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A bankers' Government.

Many of our members and voters in the Yeovil constituency voted for current Liberal Democrat MP, David Laws, who got a 55.7% share of the vote and a 13,000+ majority. By "tactical voting" (voting for the candidate mostly likely to defeat the Conservative), they thought this was the best way to use their vote to keep the Conservatives out, and by voting Liberal Democrat could produce a "Hung Parliament" - which it did, and this would make conditions favourable in bringing about a fairer voting system.

What we got instead was a formal coalition government with the Conservatives!

The agreement that was formulated immediately after the election was decided by ten white men, Oxbridge educated, with seven coming from private schools. The great unwashed were represented by William Hague (Ripon Grammar school), Andrew Stunell (Surbiton Grammar and Manchester) and Danny Alexander (Lochaber High & Oxford), now Chief Secretary to The Treasury.

Would it be right, then, if women did not take part in the discussions given that only 21% of MPs are women in the Westminster Parliament? But women make up more than 50% of the population.

Here is a summary of the people who make up the cabinet:

Lord Strathclyde, Leader of the House of Lords. Wealth: £10 million. He is the richest person in the cabinet and director of numerous hedge funds and investment firms including Galena, the investment arm of toxic waste dumping firm Trafigura.

Prime Minister David Cameron went to Eton, then Oxford University. He has a fortune of £2.2 million.

George Osborne, Chancellor, Wealth: £4.3 million Trust-fund kid Osborne is in line to inherit a big share of his father's firm and a baronetcy.

Philip Hammond, Transport minister: Wealth: £9 million. Hammond's wealth includes £5 million of shares in property firm Castlemead.

Francis Maude, Paymaster General: Wealth: £3 million. Maude has "investment properties" in south London and France. He is a paid adviser to Barclays bank—but the amount is kept under wraps.

So much for "Conservatives – vote for change"

Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister: Wealth worth more than £1 million. Clegg went to Westminster private school and Cambridge University. He is descended from aristocrats and his father was a banker and worked for neo-liberal EU Trade Commissioner Leon Brittan. In the right-wing magazine The Spectator, Clegg praised Thatcher's victory over the trades unions as an "immensely important visceral battle for how Britain is governed".

David Laws MP was Chief Secretary to the Treasury. (He has since resigned this post over expenses issues, but likely to be back soon in the Cabinet).

Wealth: said to be more than £1 million. Former investment banker, ex managing director of JP Morgan and described by one commentator as "The Tories' favourite Liberal Democrat."

To achieve positions in Government, the Lib-Dems gave up three main progressive policies. The first was the single transferable vote system. (What is on offer here is - just maybe - a referendum on the "alternative vote" system, which is not much better than what we have now, but would be advantageous to the Lib-Dems.)

The second policy was to scrap the Trident nuclear weapon submarine renewal, priced at £97 billion, (how easily money can be found for death and destruction!). The third was an amnesty for illegal migrants who had been here for 10 years or more.

A bankers' Government. Continued...

At the time of writing this article, The LIB-CON Government is pushing for fixed five-year Parliaments, and instead of a simple 50% plus one vote for a successful motion "of no confidence" they want a 55% majority of MPs for such a vote.

We should focus further on the role of our MP, David Laws: he co-authored, with investor and hedge fund manager Paul Marshall, a book in 2004 entitled "The Orange Book- reclaiming liberalism" which advocated Thatcherite economic policies, including replacing the NHS with an insurance-based system. He is co-founder and Chairman of Marshall Wace LLP, one of Europe's largest hedge fund groups; also advisor to Nick Clegg (Wikipedia).

David Laws MP was Chief Secretary to the Treasury, in at the sharp end as to what the bankers want to cut. Banker Prof. Alan Budd was advising him; he was an economic adviser to former Conservative PM Thatcher. It is also worth pointing out here that neighbouring West Dorset MP Oliver Letwin is an NM Rothschild banker *and* MP, is a policy advisor to the PM and a Cabinet Minister. We could conclude this is a bankers' government who want "Savage Cuts" (Economist and Lib-Dem MP Vince Cable) in order to cut "the budget deficit" or "balance the books." They want £6 billion worth of public sector cuts in 12 months – to be up and running in the "first 50 days" of Government.

Up for privatisation is the Tote (a state-owned bookmaker) and the Royal Mail. One commentator on Channel 4 News before the election had it that half a million job cuts in the public sector would be necessary to meet the budget deficit. There will be far reaching consequences for users of public services and the wages of half a million pay packets taken out of the economy.

But this debate should not happen without a proper debate on taxation (which, like so many other topics, the big issues of our time, was not raised at the election). So consider this:

According to the Sunday Times Rich List (April 25 2010) the combined wealth of the top 100 people in the UK is around £182.815 billion; the combined wealth of the top 1000 is £335.533 billion – an increase of £77.265Bn or 29.9 per cent in the past year. This shows there is no crisis for the very rich. How about taxing them a bit more? Source: http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/specials/rich_list/article7107182.ece -

Yet the narrative of the mainstream media puts the blame for our problems on migrants and people struggling on means tested benefits. The fabulous wealth of the super-rich is never mentioned.

According to the Citizens Advice Bureau, using data from the DWP, in the tax year 2007-8 (most recent data available) there was £16.7 billion worth of unclaimed benefits: "The government has made a serious commitment to eradicate child and pensioner poverty, and to help the working poor, yet up to £10.5 billion of means tested benefits and £6.2 billion of tax credits remain unpaid each year." See http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/press_office201022

The Civil Service Union PCS calls for a cut in the "tax gap" and is working with the Tax Justice Network and War on Want for a fairer and more efficient tax system. This includes:

- Transnational companies and rich individuals should pay their proper fair share of taxes.
- Make tax avoidance illegal.
- Put resources into tackling tax evasion.
- Change the tax allowance system – tax relief on pensions for those earning over £100k cost £10Bn pa.
- Properly resource HM Revenue & Customs – HMRC is cutting 25,000 jobs and closing over 200 offices and has to write off £11Bn in uncollected revenue due to a lack of resources.
- Introduce a "transaction" or "Robin Hood" tax on financial transactions in the City and abolish the "tax havens" (most of which are British-owned territories).

The bankers who put unimaginable amounts of money into the "sub-prime" mortgage market (where people were very unlikely to be able to meet the repayments) and then discover these assets are hardly worth anything and more or less bankrupt themselves, then come to the state to bail them out with unimaginable amounts of our money. Now this has transferred to a cost cutting programme affecting the least well off and those using public services. Private gain, public loss.

With unity and solidarity can fight the cuts and win!

See the report on page 3 of our public meeting on fighting the cuts. This was just the beginning of the campaign that is needed in Yeovil (and everywhere) to defeat this attack on our living standards and our values of social solidarity.

Around the Town & District.

Town Council By-election.

A Town Council by-election was held on Thursday 1st July 2010 due to the vacancy left by Liberal Democrat Councillor John Cruddas due to ill health.

Data from the 2007 Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis released by Somerset County Council shows the area having above average levels of crime, unemployment and people with no training or skills. The by-election is the first electoral test for the Liberal Democrats locally after the very quick exit of David Laws MP from his Cabinet Post as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and first casualty of the Con-Dem Coalition.

There were six candidates in the contest: Mike Lock (Lib-Dem) 603 votes (**elected**); Audrey Bartlett (Conservatives) 252; Lee Skevington (Labour) 171; Ken Hunt, "non-political" resident of the Central Ward, 88; Martin Bailey (Green Party) 85; and Geoff Milne (Central Committee for Political Change) 39.

Yeovil Constituency General Election result

Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
Lib Dem	David Laws	31,843	55.7	55.7
Conservative	Kevin Davis	18,807	32.9	-1.2
Labour	Lee Skevington	2,991	5.2	-5.3
UKIP	Nigel Pearson	2,357	4.1	+0.3
BNP	Robert Baehr	1,162	2.0	+2.0
Majority	13,036		22.8	
Turnout	57,160		69.4	

Source: Wikipedia

Further analysis suggests that 30.6% or 25,203 eligible voters did not vote, although the turnout was slightly higher than the national average, and a swing of 2.9% share of votes to winning candidate, Liberal Democrat David Laws

Public meeting in Yeovil: join the fight-back against the cuts!

It's not just back to the 1980s, but more like back to the 1930s, said John McInally, Vice-President of the

Public, Commercial and Services Union at the public meeting held at Unity Hall, Yeovil on 24th June.

The meeting was organised by the Somerset and Bath Branch of the Socialist Party and Somerset Youth Fight for Jobs but, in view of the need to respond urgently to the policies of the new Con-Dem government, Yeovil TUC agreed to sponsor the event as well, as did the Somerset branch of the National Union of Teachers.

Those who believed that expenditure on health and education would be ring-fenced are living in a fantasy world, said Mr McInally. He forecast that the budget would put Britain into a double-dip recession. Since, out of every £1 spent in the public sector, 74p goes back into the economy, these job losses would cause more unemployment in the private sector. The division between public and private sector workers was phoney and this budget was an attack on all workers as well as students and pensioners. It would worsen inequality, which was bad enough already compared to other European countries. The quality and extent of public services, he said, is the measure of a civilised society.

He called for "tax justice", the public ownership of the privatised utilities and services and also the banks. He described privatisation as "legalised theft" and pointed out that pensions are deferred pay. He called for the TUC to do more, by coordinating an all-union national campaign against the cuts, and he called for "the spirit of the Poll tax" (The successful and militant campaign against it, including non-payment.)

Jim Thomson of the NUT criticised academies as "the privatisation of our education system". The curriculum would be distorted by the sponsor, selection would be re-introduced and academies would abandon the national agreements on pay and conditions of staff. Schools would be offered a financial carrot to become academies, but would find that "the carrot is rotten".

Vivian Willis, Secretary of Yeovil & District TUC, said that politicians don't control capitalism – it controls them. He said that the People's Charter must be central to the campaign against the cuts.

Also present were Vicky Nash (NUT), Vice-President of the SW Regional TUC, Andy Prior, Secretary of the Weston and North Somerset TUC and Yeovil Labour Party's Lee Skevington, who said that, in fighting against the cuts "the Labour Party locally will be with

you every step of the way". The meeting was chaired by Joe Conway (Unite), President of Yeovil & District TUC and Chair of Yeovil Constituency Labour Party.

There was a wide-ranging discussion and agreement on the need for Yeovil & District TUC to be the basis for a united local campaign against the LIB-CON attack on working people, pensioners and claimants, with the People's Charter playing a key role.

"An onslaught like we have never seen"

Trade union members must stand together to resist politicians who are united in preparing an "onslaught like we have never seen," the leader of Civil Service union PCS has said.

Addressing teachers at the NUT annual conference in April, Mark Serwotka said: "Our real task is this - not to wait for the attacks to be upon us, not a kneejerk reaction when we suddenly realise how bad it is - but to accept now that we know what is coming.

"We know that there will be an onslaught like we have never seen, we know that jobs will go in education and public services and many of our jobs will be privatised - we know it is coming because all politicians have told us."

He urged delegates not to repeat the gravest mistakes of the past in standing back and watching sister unions in dispute while considering what to do.

"Our union takes the quite simple view that we always prefer to have united action but if the government rip up terms and conditions and other unions keep their heads down, that is no excuse to do the same," he stressed. Mr Serwotka also highlighted the importance of extending solidarity to low-paid workers in the private sector.

Tolpuddle event July 2010.

Once again trade unionists and their families from all over the region will be flocking to the Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival. Organised annually by the South-West Regional TUC at the Dorset village of Tolpuddle, it celebrates the six Dorsetshire trade unionists who, in 1834, were sentenced to seven years transportation to the penal colonies of Australia but were pardoned as a result of a tremendous national campaign of solidarity. This year it is on 16th-18th July. See www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk.

On the Sunday, free transport will be going via Yeovil, leaving Yeovil Labour Club, Central Road (opposite the Bus Station) at 11:15 am. Organised for all by Barnstaple TUC, with participating organisations sharing the cost. Seats on the coach will be allocated on a "first come - first served" basis. For seat reservations please contact Paul Dyer directly at barnstaple-tuc@talk21.com or contact him on

07815007424 or joe.conway@agustawestland.com
07801817963

The music and entertainment are wonderful, the food is great, the beer is great and there is something for all the family to enjoy. Thousands will be there.

Budget offers pensioners "years of pain"

Britain's biggest pensioner organization, the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) has described the June Budget as rewarding generations of pensioners with years of pain. The NPC has calculated:

- The guaranteed link between the higher of earnings, prices or 2.5% will give an extra £1.45 next April for those with a full state pension and just 90p for millions of women on lower pensions. This will do little to tackle the rising costs of living and reduction in savings interest rates.

- The increase next year in VAT from 17.5% to 20% will hurt those on limited incomes most, including millions of pensioners who have incomes of between £10,000 and £15,000 a year.

- Local authorities have already signalled that the planned cuts in public spending and the freeze in council tax will lead to a reduction in care and other services on which millions of pensioners rely. The government's decision to scrap the free personal care at home proposals have already denied free care to 400,000 of our most vulnerable older people.

- Raising the state pension age will have the greatest impact on low-paid, manual workers and those from less affluent areas whose life expectancy is lowest.

Dot Gibson, NPC general secretary said: "The government has said that everyone has got to share in the pain of this Budget, but some of us are more able to withstand the pain than others. Raising VAT, cutting care services and making people work longer is going to affect those at the bottom much more than those at the top. Pensioners should also realize that restoring the link with earnings on its own, without also raising substantially the basic state pension, will take decades before it has any real impact on tackling pensioner poverty. The message from the Chancellor today is clearly **"don't grow old in Britain."**

Yeovil TUC meets every third Wednesday of the month @ the address below. All union members welcome (though only delegates may vote). Meetings start @ 19:30hrs. Is your branch affiliated? Contact us for an application form.

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The People's Charter.

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