

Birmingham Left Unity

1. Campaign to Oppose the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

The TTIP is a new trade agreement taking place between the USA and the EU which will be incredibly damaging to the UK's social and environmental regulations, public services, and Labour rights and standards. It will create a body of law which sits above UK and even EU law, which will cement the recent Conservative and New Labour pro-market reforms, and in many cases (such as with the Conservative's privatisation measures in the NHS) will make them irreversible. Regulations, Government subsidies, and many other types of progressive legislation will, under this new scheme, be deemed "trade irritants" which have to be abolished. Multinational Corporations, under this new trade agreement, are raised to the legal status of nation-states. This will create a situation where Governments can be sued for billions of dollars simply for introducing new regulations in the public interest. Examples of this have already taken place, such as when the Australian Government was sued for billions and made to reverse its ban on colour and branding on cigarette packages, which it implemented for public health reasons. Such occurrences will be commonplace under the TTIP, and will strip countries like the UK of much of the little democracy they have left.

Left Unity should start a high-profile campaign against the TTIP as soon as possible. This is because the parties involved are aiming to come to an agreement on this by the end of 2014.

2. Listening Campaign

Left Unity needs a method of kick-starting itself, and boosting its profile to one of national prominence. One good way to do this would be through a "Listening Campaign". This would involve local groups holding meetings, and doing surveys and other types of conspicuous data collection in targeted areas, as well as online; asking people questions such as "If you could change one thing about your area, what would it be?". This would be highly advantageous to Left Unity for three reasons:

- It differentiates us from other parties. It shows we are willing to listen to people's concerns, and mould our policies as a result. This contrasts with other mainstream parties, which are rightly commonly perceived as telling people what to think.
- It adds a much-needed injection of populism into our politics. It would allow us to add policies and campaigns to our usual list which would be guaranteed to be popular, and which may not have been thought of by us previously; which may help us carry through our more technical and inaccessible policies.
- It would also help us get our finger more closely on the pulse of society, and allow us to phrase our traditional left-wing policies in new appealing language.

Can you also put this link somewhere good on the Left Unity website please. It has a good video which explains something about the TTIP:

<http://think-left.org/2014/01/11/recipe-for-ruin-ttip-the-transatlantic-trade-and-investment-partnership/>