



The General Election and TTIP

One of the most important subjects that candidates should take a stand on in the General Election is the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). We think that it is important that electors in their constituencies should examine the stand of the various candidates in order to decide how to cast their vote. This is an important pointer in deciding whether the candidates genuinely take a stand against the fraudulent austerity agenda which seeks to offload all the ill effects of economic and other crises onto working people.

report by *Michael Chant*

There are several political parties standing candidates in the General Election opposed to TTIP. They include the following:

National Health Action (NHA) Party

The NHA Party opposes TTIP from the point of view of restoring the NHS as a safe, comprehensive, publicly funded, publicly delivered, and publicly accountable integrated healthcare system. It points out that TTIP threatens not only the NHS but the health and well-being of the public. Its manifesto states: "TTIP will leave the UK prey to being sued in secret courts under the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause and the supposed economic benefits of the treaty benefits are now being seriously questioned. If the EU does sign this treaty with the United States, we believe the British Government must exercise its right to a full opt out."

The Party also is opposed in principle to monetary union, pointing out that the Eurozone has been transformed into a two-tier system in which richer nations have the

power to impose "austerity" policies on poorer ones.

Socialist Labour Party

The SLP points out that international monopolies put human well-being at risk. Its manifesto states: "We vigorously oppose any moves through secretive trading alliance such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) to give added power to Corporations to challenge governments and other democratic agencies to secretive courts from preventing them profiteering from their harmful products and activities."

Green Party

The Greens are opposing TTIP from the point of view of decisions being made by private corporations and not by democratically elected governments. Its manifesto states: "TTIP is globalisation in its worst form, designed to submit democratically elected governments to the will of private corporations. Companies will be able to take legal action against governments that they think threaten their profits. National policies in EU countries for health, environmental, consumer and social protection could be challenged by companies from anywhere in the world in private international tribunals, run by corporate lawyers."

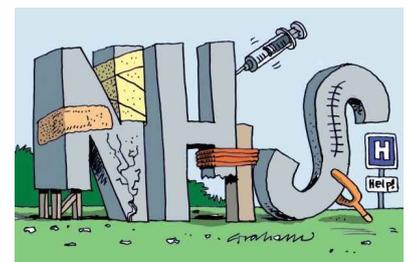
The manifesto points out that under TTIP, attempts to bring the NHS and the railways back into public ownership could be financially penalised or blocked; authorisations for GMOs could be accelerated; and the regulations of banks and the financial industry would be harder, if not impossible.

Plaid Cymru

Plaid Cymru oppose TTIP in the context of supporting locally produced food and



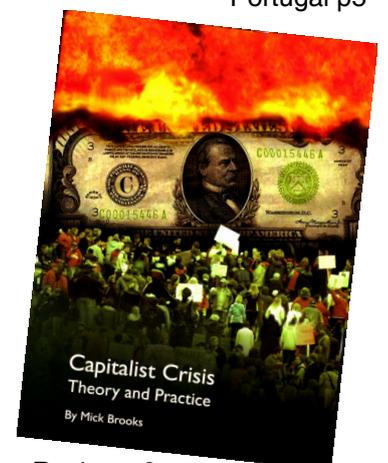
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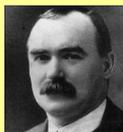


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→ ensuring food quality standards are not breached. Their manifesto opposes "the lowering of quality thresholds as part of the EU-US TTIP trade negotiations."

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC)

TUSC takes a stand for "public ownership, not private profit". Its manifesto states: "No to ... TTIP and all secret austerity treaties."

Communist Party of Britain

The CPB point out the extreme danger posed by TTIP, including the danger to healthcare, education and workplace rights.

Left Unity

Left Unity oppose TTIP, both in terms of opening up the NHS to the market, and in terms of opposing neo-liberal economic policies. Its manifesto states that it supports "governments that stand up for ordinary people against the corporations, speculators and investment bankers".

Scottish National Party

The SNP states: "We will also seek an explicit exemption for the NHS and Scottish Water, as part of a general public sector exemption, from the terms of the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership."

Of the other parties, the Conservative Party has taken every opportunity to try to justify TTIP. The Lib Dems have taken an enthusiastic position in TTIP's support.

And although there are Labour politicians

who oppose TTIP, the Labour Party manifesto states: "We support the principles behind the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Treaty (TTIP). We will hold the European Commission to account on issues of concern, including the impact on public services and the Investor to State Dispute Settlement Mechanism. And we will ensure the NHS is protected from the TTIP treaty." It should also be pointed out that there are several trade unions who oppose TTIP, and the TUC itself adopted a comprehensive resolution at the 2014 Congress opposing TTIP. In addition, local TUCs at their own conferences opposed TTIP.

Electors, therefore, must make up their own minds about whether the Labour candidates oppose austerity or not.

What is certain is that the campaign against TTIP will continue irrespective of whichever party or parties eventually form the government.

Perhaps as never before, the election campaign is showing that people are in struggle and participating in the campaign on that basis, rather than sitting back and merely putting a cross or abstaining as the sum total of their political involvement.

Nevertheless, the electorate must be wary of the establishment, which is in favour of TTIP, staging an electoral coup against the will of the electorate. The struggle against TTIP and the whole austerity agenda must be seen through to the end.

EU Matters

EU leaders agreed on 19 March to construct an Energy Union with what the Commission has spoken of as a "dynamic governance process." Probably reflecting German views, the president of the EU parliament, Martin Schulz, pronounced that the Energy Union should be "a part of the European structure, of the communitarian method, rather than left solely in the hands of member-states", the Coal and Steel Community and the internal market.

The chairperson of the Irish Parliament's Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, Dominic Hannigan, has warned that a British exit from the EU "would be a profound and fundamental change in the Irish-British relationship that would inevitably raise questions about Ireland's place in the EU."

President of the EU Central Bank, Mario Draghi, has called for a "quantum leap" in the institutional convergence of the euro zone. Euro-zone countries had not yet converged sufficiently to dispel doubts about the bloc's cohesion, he said, while stressing that "we have now integrated too much to even entertain reversing the process: our economies are far too intertwined."

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Democracy needs to be protected NOW

One word that is misused, misunderstood and not fully appreciated is 'democracy'. Paid politicians and many political activists mouth the word or disabuse the full meaning.

Democracy is not just voting once in a few years in a General Election or local authority elections – that is formal democracy which should be accompanied with discussion and debate. Many MPs consider that once elected to Parliament they can just follow their party whips or their own personal whims. Instead they should be responsible to the voters who elected them and include reporting back or consulting over key issues and policies as part of their accountability.

Informal democracy is where people can lobby those in parliament and those with power to press for particular policies and laws. This includes demonstrations on the streets and using public meetings to broadcast a particular view and gather some momentum and support for particular campaigns. Nowadays, to change policies and EU legislation, demonstrations have to take place in Brussels because that is where decisions are taken and legislation takes place.

The practical form of democracy covers many aspects. Taxation can and should be used to: transfer financial resources from rich areas and individuals to poorer areas and people; support families with children; and older people in the later years of their lives with proper care. The NHS should be fully funded out of the national coffers and budgeted for in a rational manner by governments. That must include welfare provisions and social security. Education must be properly financed out of taxes not only for the benefit

of preparing pupils and students for useful employment but also for a full enjoyable life including the arts.

Democracy did and should once again include services like the postal system where we all pay one rate to have a letter or package delivered anywhere in the country. The railways should be brought back under government control and run for the benefit of passengers, goods and the country's economy not the unaccountable privateers and banks who own the railway stock.

All these forms of democracy have been under attack for the past few decades and have currently reached a critical stage within the EU, following the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. This is where inter-governmental arrangements have been dumped to be replaced by centralised government in Brussels.

As we have stated many times in the *Democrat*, the EU is the antithesis of democracy. The EU has a virtually powerless parliament which cannot legislate but is dressed up to look like democracy. There are unaccountable EU Institutions including the: Commission which is the legislative executive; European Court of Justice; and European Central Bank as well as a number of European Agencies like the European Rail Authority in Lille, France.

Now, we have the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and other treaties with unelected EU officials conducting top secret negotiations. The Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) already in operation has secret unelected and unaccountable tribunals overriding national governments and parliaments. None of which, like the EU Constitution, was re-



quested in any way by electorates in any of the countries involved with similar so called 'trade agreements'.

The biggest attack on democracy today comes from TTIP which will bring about the loss of powers by governments and parliaments of nation-states and in turn their right to self-determination, national independence and democracy. Again, as we have stated many times, democracy can only function within nation-states and not between them.

TTIP and those behind the EU have all but stated their aim is to unravel history and push us all back towards unbridled capitalism to do whatever it wishes anywhere in the world with the free movement of everything. Having undone the Russian Revolution they may even want to push us back further to feudalism beyond the French Revolution which established the nation state and national democracy, the American war of Independence and the English Revolution which ended the divine right of kings to rule. Included would be everything in between – establishing trade unions, the Chartists and right to vote for men and women.

The tall order upon us all is to defend every aspect of democracy and in doing so open the way for a rational development of nation-states without interference from others. The signs are good that this struggle is taking place but it needs to be encouraged and amplified. The central plank of this struggle must be made clear where national democracy and the right to self determination are two sides of the same coin.

Boats across the Mediterranean

EU Citizen's Initiative

With a European "parliament" that cannot initiate legislation and an executive that is unelected, the EU's attempt under the Lisbon Treaty to get closer to its "citizens" has been a dismal failure.

This month the European Citizens' Initiative is three years old when 51 initiatives were launched. The Commission binned 20 of them as inadmissible, and 28 did not reach the required one million signatures within a year. Three did; but the Commission has turned none of these into EU law. On 3 March 2015 the Commission officially received 1,173,130 validated signatures for the initiative "Stop Vivisection"—the third proposal since April 2012.

This is an astoundingly low rate of success: out of 51 initiatives launched over three years only three have succeeded. These were "Water Is a Human Right," "One of Us" (on the protection of human embryos), and now "Stop Vivisection." In September 2014 the Commission rejected an initiative against TTIP and CETA, on spurious grounds, even though more than 1½ million signatures were collected and all the other requirements of the process were satisfied. This rejection gave rise to an appeal to the EU Court of Justice.

Few people know of the existence of the Citizens' Initiative, a process that poses excessive legal, technical and other burdens for campaigners. Once an initiative has successfully passed all hurdles the Commission is not even obliged to act!

In the next three months the Commission will have to invite organisers of the latest initiatives to Brussels to explain their proposals in more depth. The upshot may still be binning the initiatives.

Thousands of people are fleeing from Africa and the Middle East to get to 'Europe'. Hundreds are losing their lives en route and in unsuitable sailing vessels. Attention by the media is on the loss of life and not the basic causes or long history of imperialism.

Borders of some of the countries involved were defined in 1886 with the 'Scramble for Africa', the aftermath of the First World War with the break-up of the Ottoman Empire and Second World War with the creation of Israel and independence from France of Syria. The fall of the British backed Shah of Iran and the West's backing him followed more recently by the invasion of Iraq and smashing up the infrastructure. This laid down the pattern for regime change by ridding or killing leaders of countries who would not bend their knee to imperialism.

The African Union of 54 nation-states has a population of over one billion. The EU has unequal trade agreements with former European colonies in Africa and has forced many of them to adopt 'free'

markets, neo-liberal and austerity policies.

Significantly Colonel Gaddafi was head of the African Union up to 2010. He was cruelly assassinated in 2011 during the NATO military intervention which destroyed the infrastructure of Libya and destabilised this rich country.

The 'Arab Spring' started in late 2010 with dreadful and tragic results in Syria. Religious differences have always been stirred up by imperialists wherever they interfere. The 'Arab Spring' was encouraged by the West as an attempt to achieve regime change by indirect interference and encouragement.



Opposition to TTIP amongst trade unions spreads

Public-service trade unions in central European and Balkan countries have concluded that the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Comprehensive Trade and Economic Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada are harmful for democracy and workers, their families and communities. They have been trying to convince their governments and political parties to be more open and transparent, to be clearer on excluding public services, and to be more forceful on improving workers' rights. Their governments ignore them and instead mount a charm offensive to convince people of the benefits of the agreements. But no factual text is offered to support the governments' claims. Therefore the unions say, No to CETA; stop the TTIP negotiations; and no to secrecy in trade negotiations.

The negotiations between the EU and Canada are completed and must now be decided on by governments and parliaments; the negotiations between the EU and the United States are at an advanced stage, with the aim of being completed by the end of the year. Another free-trade agreement,

the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), is being negotiated by twenty-three countries around the globe, including the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia, Pakistan, and Mexico. There are also negotiations between the United States and eleven countries, mostly in Asia, for a proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The aim is to create a maze of agreements around the world that interlink and reign in public authorities.

Corporate interests are firmly behind this plan to remove politics from the economy and prevent progressive parties setting societies on a more socially just and democratic course. To demonstrate their concern, a number of the unions participated in the global day of action on 18 April. The meeting took place in Bled, Slovenia, and delegates attended from trade unions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Several unions referred to the role played by the US Chamber of Commerce, a lobbying group that influences governments to adopt corporate-friendly legislation.

Resistance to the euro and to the EU grows

The European Alliance of EU critical Movements and organisations (TEAM) is being rejuvenated. A new website will be on-line very soon with plenty of information from EU Member States and other European countries. There is a TEAM facebook which people may join. A new and young Executive has been elected and given the task of turning TEAM into an information and network centre.

TEAM was originally founded in 1992 to show solidarity with the Danish People's Movement against the EU. CAEF was a founder organisation and has played a part in TEAM ever since.

Norway



Nei til EU in Norway is celebrating ten consecutive years with a 'No'-majority in opinion polls on EU membership.

Denmark

A majority in the Danish parliament wants Denmark to change the Danish opt-out on the EU's supranational justice and home affairs policy to an opt-in model like Ireland and the UK.

Denmark will have a referendum on the EU's supranational justice and home affairs policy no later than March 2016.

The Danish People's Movement against the EU has joined with others to prevent Denmark losing sovereignty over these key policy areas and that of a proposed EU banking union.

Portugal

The poster above Portugal reads: "Throw the Euro out! Down with the government of national treason! The Escudo (former Portuguese currency)



shall come back! Long live the government of democratic and patriotic unity!"

This poster is a statement about the all important national question and right to self determination of a nation-state and a key part of the Red Green alliance during the election campaign due in September.

The alliance consists of the Green Party (PEV), which is much more to the left than the German Green Party, and the Communist Party of Portugal (PCP).

Ireland

The secretary of the People's Movement, Frank Keoghan, addressed a packed meeting called by Kildare Right2Water and chaired by Councillor Joanne Pender in Newbridge on the subject of "Water and TTIP." Two Councillors also attended, and there was a wide-ranging discussion on TTIP and the CETA.

Germany

At the end of March a demonstration of 17,000 people took place outside the brand new European Central Bank building in Frankfurt.

Under the slogan *Blockupy* the demonstrators were making the point that the ECB is undemocratic and accountable to nobody. This EU institution is supposed to control economic matters only to keep inflation down. In practice the Bank controls interest and exchange rates. With the IMF and Commission it dictates austerity measures.

Iceland

The Icelandic Government has withdrawn its application to join the EU.

EU

Italy

The leader of Italy's anti-establishment Five-Star Movement has taken his campaign for a referendum on the euro to Brussels, holding out the prospect of co-operating with other anti-euro parties.

Beppe Grillo, the former comic who built the Five-Star Movement into Italy's second-biggest political force, has frequently called for voters to be allowed to decide whether to stay in the euro zone. The constitutional hurdles would make a full referendum on Italy's membership of the single currency almost impossible to organise, but Grillo said he would press through a public petition for a consultative referendum. "If we can take 3 or 4 million signatures into parliament, then miracles can happen," he told reporters during a visit to the EU Parliament.

Even if it could not change the law immediately, a referendum on the euro would have the potential to stir growing hostility to the single currency in Italy after six years of severe economic crisis.

The Five-Star Movement appears to have lost some of the momentum that gave it approximately a quarter of the vote in last year's parliamentary elections. Opinion polls suggest that it remains Italy's second-strongest force, behind the centre-left Democratic Party of the prime minister, Matteo Renzi.

Vote to oppose TTIP, the cuts and austerity policies. They emanate from Brussels

No! to the EU of the Monopolies - There is An Alternative

The Campaign against Euro-federalism recognises that:

1. The European Union represents the interests of the neo-liberal agenda of the dominance of the global monopolies, the transnational corporations and the financial oligarchy of the EU. This includes the so-called "free trade", a "free trade" which in fact constitutes control of markets, resources and labour.
2. The alleged aim of so-called "free trade" and "free movement of capital, goods, services and labour" to create jobs, spur investment and promote economic growth is a complete fraud.
3. The EU project is one of neo-liberal globalisation which is imposing a fraudulent austerity agenda on the peoples of Europe.
4. The EU violates the sovereignty of the nations, national governments and states that are its members.
5. The "old imperialist powers" of Europe are colluding and contending to dominate the other states, including the former Eastern European countries, as well as Greece and others.

And notes that:

1. Those whose interests are served by the EU attempt to sway public opinion by imbuing workers with false hopes that future employment will be brought about by implementing EU directives and reactionary government policies.
2. The dangerous developments within the EU, such as the secret TTIP negotiations with the United States, are designed to impose private monopoly interests and wreck public services. This is under the fraud of harmonising regulation, and the proposals for a European armed force which would lead to the escalation and broadening of armed conflict.
3. The austerity programme pursued by the Westminster Government has been consistent with the neo-liberal programme of the EU, which concentrates political, economic and military power in fewer and fewer hands.
4. That there is a powerful movement of the people in this country and throughout Europe against the imposition of "austerity", a movement which fights against the neo-liberalism which enriches the elite who expropriate the people's social wealth. This devastates living standards and destroys public

services, public authority and social programmes, as well as devastating the environment.

In these circumstances, the Campaign against Euro-federalism (CAEF) affirms that there *is* an alternative which puts the people's well-being at the centre of considerations and defends the rights of all. This alternative is where people have control of their own lives and future, in which the economy is our economy, resources are our resources, and the co-operation of the peoples of Europe is strengthened for their mutual benefit, not for the rich and powerful. The interests of the monopolies are made subservient to the public good in each and every country and throughout Europe.

Some features of this alternative, to which the people aspire and are fighting to realise are:

1. The power for sovereign states to decide on their own development strategies and policies.
2. The power of economic sovereignty for people to decide on the direction of their own economies.
3. The power to restrict the operation of foreign capital and monopolies and instead to develop co-operation within the working class movement for the public interest.
4. The power to unite with workers from whatever origin so that the rights of all workers are upheld and remuneration and conditions are raised, not lowered.
5. The power to develop public services for the public good away from the control of private interests.
6. The power to conduct investment, as well as inter-European and international trade, away from the control of the bodies of the European Union - pending and future trade agreements should be concluded not on the basis of neo-liberal "free trade", which means domination of the monopolies, but on the basis of mutual benefit of working people of sovereign countries.
7. Current "free trade agreements" which represent the right of the monopolies to dictate the economic agenda to the detriment of working people should be abrogated. International trade should be conducted on the basis of the principles of self-reliance, equal trade for mutual benefit with all nations regardless of their political regime, and the inalienable right of working people to control →

Oppose TTIP and ISDS

CAEF should carry out every possible action and alert all affiliated organisations and members on the full implications of the US/EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS). This also applies to the imminent Canada/EU Comprehensive Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and India/EU trade agreement. The contents and text of these treaties has been deliberately kept secret from governments, national parliaments and electorates.

CAEF recognises that TTIP combined with ISDS, which is already in operation, CETA and TiSA is the largest frontal attack in history on all forms of democracy. If not stopped they would:

- * Give rights to transnational corporations and banks to override national governments and parliaments and write the rules for this hidden process
- * Erode the sovereignty of nation states and their rights to self determination, national independence and democracy
- * Lower social standards
- * Attack and undermine workers and trade union rights
- * Strangle the development of economies



- * Dilute food safety rules
- * Undermine regulations on the use of toxic chemicals

This AGM of CAEF resolves to assist affiliated organisations and member to expose and oppose TTIP, ISDS, CETA and TiSA in this attempt to bolt together the EU, Canadian and US markets. This to be done by:

- * Regular updates on the CAEF website
- * Providing as much information in electronic formats as practical
- * Reports on the CAEF website of actions and protests taking place across Europe, the US and Canada
- * Presenting arguments against those forces and vested interests which support these treaties
- * Making clear that even if ISDS was stopped there are many other severe implications which would emanate from the other treaties

CAEF recognises this as an opportunity to soundly defeat those interests which support these treaties who influence and operate the EU, eg the unelected Commission, European Round Table of Industrialists and tens of thousands of lobbyists in Brussels.

CAEF's primary aims remain the defence of democracy, the right to self determination of nation-states and mutually beneficial trade agreements.

Passed unanimously

➔ all decision-making that affects the socialised economy and the social and natural environment.

In short, the alternative lies in upholding the public good, opposing the dictate of European and global monopolies, including the international financiers, and affirming the sovereignty of each state's public authority over the direc-

tion of its economy and society as a whole. On that basis, the people of each country can develop their co-operation and unity which expresses their interests and not that of the transnational corporations; on that basis sovereign peoples can develop their own institutions of international mutual benefit.

Passed unanimously

Definitions

Two European courts in one continent

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) entered into force on 3 September 1953 and established the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The Council of Europe of 47 member states is responsible for the ECHR. Individuals may take their case to this court having exhausted court procedures in their own country.

The ECHR is often confused with the European Convention formed to draft the European Constitution which ended up, after a cutting and pasting exercise, as the Lisbon Treaty.

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) is an EU institution currently with 28 judges, one from each EU Member State. This court was established in 1952 by the Treaty of Paris as part of the European Coal and Steel Community. Its role is to interpret EU law and individuals cannot go to this court. In practice this Court comes down on the side of EU policies and is part of the thrust for an 'ever closer union'. This Court has ruled against trade union rights including collective bargaining – *Lavel* – and in favour of moving cheaper labour from one country to another – *posted workers* – as part of the 'free movement of labour'.

The European Convention drafted what, in the end, became the Lisbon Treaty. According to the Lisbon Treaty the EU is due to sign the ECHR but as yet has not done so.

Stop TTIP

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NATO + EU's

Very High Readiness Joint Task Force

The new Cold War has its winners as well as its losers. The biggest winners are the militaries in the West and the Western arms industry. They benefit from the new gigantic military build-up of NATO and EU.

Report by Horst Teubert

NATO uses the conflict with Russia as an opportunity to boost its NATO Response Force (NRF). The founding of NRF as a rapid reaction force capable of waging wars worldwide on short notice was announced in 2002. The NRF was supposed to command up to 25,000 troops. On 5 February 2015, NATO decided - having agreed on this generally at its summit in Newport (4/5 September 2014) - to enhance the NRF by creating a "spearhead force" of around 5,000 troops. It will be able to be deployed at very short notice within two days and therefore is officially known as Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF). Lead nations will be Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Poland and Spain. In addition, the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) based in Szczecin (Poland) will be upgraded to become the command authority for the VJTF. MNC NE is comprised of German, Polish, and Danish troops and is under the alternating command of a German or a Polish general. There will be six small NATO Command and Control Units in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria which can be used as military bases near the Russian border if tensions should escalate.

Because it takes some time to implement the VJTF, NATO has established an Interim VJTF led by Germany, the Netherlands and Norway. Half of the around 5,000 troops are from Germany. On 7 April, the

Interim VJTF started its first performance test, a so-called alert exercise which focussed on airlifted rapid relocation within NATO territory. A NATO spokesperson described the goal as preventing "terrorists" from advancing onto the territory of an allied country - an obvious allusion to Ukraine's civil war. There will be further VJTF manoeuvres all through 2015.

At the same time, pressure is mounting to build an EU army. In March, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, taking up an old German demand, declared an EU army would help "Europe" in its power struggle against Russia: "A common army among the Europeans would convey to Russia that we are serious about defending the values of the European Union." Just a few months before, leading military experts of the German SPD had published a paper calling for the EU to draw up a "white book" establishing a "common military policy", to increase "the number of joint European manoeuvres and exercises" and to "further enhance cooperation among the various armed forces". Also, a "permanent EU military headquarters" should be created. The experts made it clear that even regarding questions of war and peace, "the transfer of EU nations' sovereignty and the transformation



General Sir Adrian Bradshaw at a recent meeting in Hungary about VJTF. He is currently NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe and took part in the war in Iraq.

of the authority of decision-making to a democratically legitimated EU organ must be discussed".

Knowing very well that not every EU nation state is happy to deliver the decision over war and peace to an EU which is dominated by Germany, Berlin has already begun to build "European" military structures from scratch. The German army has integrated a paratrooper unit from the Netherlands into its "Rapid Forces Division" - a "milestone of integration", as the German press puts it. It has started a similarly close cooperation with the Polish army. More is to follow. Berlin hopes that in the end, it will possible to merge all these elements of cooperation into an EU army. The conflict with Russia makes it easier to convince states like Poland to obey.

The new Cold War has its winners, for example the militaries. It has its losers, too - the ordinary people who have to pay for the expensive military build-up, who have to bear unbearable propaganda (today, its anti-Russian propaganda) and who will have to die in future wars which will be waged by NATO and the EU.

Book review by Tony Grace

The Capitalist Crisis*

Theory and Practice by Mick Brooks

This immensely readable work is without doubt a Marxist analysis of the catastrophic events of recent years which have severely damaged but not destroyed the system we call capitalism. Yet the crisis persists and the author skilfully demonstrates, especially in chapter 3, how Marxist theory provides a comprehensive interpretation of the latest and also earlier upheavals eg the Great Depression of 1929-33 and the post World War II boom/slump cycle since 1973-74.

The alltoo familiar progress of the recent great recession, starting with the credit crunch of 2007 is set out in Part I. The dreary sequence of the economic disaster include: "The Greek Tragedy"; "The Rescue of Ireland" and the paralysis of the EU economy.

The "Financialisation thesis" promoted by the many apologists of Capitalism is shown in Chapter 4 to be entirely erroneous. This section helps to explain the complex terminology used by those who would spread confusion on this topic.

In part 5, the author demolishes the theories of under consumption, profit squeeze and the Brenner theory which attempt to explain the continuing fall in the rate of profit.

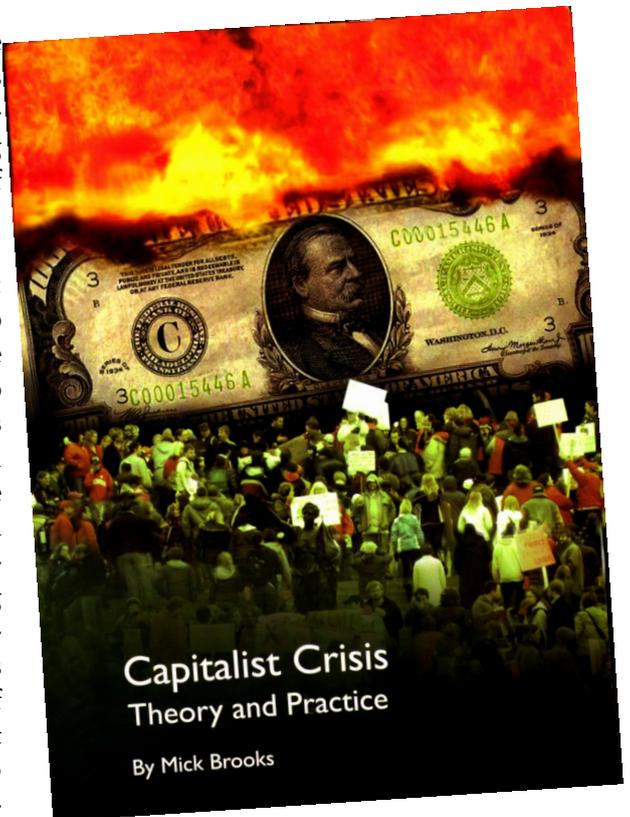
The complexity of the economic arguments concerning the fall in the rate of profit is explored in absorbing detail in the final pages of this section. The ultimate conclusion that it is not the recurring crises which have caused this but the "rising organic composition" of capital which in the author's words is decisive in determining variations in the rate of profit. This re-affirms Marx's state-

ment: "The reason for the fall in the rate of profit is overwhelmingly on account of the increasing organic composition of capital."

Part 6 poses the question: "What can the State do about the Crisis?" The answer considers the two main economic positions of Keynesianism and Monetarism. The essence of contemporary fiscal policy seems best summarised in the following quotation: "The Government can run a surplus meaning that it pays off part of the nation's debt that has been built up historically. This is a con-

tradictory fiscal policy, since it is effectively taking money out of people's pockets. Or it can run a deficit by spending more than it gets, leading to greater indebtedness. It can do this by cutting taxes or increasing public expenditure. Both of these count as an expansionary fiscal policy since they effectively put money in people's pockets. If the government increases government spending or reduces taxes, it is believed by Keynesians that this will have a knock on "multiplier effect" on economic activity.

In the final chapter, continuing austerity is predicted for "the heartland of modern capitalism", which accounts for more than 60% of world output. Even though the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India and China) expanded rapidly during the crisis yet, as they depend on the main western economies for their markets. Finally, the writer heralds the inevitability of



the fight back by the working class and gives this advice: "to be effective the labour movement needs a correct analysis of the situation it faces and flowing from that a correct programme."

As it cannot be bettered, the author's conclusion is quoted in full: "We can beat the cuts. But to do so we must be clear that we are taking on the entire might and interests of the ruling class."

This book was written by a socialist and Marxist. It is evident now more than ever, that the only real solution to the problems of working people is to transform society in the direction of socialism. Let us dedicate ourselves to this task."

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Quiz No. 145

Solve the following dingbats

1. **Ban a na**
2. **PinnAcLes**
3. **A spiders planet sized home**
4. **Money birth**
5. **Cloud Th**
5. **Birthdayyyy Partyyy**
7. **Imbibe xxs**
8. **Toffea
Tofee
Toffe
Toffie**
9. **pill a.m.**
10. **Poster
Poster FA ST
Poster
Poster**

**Answers
No. 144**

1. Altar Boy
2. Wedding Bells
3. Flower girls
4. Minister
5. Wedding night
6. Order of service
7. Exchange the vows
8. Let no man assunder
9. Top hat and tails
10. The first dance

AGM

Reports on CAEF's activity, financial situation and influence were all positive. Despite a small membership it is estimated and agreed that CAEF punches way over its weight with good results and positive influence. Two resolutions were adopted at the AGM and are printed in this issue.

The first deals with the General Election and Referendum on the EU. It was generally agreed that it can't be a foregone conclusion that the question written for the Referendum would be a straight in/out vote. What has to be done is to win the labour and trade union movement to support the holding of a referendum in the first place and that the question is for or against Britain's EU membership.

The second resolution deals with TTIP and similar so-called trade agreements and CAEF's total opposition to them. These agreements are collectively an attack on democracy and nation states and their right to self-determination.

Public Meeting

The public meeting after the AGM was addressed by Mick Brooks, an active trade unionist, who gave a no-nonsense talk about the current capitalist crisis and dealt succinctly with the difference between deficit and debt. He made quite clear that the austerity policies are counter-productive and are only making matters worse for people except the rich. The latter of course spend their accumulated wealth on luxuries rather than invest in production for the benefit of the national economy. His book is reviewed on page 9 and is available through *Democrat Press*.

Michael Chant addressed the questions of the General Election and the expected Referendum. He made quite clear that a lot of work has to be done to influence and move policies to be more progressive before and after the Election. This is especially so as far as the Labour Party is concerned and the labour and trade union movement in general. The anomaly of growing opposition to TTIP being negotiated by the EU at the same time as continued support for EU membership is an opportunity to expose the real architects behind both.

John Boyd as CAEF Secretary and joint author of the *First World War* pamphlet published by *Democrat Press* drew attention to the parallels between the run up to the war and the EU today. Imperialism has been resuscitated and is again on the march around the world. This is especially so in Africa and the Middle East where some problems emanate directly from the imperialist carve up over a century ago. In fact the desperate situation where people risk their lives to cross the Mediterranean to reach a country in the EU is a symptom of the implications of imperialism.

Questions and discussion followed each speaker giving all who attended to put in their point of view. There was an appeal to distribute CAEF leaflets at forthcoming public events and demonstrations. The collection at the meeting raised enough money to cover the cost of hiring the room and travel cost of the guest speaker.

This was a successful and enjoyable AGM and Public Meeting which followed hard on the equally successful CAEF conference earlier in the year. The hall mark of CAEF events is unity. Members from different political parties and groups and those of none can sit down together and discuss matters without any display or hint of sectarianism.

Renewal of subscriptions

Because of computer problems we were unable to send out renewal notices to CAEF members and affiliates with this issue of the Democrat. If there is the letter 'R' after your name and you have not renewed your subscription this year please send this to us as soon as practical.

Standing orders can be made by telling your own bank the sum and frequency and pay to sort code 08-92-99 and bank account 65476899 at the Co-operative Bank.

In the meantime donations to the campaign are very welcome and provide a much needed lift to our Campaign which has a lot of work to do. We thank all those who have donated over the recent period.

Useful Websites

CAEF does not necessarily agree with everything in these sites

Campaign against Euro-federalism with data from current, many feature articles and back issues of the Democrat.

www.caef.org.uk

EUobserver reports daily on EU matters with links to other newspapers and sources.

www.euobserver.com

Scottish CAEF:

homepage.ntlworld.com/foster-prendergast/scaef/index.files

Trade unionists against the EU Constitution (TUAEUC):

tuaeuc.org

No2EU yes to democracy:

NO2EU.com

TEAM the European alliance of EU critical organisations.

www.teameurope.info

Democracy Movement, a broad movement with a large number of supporters:

www.democracymovement.org.uk

Campaign for an Independent Britain (CIB):

eurofaq.freeuk.com

Labour Euro-Safeguards Campaign, for Labour Party members:

lesc.org.uk

Peoples' Movement Ireland:

people.ie

National Platform of Ireland:

nationalplatform.org

German foreign policy group of journalists:

german-foreign-policy.com

Open Europe—an influential think tank of leading business people:

openeurope.org.uk

Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO):

eulobbytours.org

Data on other sites welcome

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Please forward the next five issues of the *Democrat* to the address below. CAEF members are sent the paper free through the post. Please make cheques and POs to *Democrat Press*

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(d145)

Campaign against Euro-federalism

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[d145]

Campaign against Euro-federalism

The Campaign opposes:-

- the EU Constitution which hands over more powers to unelected and unaccountable bodies and reduces further the influence of Britain in the EU;
- the so called trade treaties such as TTIP, CETA and ISDS which are grave threats to all forms of democracy and national independence;
- the introduction of a Common Foreign and Security Policy and an EU Foreign Secretary;
- the formation of a European Army and battle groups as part of rapid reaction forces would be a threat to peace.

The Campaign is a democratic organisation and primarily oriented to the labour and trade union movement and people whom these organisations normally represent, including democrats, socialists, trade unionists, students and pensioners.

The Campaign is for democracy and accountability, independence, jobs the pound and against racism.

The Democrat

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Arthur Smelt asks

What Next?

"The use of recrimination in the past is to enforce effective action at the present"

Winston Churchill.

When the NHS came into being at the latter end of the 1940s the Labour government at the time had in mind some of the fundamentals of government by the people for the people.

The horrors of the second world war had created a degree of camaraderie to beat the common enemy, Nazism. Sadly however, there were still those who were and still are, imbued with the greed and grab mentality. Concerns were expressed that there were those

who were abusing a health service intended to benefit anyone in genuine need and be free at the point of delivery.

In every walk of life there are conscientious and altruistic people who try to do a good job and others who do the opposite. Ground level staff who witness incompetence, thieving, corruption and sheer waste of money and resources, must keep quiet or be black listed.

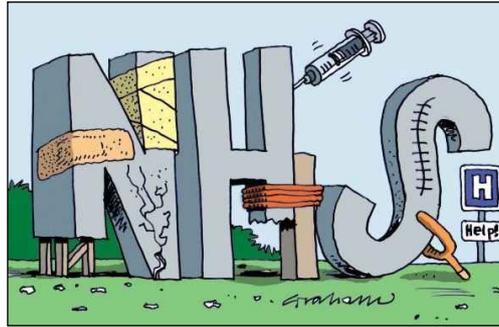
At one time hospital finance officers would submit estimates to the Board of Control as to how much it would cost to run the hospital for the coming financial year. When the financial year was nearing its end and it became clear that running costs had been overestimated as they usually were, money would be spent frivolously to make the estimates come right otherwise the estimates would be cut back.

In a short epistle of this kind it is impossible to highlight the plethora of incompetence, corruption and waste at local or central government level. However, the accusing finger needs to be pointing towards the mess made by central government in the hope that the necessary effective regulation will be put in place.

For years we have been told by politicians both left and right that the NHS is not being privatised. However, we see

on every hand private contractors and consultants being used more and more. Drug companies too are not backward at charging as much as they can for drugs supplied to the NHS.

In-house projects such as the National Information Technology network, where inordinate amounts of money were spent, several private contractors employed and the project was abandoned. There is also the scandal of the PFI where private money was used to finance hundreds of public projects in-



cluding the building of new hospitals. The cost of this is phenomenal but is seldom mentioned. Labour representatives will argue that there would be no NHS without PFI. Again we are not told about the EU involvement in all this. The nature of EU is such that preservation of our NHS is not in their scheme of things.

When Ed Miliband and other Labourites give their unequivocal support for the EU along with the other parties it shows there is little difference between the major political parties. When they say they will not have a referendum on the EU it shows they are indifferent to public opinion. So much for democracy!

Some newspapers and politicians keep telling us that the NHS is in dire straits and will ultimately collapse. When billions of pounds are spent on wars like the illegal Iraq war, the Afghan fiasco, Faslane and others we have not enough money for civilised activities like financing the NHS. How barbaric.

When the Afghans were fighting the Russians, they were kept supplied with weapons and finance by the UK and the US. When the Russians pulled out of Afghanistan and we went in, our weapons were used against us, at the same time we cannot look after our elderly and sick. If this is not utterly insane,