may well have hindered the investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

These issues as well as many other abuses of state power are taking place within the context of security based policies that have their roots in the declaration by George Bush of a War on terror. This declaration led our government taking a path of introducing increasingly authoritarian legislation that is undermining our individual and collective civil liberties and progressively restricting our rights to protest, our freedom of speech and our rights to privacy. Measures that were put in place under the auspices of counter terrorism are being increasingly used to police the domestic population, especially black communities.

Alongside this we have seen the growth of the use of private companies to carry out state security functions. This started with private companies being used in areas such as asylum and immigration with private companies running removal and detention centres and being used to deport failed asylum seekers via private charter flights. The growth of the use of private firms then spread into the prison system initially with the use of private companies to transport prisoner and then expanding to the running of prisons. Currently 12 of the existing 138 jails are in private hands with the Government announcing their intention in July last year to close two prisons and privatise nine others.

Now under the auspices of austerity this Government is moving further down the path of becoming a private security state by encouraging the privatisation of the police. Recent announcements by the West Midlands and Surrey Constabularies' of a contract worth £1.5bn follows hot on the heels of the awarding of a £200m contract in Lincolnshire to build and run a police station. Senior police officials and coalition politicians have been quick to argue that frontline policing will remain in state hands and that this is more efficient and cheaper way of providing new police stations and running support services. However, the tender for the West Midlands and Surrey contract revealed that the activities that private companies are expected to be involved amongst other are:

- Bring Offenders to Justice – Investigate crimes, detain suspects, non judicial disposal, develop cases, support prosecution.
- Deal with incidents – Respond to incidents, manage scenes of incidents, investigate incidents, and manage major incidents, support victims and witnesses.
- Manage Public Engagement – patrol neighbourhoods, manage public relations, manage customer relationships, report on performance, and manage contact.
- Protect the Public, manage high risk individuals, improve communities, protect vulnerable people, disrupt criminal networks, manage planned operations, protect vulnerable places, manage licensing, and manage road safety.

The truth is that these are core policing function of the state being handed over to private security conglomerates many of whose track record does not stand up to scrutiny.

A prime example is Group 4 Securicor now known as G4S Ltd, a leading player in the queue forming to snap up these lucrative contracts. Earlier this year David Taylor-Smith the Head of G4S for the UK and Africa predicted that private companies would be running a large parts of the UK's Police services within five years. G4S is the largest private security firm in

the world and already has contracts running private prisons and immigration removals centres, prison transport, managing housing for refugees and to build a police station and manage the police support services in Lincolnshire. Its recent very public catastrophic failure to meet the requirements of the contract for providing security at the Olympics should register loud alarm bells in the heads of the Government and those advocating police privatisation. This debacle is just the latest in a long line of failures that include escaping prisoners, having one of its immigration centres branded unsafe by HM inspector of Prisons, accusations of racism in the UK and internationally and the tragic death of asylum seeker Jimmy Mubenga while deporting him to Angola.

The impending introduction and election of Police and Crime Commissioners who will be responsible for among other things setting and updating a police and crime plan and setting the police force budget and local tax precept is likely to increase the likelihood of police privatisation as they are pressured to find savings by a Government focussed on austerity.

These developments should also ring alarm bells for black communities, not just because of the racism and incompetence already demonstrated by these conglomerates but because of the complete lack of public accountability that results when vital and sensitive public services are placed in the hands of private corporations.

This lack of accountability was amply demonstrated when MP's on the public accounts committee found themselves in a position where they were denied information about how public money was being spent Olympic security because of supposed commercial confidentiality. With black prisoners make up 15% of the prisoner population compared with 2.2% of the general populations, stop and search levels in the black communities continuing to rise and the continued failure of the state to deal with the issue of deaths in custody the privatisation of the police service and criminal justice system is an issue we cannot ignore.

COUNTING THE COST OF THE CUTS

Last year the TUC published an initial report on the effects of the recession on Black workers. The report made the point that there are good reasons to worry. The experience of previous recessions suggests that black and minority ethnic workers are particularly vulnerable to rising unemployment. When the economy was growing high, unemployment has been in retreat and during this period black and minority ethnic workers benefited even more than whites, gaining jobs at a faster rate. However, this picture changed rapidly from 2009 because of the government's public service cuts.

Predictions of the effects of 10% budget cuts in local authorities are that there will be large job losses over the next three years and this will be replicated in areas such health, education and the civil service. Recent unemployment figures bear this out with as they show that the black and ethnic minority employment rate is currently only 58.7% as opposed to 72.0% for the white population. The figures for young people from our communities are even worse with unemployment for young black men doubling from 28.8% in 2008 to 55.9% in the last three months of 2011, twice the rate for young white people.

Although the scale of rising levels of unemployment levels in the black community is well known to government ministers, their insistence on a colour blind approach to employment and belief that that generic programmes like the expansion of apprenticeships and the work programme will solve the problem of the disproportionate levels of unemployment in black communities indicates that they do not believe that government has any role to play in tackling race discrimination in employment. Meanwhile in public services it is likely that the cuts will have a major effect on black women who rely on public sector jobs for employment.

The TUC is currently working with the Runnymede Trust on a project which is conducting a national survey measuring the equality impact of recent cuts to public services

so that hard evidence can be gathered on what groups of workers are affected by the cuts. The project which is supported by Unison, Unite, UCU, NASUWT and PCS, aims to survey at least 2000 workplaces to create a comprehensive picture of how changes in the public sector since January 2011 have effected who is employed and how they are employed. Information on the survey and how to complete it can be found at <http://goo.gl/UmkIy>. The evidence from the survey will provide an important means of demonstrating to employers and government that urgent action is needed.

As the scale of the changes that are taking place in the workforce increases, monitoring will be vital to establishing hard evidence of the effects that these changes are having on different sections of the workforce. Without gathering information derived by some form of monitoring activity, employers cannot be held to account about decisions that may adversely impact black workers or assess whether race equality policies are working. The legislative changes that the current government is making to equality legislations makes it more important than ever that trade unionists put employers under pressure to monitor and publish the outcomes to ensure that issues of race equality remain on the bargaining agenda.

The Overseas Frozen Pension Swindle

Over recent years it seems that pensions and pensioners have continued to be squeezed on all fronts. First it was the pension's gap resulting in many schemes in the private sector being downgraded, denied to new workers or just closed. Then it was the scam of attacking supposedly gold plated pensions for workers in the public sector and making them pay more pension contributions for a smaller pension. The latest attack has been to change the methods to measure inflation for calculating the annual up-rating of state pensions from RPI to CPI which will mean that 10 million pensions will get £207million less next year than they would under the current system.

But these are not the only outrages in the pension system. For years, about a half of UK pensioners that have retired abroad have not had a right to have their pension up-rated. Of the 720,000 UK pensioners that live outside of the EU and receive the British state pension 543,000 live in countries where the pension is currently frozen. Rob Berkeley the Director of the Runnymede Trusts has pointed out that this is an issue which particularly affects people from Black communities, who may choose to retire to the country of their birth or the country of their parent's birth such as India or Pakistan or African and Caribbean countries, he commented. *"By retiring to one of these countries they may miss out on almost 50 per cent of the money they are entitled, despite the fact that they have paid mandatory NI contributions during their working life in the UK. This is a disgraceful disregard for the contribution that they have made to the UK economy"*.

Bizarrely for historical reasons this does not apply to all pensioners living outside of the EU. So, for example in the Caribbean, if you retire to Jamaica or Barbados you get your pension up rated annually, but if you retire to Trinidad or St Lucia its frozen. Similarly if you retire to the USA you get your pensions increased, but if you retire across the border in Canada you won't get an extra bean. Over time the value of pensions paid out to people in countries where the pension is frozen significantly reduces, so for example a pension of £107.45 per week at 65 will only be worth £39.50 by the time you reach 90 at today's prices.

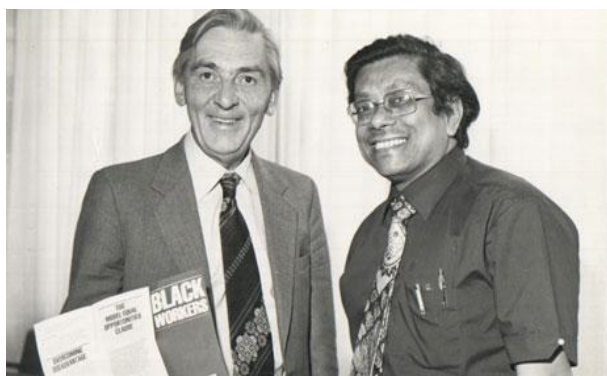
The TUC has been supporting a campaign by the International Consortium of British Pensioners (ICBP) to get Government to change the rules so that all pensioners that have paid into the tax system are entitled to fully up-rated pensions. TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber commented that *"Britain's workers have earned the right to equal choice of retirement without financial penalties. Few workers know about the current government policy that dramatically diminishes pensions in certain countries and we will work to ensure that all workers have right to a fair and decent pension irrespective of where they choose to retire"*.

In a recent report that the ICBP commissioned from health economic consultants Matrix Evidence it was demonstrated that if the Government up-rated all pensions, it would eventually save money, because more people would move abroad, and stop claiming health and social benefits.

Changing this state of affairs does not require major changes to the law. All it requires is the government to repeal a regulation of the Social Security Benefits Up-rating Regulations. The ICBP are currently running an online petition in order to get a debate in the house of commons. The petition can be accessed on the internet at <http://bit.ly/BritPensions>.

We must support the campaign to reverse this discriminatory policy to avoid further suffering among some of our most vulnerable citizens and ensure that British workers can enjoy the freedom to retire where they wish without fear of becoming a financial burden on their loved ones in later life.

LEST WE FORGET



Dipak Ray, a former member of the Race Relations Advisory Committee, died in late April this year aged 82. He had been a GP in South Wales who was among the pioneers of patient involvement in the running of surgeries. He was also heavily involved in medical politics and campaigning against racism.

Dipak was born in Cuttack, in Orissa, India. His family was involved in the campaign for independence and Dipak was arrested at the age of 11 for distributing anti-British leaflets. He

went to work as a GP in south Wales in the early 1960s, eventually settling in Blackwood, Caerphilly.

Dipak represented the radical Medical Practitioners' Union on the British Medical Association's general medical services committee from the early 1970s to the late 80s. He had a regular column in the magazine Doctor and wrote for Tribune. He was one of the first doctors to state publicly that there was racism in the medical profession. He was also a prominent member of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs and a TUC delegate for many years, where as a member he moved motions on healthcare. In 1974, for instance, he demanded an end to private treatment in NHS hospitals.

He was a leading member of the TUC's Race Relations Advisory Committee and Equal Rights Committee and instrumental in campaigning for affiliates to negotiate the inclusion of equal opportunities policies in main collective agreements.

He was part of a delegation that visited St Paul's, Bristol after the riots in 1980 to gather information on the causes of the disturbances for the TUC and worked closely with Bill Keys the Chair of the Advisory Committee. He was also heavily involved in the creation of the first TUC Charter for Black Workers in 1980 and encouraged the TUC and affiliates to print materials in different languages to communicate and encourage black workers to join trade unions

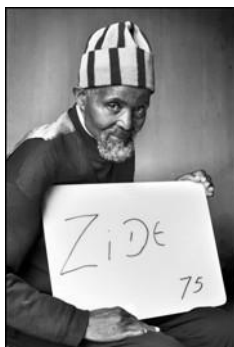
Dipak was a dedicated anti-racist campaigner, taking part in marches, running educational sessions on racism and becoming a Commissioner on the Commission for Racial Equality. It was in this capacity that he became involved in the controversy concerning Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* (1988). Dipak argued that further copies should not be printed, but that the book should not be banned. As a result, he received threatening phone calls.

Dipak was one of a number of leading black trade unionists that have played an important role in advancing the TUC and trade union

policies and campaigns on race equality since the 1970's. We should not forget that it was because of his efforts and others like him that anti racism became a trade union issue.

JUSTICE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD MINERS

Under apartheid gold mining was South Africa's biggest industry. Production levels were high and major multinationals made a fortune at the expense of black workers, with little or no consideration for their safety.



Most miners were migrant workers from rural areas. They were seen as an expendable commodity, forced to work underground in appalling conditions for a meagre pay and housed in poor and overcrowded single sex hostels. When they weren't working long hours in the mines, they lived, cooked and slept in the same room. They were lucky if they saw their families once a year, most of who lived in a small area of South Africa designated by the government as 'Homelands'.

Black miners undertook the dustiest jobs and were given little or no protection. The mine owners had known the risks of the high levels of silica dust for over a century, but took none of the simple steps to protect their workers. Now it is estimated that tens of thousands of ex gold miners are suffering from silicosis, a terrible lung disease caused by prolonged exposure to silica dust. It decreases lung capacity, making it difficult to breathe and massively increases the risk of TB, which can be fatal. Silicosis can take 10 – 20 years to develop, so was unlikely to affect workers whilst they were employed by the mines. Respirators and onsite showers would have saved many lives, but profits were prioritised over the lives of black workers.

There is no cure or specific treatment for silicosis, but medical care is essential for diagnosis and to treat associated diseases such as TB, particularly as South Africa has proportionally the highest number of TB cases in the world. However, in rural areas where most ex-mineworkers live access to screening and medical facilities is very limited or non-existent. Without diagnosis, they cannot even access the limited and inadequate compensation scheme which exists. Under the current scheme compensation does not cover pain and suffering. It is based on pay, so black ex miners get next to nothing, as they were paid the lowest wages.

The National Union of Mineworkers South Africa is calling for decent compensation, treatment, screening and support for silicosis sufferers. They say it should be paid for by the mining companies that profited from South Africa's gold and ACTSA supports those calls.

Anglo American South Africa (AASA) was the largest gold miner in South Africa throughout the 20th century making millions in profits from apartheid gold. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Anglo American plc which is listed on the London Stock Exchange. Anglo American claims that "we do not accept that it is necessary for people to be made ill whilst working for us."



Currently there are over 1,200 ex gold miners from South Africa taking legal action against Anglo American South Africa (AASA) in the UK and 18 in South Africa for compensation and access to health care. They are suffering from silicosis and silico-tuberculosis from exposure to dangerous levels of dust from the South African gold mines.

ACTSA wants Anglo American to live up to its Corporate Social Responsibility statements and take urgent steps to provide decent compensation and improve medical services for the thousands of ex gold miners who are now suffering from silicosis. We are urging Anglo

American to provide leadership and do what is right.

You can find out more about the campaign and how you can support our calls for justice for South Africa miners at www.actsa.org

ALDER CAMPAIGN - FINANCIAL APPEAL

On 1st April 1998 Christopher Alder, a former paratrooper died in Police custody choking to death with his trousers round his ankles on the floor of a police station in Hull where CCTV recorded officer chatting, making what appeared to be monkey noises at him and laughing.



An inquest in 2001 recorded his death as unlawful killing but

despite the evidence, a subsequent trial of the five police officers involved collapsed in 2002 resulting in the officers being cleared of manslaughter and misconduct. An investigation by the Independent Police Complaints Commission in 2006 found the officers guilty of a most serious neglect of duty and unwitting racism.

In 2011, thirteen years after his death, the shocking revelation came to light that women called Grace Kamara had been buried in Christopher's place. The mix up was only discovered when members of Grace's family asked to see the body before it was buried.

The Justice for Christopher Alder campaign has recently secured copies of CCTV evidence from the West Yorkshire and Humberside of the night that Christopher died. It is believed that this CCTV evidence may potentially contain new information that could re-open the case. The campaign is seeking solidarity and financial

support to secure the professional and independent transcription of the CCTV tapes.

The financial appeal aims to raise £5000 to cover the costs of the transcription. **Donations should be made payable to Justice for Christopher Alder Campaign and posted to: c/o Andy Makin, Red Triangle Cafe, 160 St James Street, Burnley, Lancashire, Burnley, BB11 1NR**



www.londonlabourfilmfest.com
www.princecharlescinema.com

LONDON LABOUR FILM FESTIVAL
cinema celebrating working people

METROPOLIS - HIGH HOPES
SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO - FOUR HORSEMEN
BIUTIFUL - POTICHE - NAVIGATORS - MOON
AND MANY MORE GREAT FILMS

TICKETS £5.50 13-15 SEPTEMBER

Working people will be celebrated in a festival of film in London from Thursday 13 - Saturday 15 September.

Running for just three days at the Prince Charles Cinema off Leicester Square, the Labour Film Festival <http://londonlabourfilmfest.com/> will feature films by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (*Biutiful*), Ken Loach (*The Navigators*), Hal Ashby (*Bound for Glory*), Mark Herman (*Brassed Off*), Mike Leigh (*High Hopes*), Jennifer Baichwal (*Manufactured Landscapes*), Nigel Cole (*Made in Dagenham*) and many more inspirational and international filmmakers.