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1. Branch meeting – in Bristol

TUC action in opposition to new

Anti-Trade Union laws

Thursday 16th June 2016

2.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Venue: St Michael's Church

The Old School Rooms

Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8PD

Tel: 0117 969 2486

<http://www.stmichaelsbristol.org/st-michaels-church/bookings/>

Tea and cakes will be provided if you let us know a week in advance that you are coming. ucu.swest@gmail.com

This newsletter is, in part, that of the East Midlands branch who unselfishly share their expertise with all the Retired Members Branches (RMB). Your contributions for our next newsletter welcome.

Email them to ucu.swest@gmail.com

Are you getting all the info?

This May newsletter has been distributed to SW RMB members by email.

If UCU Head Office has your email, then you should also be receiving regular updates on campaigns from UCU head office – the ones sent by Justine Stephens. You should also get occasional messages from Sally Hunt, UCU.

If you are only getting our newsletter, then let me know at ucu.swest@gmail.com and I can amend your UCU members' database entry.

MayDay 2016 in Bristol attracted marchers and banners from Bristol, Shrewsbury & South Glos.; we marched to the Ambling Band around Broadmead and Old Market.



2. TUC action in opposition to new

Anti-Trade Union laws is the topic for

the June meeting; **Nigel Costley, SW TUC** is our speaker.

In late October 2,500 trade unionists were at the lobby of parliament against the trade union bill. Even the police conceded that the TUC-organised event, with union members

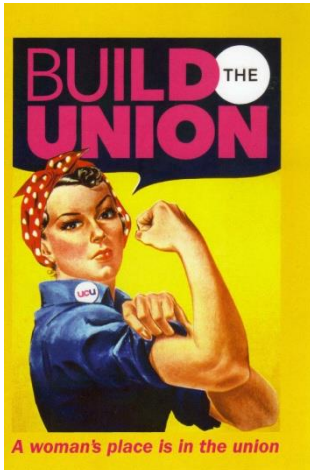
travelling from all over the UK to talk with their MPs in person, was the biggest lobby of MPs ever seen. Sadly, instead of working with trade unions, our Government still see them as 'the enemy within'. We have a generation whose politics was framed by Thatcher's battle with the unions. They seem to be intent on finishing what she started.

Background reading:

<http://strongerunions.org/2016/04/29/trade-union-bill-stand-up-for-union-rights/>

3. National recruitment week 3 (NRW3) takes place 16-20 May: please help us to make it the biggest yet.

Thanks to the efforts of branch officers UCU's national recruitment weeks in November and February were a great success. Significant numbers of new members were recruited on both occasions and that was in no small part down to the hundreds of events and activities run by UCU activists at so many locations. There has been an overwhelming response from branches putting on events during this week this time around, and there is some sort of event planned in most branches of any size throughout the South West.



If you would like to help out at your local college or university, do get in touch with their UCU branch and offer to help with their planned activities.

Jo Corke

4. TTIP: an update from 38 degrees.

The Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership, TTIP, is an EU-US trade deal that has provoked a lot of concern over the previous three years, and I have been following events via the on-line campaigning group 38degrees. What follows is a recent update from 38degrees. I believe TTIP to be a real threat, but you will make up your own minds.

The government's official report into TTIP found the deal has "lots of risks and no benefit" to the UK. [1] Politicians have covered up the report for the last three years, but on 25.4.16 it was exposed.

This report should make the government's hopes of getting TTIP agreed before the end of the year unlikely, but they are relying on lots of people not knowing about the real impact of this deal. The deal remains shrouded in secrecy - so the more we get the word out, the more roadblocks we'll put in its way. The full conclusion of the government's report into the risks and benefits of TTIP is shocking. One paragraph begins:

"In sum, an EU-US investment chapter is likely to provide the UK with few or no benefits. On the other hand, with more than a quarter of a trillion dollars in US FDI stock, the UK exposes itself to a significant measure of costs."

To read the full report and share it, click here: <https://secure.38degrees.org.uk/ttip-share>

NOTES:

[1] The report was exposed by a Freedom of Information request from anti-TTIP campaigners Global Justice Now. The Department of Business and Skills commissioned the risk assessment report in 2013. The London School of Economics carried out the assessment on behalf of the government and found that TTIP would have limited political and economic benefits and may result in "meaningful economic costs in the UK". See the full report on the government's website here: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260380/bis-13-1284-costs-and-benefits-of-an-eu-usa-investment-protection-treaty.pdf

Michael Bowsher, QC, was commissioned by **Unite the Union** to produce a legal opinion on the potential impact of TTIP on the NHS. He said that TTIP poses a "real and serious risk" to the NHS. A full copy of the advice can be found here: <http://www.uniteunion.org/uploaded/document/MBTTIPAdvice20111511-25674.pdf>

Jo Corke

5. What has membership of the EU done for Women?

This women only event is organised by Fair Play SW, the women's equality network, and the SWTUC Women's Committee.

<http://www.fairplaysouthwest.org.uk/>

It is open to members of both organisations including women from all trade unions. It will be held on 17th May 2016 from 11am to 1pm at the UNISON conference centre in Taunton.

You are invited to a discussion with Clare Moody MEP on what membership of the EU has done for women since the UK joined in 1973.

Ahead of the Referendum on our membership of the EU, Clare is speaking at events across the South West as she thinks it is important that people have the opportunity to ask questions and are as well informed as possible about the most important decision that this country will make in a generation. Unlike at a General Election, the EU referendum is not a choice for the next five years, but the next 50 years. The stakes could not be higher.

Clare says: *"We benefit from the EU in nearly every aspect of our lives, from better work place protections such as paid maternity leave and greater health and safety to tackling cross border issues like climate change and crime where one country's effort isn't enough."*

After an introduction by Clare there will be an opportunity for questions and comments and we are hoping for a 'free and frank discussion'. It is time that women's voices were heard in the debate!

To register please apply via the Eventbrite link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-has-membership-of-the-eu-done-for-women-tickets-23164157619>

6. Representing Pensioners.

At the UCU Retired Members AGM in November 2015, one of the motions that was passed asked that the NEC to seek a review with TUC and STUC respectively of the extent to which their current arrangements in this sphere are fit for purpose. To access the present arrangements below is an explanation of the main organisations.

The National Pensioners Convention (NPC) and Public Sector Pensioners Committee (PSPC) are based in England and Wales in their organisational structure. The European Federation of Retired and Older People (FERPA) covers the European Union. The Public Sector Pensioners Council (PSPC) covers public sector unions in UK.

History. NPC was initially established by the TUC to bring together a voice for the retired members sections and groupings in unions. Given financial pressures this organisation had to become independent and established itself as a campaigning body run by pensioners for pensioners with the trade union representation at the heart of its organisation. FERPA was established by the European TUC (ETUC) to which the TUC is a member in 1985, and in 1993 it became a separate organisation but continues to work closely with the ETUC

National Pensioners Convention.

In June 1978 at the TUC Conference it was agreed to establish a single organisation which would represent and campaign on behalf of pensioners. The first Pensioners Convention took place the following year and adopted a 'Declaration of Intent'

This conference declares that every pensioner has the right to choice, dignity, independence and security, as an integral and valued member of society.

The organisation continued to grow and union retired member branches and section affiliated. In 1988 the TUC withdrew financial, secretarial and other assistance and the NPC became an independent and separate entity – run by pensioners for pensioners. NPC developed into an umbrella organisation of today.

Unions affiliate at national level and are allocated seats on a size bases, UCU has 4 delegates, who serve on the national council and one executive member and one vice-chair. UCU delegates serve for two years from the end of one biennial delegate conference to the next. UCU sends its national representative to both the Pensioners' Parliament and Biennial Delegate Conference. UCU Retired Member Branches are encouraged to affiliate at regional level and send delegates to that body.

NPC has working groups, UCU expects all of its delegates to serve on one. Finance, structure, pensions and income, health, social care, transport, black and ethnic elders, women and trade unions. These working parties regularly organise events and produce information materials, but remain responsible to the EC for their activities.

NPC prioritises campaigns at the Pensioners Parliament and organises activities and lobbies on a range of issues:

- *Single-Tier state pension- not good enough and wants a citizen pension which is tied to the living wage.

- *Universal Pensioners benefit- fighting to retain the winter fuel allowance and free bus passes.

- *Fair Care- wants a new type of social care system – A National Care Service- integrated with the NHS and funded through taxation

- *Fuel Poverty Campaign – fighting government decision to freeze payments for 4 years.

- *All pensioners to receive increases in the state pension irrespective of where in the world they live.

- *Dignity code for older people- wants all services to adopt this which upholds the rights and maintains the personal dignity of older people.

- *Campaign for Better Transport – fighting to retain services and extend free access to travel for older people.

- *Generations United – working to build solidarity between generation to fight austerity and bring improvements to all. Reports from this body are sent to UCU NEC and are circulated to RMBs.

Public Sector Pensioners Council

Public Service Pensioners' Council represents the interests of retired public servants.

Founded almost fifty years ago, PSPC brings together the various organisations for retired public servants and the retired members' sections of public sector unions, providing a united voice on issues of concern to government and the public.

We campaign alongside other organisations, including the National Pensioners' Convention and the TUC, to protect the interests of pensioners and protect public service pensions.

PSPC members are not just concerned about protecting existing pensioners. From the vantage point of retirement, we recognise the importance of pensions for current and future public sector workers alike.

The PSPC therefore aims to provide access to better information on the public service pension schemes and on the case for good pension provision for public servants and better State provision for all pensioners to ensure dignity in retirement. The importance and the true costs of public service pensions are all too often misunderstood or misrepresented. We believe in protecting public service pensioners by promoting the facts rather than misconceptions.

UCU is affiliated to this organisation and sends two delegates per year to their AGM, and has one delegate on their executive. UCU circulates reports of meetings, lobbies and campaigns to RMB's.

FERPA

The European Federation of Retired and Older People is a member of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

FERPA works actively to shape European Union legislation and policies through direct lobbying of different European institutions. It wants a procedure to be set up for the European Commission to consult the most representative organizations of retired and older people in order that their voice should be heard.

It was founded in 1993 by pensioners who wanted to carry on their trade union struggle for a fairer, more democratic, more civic-minded and inclusive society with young people and active workers. It coordinates its policy with that of the ETUC, especially on social security and social protection, with a particular focus on pensions, health care, and action against social exclusion and poverty, which affect more than 50 million of Europe's citizens, over 16 million of them older people, many of whom are older women living alone. FERPA is funded from affiliation fees from its member organizations and does not receive any funding from government sources. It has 40 organization members from 21 European countries which represents 10 million members. The two organizations who are members from the UK are the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC).

Unions who wish to be involved affiliate to FERPA via the TUC and from this group the delegate is selected who attends the meetings and reports back. They serve on the executive committee for 4 years. This body meets twice a year. There is a congress every 4 years. There is also a women's committee that meets before the executive.

UCU receives reports of all meetings and these are circulated to RMBs. UCU is not affiliated to this body.

Feb 2016 Geraldine Egan UCU Pensions.

FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES RETRAITÉS ET DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES.

We regularly receive papers for the meetings of FERPA; sometimes the papers are in French, sometimes English. If you would like to receive these regularly, then email ucu.swest@gmail.com and we will forward them to you.

Jo Corke

7. Other Lives: Avril Henry.

Avril Henry was a member of this branch until her death on April 20th 2016.

She is known in Exeter for her work on the Exeter Cathedral Internet Project*, a project which was nearly scuppered by Exeter Uni itself.

She joined the Exeter University in 1970 as a Lecturer, and was Professor of Medieval Culture from 1995 to 2000; together with Anna Carson Hulbert, cathedral conservator, she worked on the project for twenty-four years from 1976 to 2000.



In 2000, THES** reported that the Queen had ordered Exeter University to set up a grievance committee to hear complaints from Avril Henry whose research was abandoned because it was ineligible for the research assessment exercise.

The THES revealed in March that year that vice-chancellor Sir Geoffrey Holland had denied Professor Henry a hearing, prompting a complaint by the AUT that his decision was unconstitutional.

This may strike a chord with those who claimed that the dash for research funding caused by the RAE was and still is damaging research and eroding academic freedom.

Professor Henry had been awarded £4,631 to complete an interactive computer application that would catalogue sculptures at Exeter Cathedral. She had agreed a two-year research-only contract that would run until her retirement. Exeter withdrew the funds when it emerged that Professor Henry's retirement would render her work ineligible for the 2001 RAE. THES reported that she was told that, despite an acknowledgement that her work was "of international standing", the "awful truth" was that the university could not "get any RAE joy from it".

Chris Cheesman, AUT assistant general secretary, said at the time, "We assume the

Harry Heaney recalls being a member of a three-person panel considering whether the probationary period of a young colleague should be judged unsatisfactory: Russ so

completely demolished the case made by the witnesses that the lay chair did not wait to have a discussion at the end of the hearing, but simply stated that it was clear that a case for dismissal had not been made.

Nevertheless, Russ often said that in casework we should not try to defend the indefensible: the aim of a good Union officer should be to ensure a just outcome.

Anyone attending national meetings of the AUT with Russ heard at first-hand his passionate and effective oratory. He made many friends and contacts among other branches of the AUT, and was known and respected by a succession of Union General Secretaries.

Outside the University there were many people in Loughborough, Leicestershire and the wider East Midlands who benefited from Russ's help. He was an officer of Loughborough TUC for many years. In the 1970s he was very active in opposing the National Front. He was a great supporter of the miners in 1984. In retirement Russ became very active in community politics in his local area as a member of the Storer and Ashby Road Residents' Group.

He has been an inspiration and mentor to two whole generations of younger activists, and it is only half-jokingly that he is referred to by some committee members as The Great Helmsman.

Jo Corke

Harry Heaney & Rob Kirkwood EM

8. Book corner.

Robert Tressell - A Life in Hell: The Biography of the Author and His Ragged Trousered Philanthropists. Author: Ian Hernon (Red Axe Books £12.99)

A review by Denis McShane who said we could use it in the newsletter.

The oddly named novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* was said to have won Labour the 1945 general election. I read

it as a young leftie in the Labour Party in the 1970s and it fired up my socialist fervour with its description of the treatment of building workers and decorators in the first years of the last century.

Tressell is no Zola or Orwell, imagining the life of the oppressed proletariat from the perch of the full time novelist. Robert Tressell was actually Robert Noonan, born in Ireland, who lived and

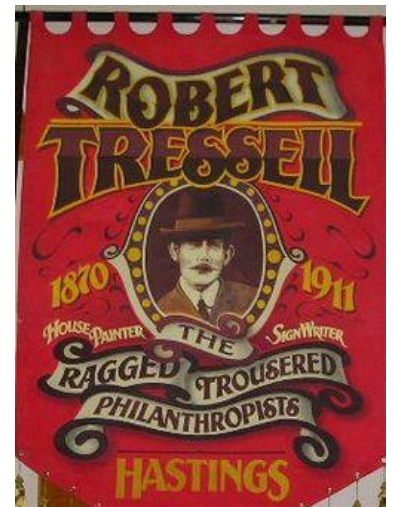
worked in gold-rush South Africa at the end of the 19th century and then settled as a painter and sign writer in Hastings.

His book ran to 1,600 pages of Dickensian description of the building trade workers, their brutal, greedy employers, the pomposity of local civic dignitaries, and the laziness of local editors who were part of the Hastings small town elite.

It is a gripping page-turning tale. We no longer have working class writers. Novels about exploitation of labour may be written about India but not about the armies of migrant and native workers here in Britain who still get up at 4 in the morning to clean offices, fill sandwiches, care for incontinent Alzheimers patients and staff our 7/24 transport and coffee shop economy.

Robert Noonan died aged 41 from TB in 1911 and his daughter preserved the handwritten manuscript, editing it down for publication in 1914 so that it became the biggest selling book about the exploitation of British workers, inspiring all those who helped grow the Labour Party and trade union movement between the wars.

The House of Commons lobby journalist, Ian Hernon, who is also deputy editor of the left wing magazine *Tribune*, started life on the Hastings Observer and has been fascinated for decades by the mystery of Hastings's most famous socialist and writer. He has now



written what might be called “The hunt for the man who inspired the British Left”. Using all his journalist’s skills and his knowledge of Hastings, Hernon takes us back to the life of a man who grew up at the height of the British empire when Ireland and South Africa were all under one crown, and then settled to a life of penury and hard work with his wife and daughter on the south coast of England.

Hernon quotes copiously from the Ragged Trousered Philanthropists but it is Tressell’s life that makes this book come to life as a very enjoyable read.

Denis MacShane

Former MP Denis MacShane’s latest book is *Brexit: How Britain Will Leave Europe* (IB Tauris.)

9. Care and State Pension reform



The Nuffield Foundation is funding a research project on understanding the interactions between state pension and long-term care reform. It involves researchers from the Pensions Policy Institute, the Personal Social Services Research Unit at the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Health Economics and Political Science and the Health Economics Group at the University of East Anglia. The first report has been produced: *Interactions between state pension and long-term care reforms: An overview* (November 2015). Inevitably it cannot be a final evaluation. The New State Pension (NSP) operates from April 2016; the DWP is still frenetically trying to iron out the glitches in a scheme that was firmer on “vision” (reducing spending) than mundane detail.

The report correctly identifies that post 2040 the NSP will actually save money compared to an extrapolated costing for the old scheme since the State Second Pension would have

had an accelerating effect on expenditure. The current state pension system uprated by the triple lock would cost around 9.1% of GDP by 2060 compared with 8.7% for the NSP uprated by the triple lock, or 7.7% if uprated by earnings. This might indicate that the days of the triple lock are numbered.

Lower income renters are those more likely to lose out from the pension reforms as they can lose more in means-tested benefits than they gain in state pensions. Reduced Housing Benefit is a main reason why low earning renters do not benefit from higher state pension income.

This report fails to mention the impact on those in public sector pensions of contracting out which will lower the NSP for those pensioners. Reforms to the English long-term care financing system were also to be introduced in 2016 but have recently been postponed until 2020. Already we have seen a steadily decreasing life-time cap for a portion of care costs. The combined effects of these two sets of reforms have received little attention despite interactions between them.

The “simplified” NSP will still involve some means testing of benefits such as Housing benefit and some disability additions. Savings Credit is abolished for new retirees in April 2016. This may have profound implications for both NSP and Care funding. As alluded to before, low earning renters are less likely to benefit from the reforms. Their entitlements to means-tested benefits can fall because of the removal of the Savings Credit and to offset higher state pension. Therefore some individuals, even if they have a higher NSP, could see a fall in net income. Their entitlement to means-tested benefits is reduced by more than the increase in their state pension income.

On present Government thinking the removal of the Savings Credit will lead to the removal of the savings disregard in residential care. This is one reason why the state pension reforms can appear to cause a reduction in state support for care needs. If an individual’s net income changes as a result of changes in

their state pension entitlement, the contribution they are required to pay towards their care costs can change. Thus an increase in state pension income can be wholly or partially offset by an increase in liability for care charges. Additionally, the residential care means test incorporates a small disregard on income from savings (the 'savings disregard') which was implemented when the Savings Credit was introduced. The savings disregard applies to all forms of savings income and people do not have to receive the Savings Credit to benefit from it. Since the pension reforms remove the Savings Credit this disregard may also end, with a consequent increase in care costs.

Long-term care for older people costs much less than state pensions but is projected to rise substantially even under the current funding system due to the rising numbers of people at the ages where care needs are greatest. In contrast with the state pension reforms, the long-term care financing reforms to be implemented in 2020, are projected to increase public expenditure on social care for older people from about 2025 compared with the current system. By 2035 net public spending on social care for older people is projected to be 0.80% of GDP under the reforms compared with 0.69% for the current financing system. But even this essentially small increase – scarcely enough to fund a small war – can be eroded by the interaction between the care, pension and benefit systems. We can be certain that the promises on long-term care will be extravagant but the financing will be miserly.

Julian Atkinson EM

10 SWTUC Pensioners Conference 2016

Advance notice: the next annual Conference of the South West TUC Pensioners will be held at the Weston College, Knightstone Campus, Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2AL on Thursday, 20 **October**, 2016 from 10.30 a.m. to 3.30pm.

As an affiliated branch we can send a couple of delegates, so if you would like to attend let us know. Conference and travel expenses will be paid.

Nomination of Delegates to the South West TUC Pensioners' Committee. The Committee has 22 seats. To stand for nomination to the South West TUC Pensioners' Committee you must either be in attendance at the South West TUC Pensioners' Annual Conference or present your apologies. If you are interested in standing, let us know.

Jo Corke

11. Motions to Congress 2016

The following motions of interest to UCU Retired Members have been submitted. The full text is in a separate document circulated with this newsletter (if I remember).

1. Solidarity with academics and teachers in Turkey *London Retired Members' Branch*
2. Education and training of care staff *Eastern and Home Counties RMB.*
3. Expenses for Wales RM branch meetings *Wales RMB*
4. Retired members: voting protocol on NEC (and HEC/FEC) *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Committee*
5. Inclusion *West Midlands RMB*
6. Defend our NHS *North West RMB*
7. The Crisis in Social Care *East Midlands RMB*
8. Campaigning for improved state pension *Southern RMB, Northern RMB*
9. USS and Ethical Investment *University of Oxford*



Geraldine Egan UCU Pensions

12. UCU SW Retired Members Branch

The branch has been underway for four years with over 200 members. We are affiliated to the Western branch of the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), and to Torbay, Exeter and Glos. local TUCs. If you worked outside the South West but lived or now live in the South West, you are welcome to join our branch. We

have welcomed about 20 new members this year, including some of you retiring from Central.

Meetings: We hold meetings three times a year, generally in Exeter, but **this time in Bristol**. The meetings centre round important issues for UCU pensioners and give a chance to chat to other members.

Newsletter: A termly newsletter for retired UCU branch members is sent to all branch members for whom we have email addresses.

Email addresses: We encourage you to use their home email for when you give up your work email address. Please let us have your email address and any changes.

Just room for a couple of union banners from the MayDay 2016 Bristol march.



Unfortunately there was no UCU banner in evidence.....

15. For more information

please contact ucu.swest@gmail.com
or contact the officers here:

South West Branch officers and committee

Chair: Jo Corke ucu.swest@gmail.com
Vice Chair: Liza Sentance, lizasentance@hotmail.com
Secretary: Pat Mee Patriciamee@sky.com
Regional rep: Margaret George mmargaretg@gmail.com
Treasurer: John Daniell john.daniell@btinternet.com
Membership: Tom Murray tom.murray2@blueyonder.co.uk
Environmental Rep Liza lizasentance@hotmail.com
TUC Exeter Pete Bailey peter.bailey1@hotmail.com
TUC Torbay Liza Sentance lizasentance@hotmail.com
SW NPC & Glos TC. Ruth Amias ruthamias2000@yahoo.co.uk

More information and news from these websites.

UCU National Website: <http://www.ucu.org.uk>

AgeUK: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Independent Age: www.independentage.org.

68 is too late: www.68istoolate.org.uk

National Pensioners Convention (NPC): <http://npcuk.org>

NPC: <http://npcuk.org/>

