

# DITCH

# DODGEY

# DAVE



**THE PANAMA PAPERS HAVE EXPOSED CAMERON.** He has profited from offshore banking, inheritance tax management and the tax avoidance schemes that are the preserve of the very rich. He has criticised others for tax evasion but now the mask has slipped and his hypocrisy is exposed. He is revealed for what he is: both a beneficiary and an agent of extreme class privilege. And while profiting himself he has driven forward the most savage attacks on working people and the poorest in our society.

These offshore banking and tax evasion systems have been carefully constructed by the very rich and their political representatives. They have been developed and established over years. And it is not something confined to corrupt individuals and regimes elsewhere – as some would have us believe. Britain is at the very heart of it: the whole legislative framework of the Virgin Isles, laws in the Channel Islands and in the Isle of Man and more. Tax minimisation lawyers have been ‘consulted’ by HMRC while tax collection employees have been reduced in numbers. Our ruling class has put far more effort into this than into creating and building modern industry in this country.

It’s not just one law for the rich but a whole complex construction of laws – holding, managing, investing and hiding extreme wealth are rarely covered in popular news, unlike so-called benefit fraud. The huge wealth of this country – held by so few – exposes the total lie of austerity. In truth, there is plenty of money and it needs to be distributed fairly across society. Austerity is a political fraud not an economic necessity.

Why should the NHS go short? Why should people have to use food banks? Why should people lose essential mobility cars? ‘There is no alternative?’ Far from it!

Cameron is at the heart of a multi-generational project, to protect the privileges of wealth. Meanwhile his government sets the benefits cap to make tens of thousands of families with children homeless. It’s time to put an end to this duplicity and extortion, wreaked upon the people of Britain. Of course there is more to it than Cameron: a whole rotten class system stands with him and behind him, but he has to go. It’s the first step towards acknowledging that Britain needs an alternative. **Cameron has to go!**

# WHY WE SAY VOTE REMAIN

## AS WE HEAD TOWARDS THE EU REFERENDUM ON JUNE 23RD, LEFT UNITY IS CAMPAIGNING FOR A 'REMAIN' VOTE.

Serious criticisms can be levelled against the European Union, but this referendum is not driven by the desire to make the EU more just, democratic and equal. It is driven by a widespread campaign of racism and bigotry against migrants, to cut back the EU's commitment to the free movement of people. UKIP and the hard right of the Tory party argue that EU membership causes Britain to be 'swamped' by migrants because of the EU's 'freedom of movement' policy. This same EU policy also allows 1.8 million Britons to live in other EU countries.

Cameron has negotiated with EU leaders to get a 'better deal' for Britain. But he hasn't secured an increase in the democracy and accountability of the EU institutions, or challenged the disastrous neo-liberal cuts agenda which has dominated the EU since the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s. Instead, he has focused on attacking migrants' rights.

His 'achievements' from his negotiations add up to nothing more than a petty and vindictive assault on freedom of movement, pandering to the far right agenda.

He has negotiated to stop migrants from claiming in-work benefits for four years – a so-called 'emergency break' which can be applied for seven years. He has negotiated a reduction in the amount of child benefit payable to the children of migrants, to the levels in the countries where they reside. This is in spite of the fact that people come to Britain to work hard, contribute to our economy and pay taxes into the system. This punitive child benefit system is a disgrace, an attack on children, their health and development.

Racism and xenophobia are on the increase. Refugees from outside Fortress Europe are also coming under attack, in spite of the fact that the British government is largely turning its back on them – even though their extreme distress often originates in the failed foreign policies of Britain and its allies in the Middle East.

**LEFT UNITY** will do all it can to stand by migrants and refugees. We will work with others across Europe to welcome those driven from their homes by capitalist crisis and war.

A vote to 'leave' will not create the political space for a socialist Europe. The fragmentation of the EU would be on a right-wing, intolerant and nationalist basis. It would be a Europe of Le Pen, Farage, Orban and others on the right.

This is why we say that another Europe is possible, why we work in solidarity across Europe for a social Europe – extending people's rights and improving living standards, and why we say there are no national solutions to Europe's crisis.

# SAVE OUR NHS

**THE NHS IS BEING PRIVATISED, CUTS ARE BEING MADE.** We have seen cuts in the nursing and allied health professions, with the withdrawal of bursaries. Junior Doctors face new contracts that are neither safe nor fair. Let us tell our politicians as loud as we possibly can **'Our NHS is not yours to sell!'**



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# HELP KILL THE HOUSING BILL

## THE GOVERNMENT'S HOUSING AND PLANNING BILL AIMS TO DESTROY COUNCIL HOUSING, AND DRASTICALLY WEAKEN SOCIAL HOUSING IN GENERAL. If the Bill is not stopped, it will:

Introduce means-testing for council tenants under 'pay to stay' regulations. Council tenants in London with a household income of £40,000 or more (£30,000 outside London) – eg two nurses – will see their rents rise, possibly to market rent. Councils will have to pass the additional rental income to Government. The Government tries to justify pay to stay by peddling the myth that council rents are subsidised – they are not. Long term tenants pay for their homes many times over. Housing associations will also be encouraged to introduce pay to stay voluntarily, but will be able to keep the extra income.

Secure tenancies for new council tenants will be replaced by fixed-term tenancies of two to five years. Existing secure tenants will lose their secure tenancy if they apply for a transfer (because of, say, domestic violence, medical need, or overcrowding). Without security of tenure, council tenants will be unable to plan for their family's future, or find a place within the community.

Extend the right to buy to housing association tenants (implementation is voluntary for housing associations).

Force councils to sell off their 'high value' properties on the open market as they become vacant.

Require councils to pay the money from these sales to Government, to fund the discounts for housing association tenants exercising their right to buy.

Require councils to give planning permission for starter homes to buy, instead of affordable homes for rent. Starter homes, capped at £450,000 in London and £250,000 elsewhere, will be out of reach for most.

Make demolition of council estates for 'regeneration' schemes by private developers easier to push through, by enabling designation of council estates as 'brownfield sites'.

Reduce Housing Rights for Travellers.

The massive reduction in social housing, through the sell-off of council properties, and housing association properties through right to buy, will make it even harder to get social housing than it is now; it's been estimated that 26,000 social rented homes could be lost in the borough of Islington alone. More people will be forced into renting privately, making private renting even more expensive and insecure. With the roll out of lower housing benefit caps and universal credit, this will lead to mass homelessness and dispersal of communities. Those that can afford it will be pushed into buying, often with unsustainable mortgages, driving house prices up and creating a new housing bubble.

This Bill will do nothing to resolve the housing crisis – it will make it worse. It will further privatize housing, putting the market even more in control, and encouraging further financialisation of housing. It will affect everyone: employed and unemployed, social tenants, private tenants, leaseholders, those who are homeless, or in temporary accommodation. Homeowners with adult children will find their children are unable to move out as rents will be too high.

**LEFT UNITY calls for the Housing and Planning Bill to be scrapped.** We call for:

Local councils to refuse to implement the Bill.

A massive expansion of publicly owned and democratically controlled housing, which can be funded by Government at low interest rates and will create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

An end to right to buy.

Social housing not social cleansing: social housing to be allocated according to need.

Rent controls to ensure genuinely affordable rents, with secure tenancies for public and private renters.

Protection from eviction for people unable to pay their mortgage or rent.

Squatting of empty buildings to be legalised, take vacant accommodation into public ownership.

The bedroom tax and benefit caps to be scrapped, and no restrictions on housing support because of age or immigration status.

An emergency programme to secure enough decent, local homes for homeless people, with units to meet all needs.

Housing to be renovated and built to create modern, energy-efficient, sustainable lifetime homes to meet all needs.