



Out of the EU!

**Why Britain must vote Leave
in the June referendum**



Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist

Out of the EU!

**We have nothing to lose but its chains.
We have everything to gain.**

At last the EU referendum is at hand. On 23 June we can and must vote to leave the European Union, reclaim sovereignty over Britain and deliver a hammer blow to the dictatorial ambitions of the deeply undemocratic EU.

Forget all the fluff about which politicians or personalities are for in or out. Overwhelmingly those representing the interests of the monopolies and finance capital are for staying in. Of course they are. They love it because it belongs to them – it was designed by them, for them, it serves only their interests and they are desperate for it to survive to continue that mission.

The lie that the EU protects workers and that it can be improved from within – a lie shamefully peddled by such as Frances O’Grady at the TUC – is so easily disproved that you have to wonder about their motives.

EU membership has exerted a slowly tightening stranglehold over workers here. Gradually, successive governments have handed to Brussels control over all aspects of our lives and our capacity to determine our country’s future – the basis of democracy.

If we voted to stay in the EU this diktat (remember Greece?) would be rapidly accelerated, not only for Britain but for all member countries. We owe it to

ourselves and to them to leave. A vote for the status quo is impossible.

Leaving would be a vote for peace in Europe. The EU is a force for war. In search of expansion it instigated the violent break-up of Yugoslavia, leading to an estimated 140,000 deaths. It promoted the Maidan coup in Ukraine when the elected government there rejected an association agreement with the EU. It even wants a joint EU army, controlled by the European Parliament!

Vote for a new beginning of self-respect and independence for our class. Once out, we will be able at last to plan a future in which the distortions forced upon our economy by the EU can be steadily corrected. We can do the things we are good at, using the resources we have to hand. We can stop being “little Europeans” and begin to think globally.

Above all, we can take decisions for ourselves and plan for a future. Governments come and go, but leaving the EU would be a blow to monopoly capitalism, and strengthen us.

Read this pamphlet. Discuss it at work and home. Let the fight for national liberation begin! ●

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Cover image: steelworkers from all over Europe converge on the EU, 15 February 2016. Photo Workers.

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Steelworkers march on the European Commission. Photo Workers.

No to rule from Brussels – for an independent Britain

National sovereignty matters, to countries large and small. Without it, they are run from abroad, and that inevitably means the loss of democracy.

And nothing could be further from democracy than the European Union. The EU is designed not to be controlled by its peoples. Its Commission is unelected, its highly paid Parliament elected on cross-Europe turnout well below 50 per cent.

How many people can even guess the name of their MEP – even among the scant third who in Britain turned out to vote? Accountability is zero.

There are 503 million people in the nations that make up the EU, but the decisions are taken by a handful of eurocrats and judges guided only by the desires of transnational companies and their own obsession with the “free” market.

That suits the City of London, and it suits the big American corporations that are the stoutest defenders of the EU.

And no wonder. Having got the

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For details of the budgetary cost of the EU to Britain, see fullfact.org/economy.

countries of the EU to hand all trade policy over to Brussels, the US needs only one set of agreements to enable its corporations to rob a continent.

Nothing is allowed to stand in their way. Everything is done to cast national independence as small-minded chauvinism. At the same time, devolution and regionalism – two central planks of the EU – weaken nations from within.

David Cameron is avoiding talking about treaty change. He knows it's not going to happen, given that it would require unanimity from all 28 member states – 30 if Bosnia and Turkey are let in.

Not since Henry VIII broke the power of the Pope in the 16th century has Britain had its laws imposed from abroad – until the EU came along. And we are paying for the privilege – £8.5 billion in net contributions last year.

The European Commission thinks it can do anything. What control it doesn't take for itself it hands over to the transnational corporations.

In an independent Britain, we can control our own governments – if we exercise our collective will. We can decide what kind of Britain we want, and plan for it.

What authority the EU has corresponds directly to the extent to which we have handed over our capacity and willingness to shape our own destiny.

The EU stands as a monument to our own timidity and backwardness. It is nothing more than a life support machine for transnational capitalism – why the reluctance to switch it off?

Our needs are simple. We only want to control our own country. We only want to decide our own future.

Most of us want to keep the pound and want import controls to protect our economy.

Most of us believe that Britain not the EU should decide our policies on taxes, industry, health, welfare and education, culture and the law, the level of immigration, defence, rights at work, and the level of agricultural production.

Most of us want to keep Britain united and oppose the separatism and devolution pushed by the EU.

In short, most of us – even those who think they want to remain in the EU – want Britain to be a sovereign country. But sovereignty and the EU are mutually incompatible. That's why a vote to leave is crucial to the survival of Britain. ●



No to the EU's TTIP – let's make our own treaties

People across Europe are waking up to the fact that the EU is negotiating trade treaties with the US and others that could wreck their industries and services. Control would pass from governments to the world's transnational corporations.

Treaties like TTIP – the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership – have been planned by the multinational corporations and the banks for decades. Now they are moving to fruition.

These treaties aim to give corporations total freedom to move production between countries, destroy national industries – and open up health and education services to irreversible privatisation.

These treaties are being negotiated in secrecy so tight that even the negotiating documents won't be made public for years after the treaties are signed.

How come we never knew about them? How come our own MPs don't even know what is happening? The

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See also "TTIP: a dagger aimed at Britain's sovereignty", *Workers* January/February 2015 (cpbml.org.uk/ttip); "You thought TTIP was bad? Take a look at TiSA", *Workers March* April 2016 (cpbml.org.uk/tisa).

answer is simple: our government is not negotiating them. They are being negotiated on our behalf by Brussels.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has "exclusive competence" for trade policy. That means it is the only body that can negotiate a trade agreement – individual countries are banned from making their own deals.

The TUC and a number of trade unions have voiced opposition to TTIP. Yet opposition has been hamstrung by the TUC's insistence that the EU should continue to negotiate on our behalf (it put this in writing during a government-led review of EU competences in 2013).

TTIP is bad enough. But the EU is negotiating an even less well known deal called TiSA, the Trade in Services Agreement, with the US and 21 other countries.

Services constitute 78 per cent of Britain's GDP, and something like 75 per cent of the US's.

What's a service? Just about anything that you can't hold in your hand or load onto a ship. That means banking, insurance, transportation, medical treatment, design, education, culture, water supply, post, shops, restaurants...

The EU is the root: TTIP and TiSA are only its branches.

PSI, the global federation representing public services trade unions, says that TiSA threatens the privatisation of primary and secondary schools along with hospital and medical services, museums, roads ...the list is endless.

Want to regain control of trade and industry and retain public control of the NHS and education? That won't happen unless we leave the EU.

More than that, a vote to leave would be a huge blow to TTIP itself. Britain is, after all, the second largest economy in the EU.

Leaving would also be an act of solidarity with the developing countries, which are being shut out of these EU-US deals. The multinationals and the banks want to bypass the World Trade Organization and force developing countries to stop protecting their economies. It's war, by economic means.

Once out of the EU we will be able to discuss trade with other countries directly, rather than the EU acting on our behalf. The US may not like the idea of separate talks, but we are the world's fifth largest economy – so it will have to. ●



Refugees, Slovenia, October 2015. Photo Janossy Gergely/shutterstock.com

Why we've got to control our own borders

You don't need to work in a think tank to see why it is important for a country to be able to determine who comes in. The question is central to a country's ability to plan its future and ensure its security.

The free movement of labour encourages the modern slavery of workers moving at the orders of cheapskate global employers, gangmasters and people traffickers.

It has established a new colonialism – one where stronger economies poach educated and qualified workers from weaker ones. Romania alone has lost 6,000 of its 20,000 doctors since 2011.

Control over migration is central to the ability of workers to organise successfully to maintain and improve pay and conditions. It's straightforward really: if you cannot control the supply of labour, then the price of labour will fall.

That's why the EU has free movement of labour at the heart of its treaties.

That's why the EU's European Court

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See also "No borders, no control", *Workers*, March/April 2016 (cpbml.org.uk/control); "The terrible tale of the EU and workers' rights", tuaeu.co.uk/?page_id=723

of Justice has ceaselessly upheld the right of employers to move labour between countries, lowering wages and dumping collective bargaining agreements.

That's why most of Britain's large employers are lining up to tell us why we must stay in the EU. The Institute of Directors even says we shouldn't bother collecting immigration statistics!

Cameron's focus on migrants' benefits is a distraction. The amount of money involved is tiny, and it won't put off would-be migrants. The fact is that his immigration targets are fantasy, because the EU won't let us control immigration.

The EU's defenders have reduced the question of whether immigration is good for Britain to whether it boosts GDP. That's their most favourable ground as it ignores questions of who benefits from changes in GDP, and the net effect on social security and society when unemployed people here cannot get jobs.

For a classic case study, look at Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, where a big industrial estate was built with EU "regeneration" money.

Enter Sports Direct: it set up its HQ in the estate, where it now employs around 5,000 people, almost all of them

agency workers recruited directly from EU member states and almost all on zero-hours contracts. Working conditions are so bad they were the subject of a Channel 4 documentary.

Has Mansfield benefited? It's now the fourth-poorest town in Britain ranked by average wages and levels of benefit paid. GPs and hospitals are at full stretch.

The rise in local employment of migrant labour has not led to wages being spent in the local shops and businesses. Instead, money is remitted back to Poland and other countries – and the town centre is full of empty shops.

The idea of Britain controlling its borders is not racist, any more than calling for Britain to dump TTIP or leave NATO. And to be clear, we see anyone working in Britain and established in Britain as being British.

It's not about where you come from. There's nothing "xenophobic" about wanting an immigration policy that allows a country to plan for jobs, housing and services for its people.

We cannot control our borders while we are in the EU. Only when we leave the EU will we be free to decide what level of immigration we want. ●



A protection racket – the lie of ‘Social Europe’

Even the TUC acknowledges that the EU is not perfect, that it comes at a price. Many in the trade unions – though not the RMT – have convinced themselves that it is a price worth paying for its “protection”. But they are badly wrong.

First, some basic facts. Nothing in EU law gives any more protection than national legislation to the right of trade unions to freely represent their members and bargain on their behalf. The EU does absolutely nothing to protect the right to strike.

When the government banned unions at GCHQ in 1992, nothing in EU law stopped it doing so. And there’s nothing in EU law that could have stopped the progress of the new Trade Union Bill.

In principle, EU law asserts the right to collective bargaining. But above all else it protects the fundamental freedoms of business, enshrined in its treaties: the rights to provide services, to establish a business, to move labour, to invest (and de-invest) where they want.

In Greece, the European institutions

have intervened against collective bargaining. They have reduced the role of trade unions in setting the minimum wage, removing automatic indexing in line with price increases, and imposing a reduction in the minimum wage itself. Call that protection?

No wonder the leading labour lawyer John Hendy says, “The EU has become a disaster for the collective rights of workers and their unions.”

The much-vaunted claims that rights at work depend on the EU don’t stand up to proper examination. For example, we are told we have 20 days’ statutory holiday courtesy of the EU. In fact, British law lays down 28 days, including bank holidays. The government could cut holidays by 8 days tomorrow without troubling the EU.

Rights mean nothing unless workers are ready to fight for them. Without workplace organisation and strong collective agreements, employers can and will do what they like. The union Unite even says that EU laws “stop you from being exploited by your boss”. As if!

Unite also tells us the EU means that “men and women must be paid the same for doing the same job” (actually

something established in Britain by the Equal Pay Act of 1970). But men working full time in Britain still earn 14.2 per cent more than women. What protection?

In return for a handful of alleged rights, many unions have bought into the EU. But look at the cost.

Here’s the price tag. Privatisation of post, rail and other industries, enforced by directives; trade treaties like TTIP and TiSA to drive through yet more privatisation and stop us taking industries back into public ownership; attacks on collective bargaining; the bailouts that have impoverished Greece.

And there’s more. EU competition law bans support for industries like steel, even when they are threatened by unfair trade practices. Britain has to beg Brussels to be allowed to invest in power stations.

Meanwhile, uncontrolled migration is lowering pay rates and reducing job opportunities. Some employers prefer to find cheaper workers abroad and – quite legally – not bother to advertise here.

There’s no fairness for communities stripped of employment. No equality at work if you haven’t got a job. And no justice for workers in the EU. ●

Read more

See also “Why trade unionists should vote to leave”, *Workers*, March/April 2016 (cpbml.org.uk/tuleave).



Redcar steelworks. Photo Robert Cook (CC-BY-SA 2.0)

A future for Britain – free to plan, free to trade

Britain's fishing communities are on the edge of extinction. Yet one Dutch supertrawler – the *Cornelis Volrijck* – is taking 23 per cent of the entire UK fish quota. Unbelievable, yet true.

The scandal was exposed by Greenpeace, and though the details are complex, the reason is clear: the EU, which under its treaties has “exclusive” competence over the fish in our waters. We cannot decide who can fish what, or when. Brussels doles out the quotas.

It's simply one of the most outrageous examples of a loss of sovereignty that is crippling Britain. The EU also has “exclusive competence” over commercial policy and international trade agreements, as well as the internal market (trade among the member states). That means we are not “allowed” to support our steel industry, because the EU decrees that state support is unfair competition.

According to the government, we

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See greenpeace.org.uk for details of the fisheries scandal. For more on how Britain can stand alone, see “It shouldn't be if Britain leaves the EU, but when”, *Workers*, January/February 2015 (cpbml.org.uk/when).

cannot insist that the trains that run on Crossrail be built in Britain. Nor can we pass a law to stop foreign companies buying up British ones only to close them down – as the US corporation Kraft did when it closed Cadbury's Somerdale factory, reneging on promises made when it bought the company.

They call it a level playing field, but it's more like a level graveyard.

The loss of sovereignty over our commerce has consequences that invade almost all aspects of our lives.

Take the Volkswagen diesel emissions crisis, the worst to hit the motor industry. Attention has focused on the German car manufacturer. Less well known is the abdication of sovereignty which saw the British government stand by while hundreds of thousands of tonnes of air pollution killed thousands of our citizens.

Britain has to accept the EU's deliberately lax testing regime. It's one that allows carmakers to shop around for the most compliant regulator. Once any authorised tester anywhere in the EU has assessed a car for emissions, that's it: all 28 countries in the EU have to accept it.

Leaving the EU won't suddenly make everything right again. The government

often hides behind EU directives so that it can wash its hands and say nothing can be done. But outside of the EU, that excuse will no longer be available.

Inside the EU, it's impossible to plan for a future for Britain. The “market” – in effect, the large transnational companies – will decide everything.

Outside the EU we can plan to develop our industry. Inside, we cannot protect sections attacked by foreign “dumping”. And that's before EU treaties like TTIP and TiSA (see page 4) strip us of even more power.

Inside the EU we cannot plan for the NHS to deliver safe and effective care because hospitals never know what the population will be. Our schools find they are suddenly asked to take in whole new classes at a moment's notice.

We are no minnows. We say it again: we are the fifth largest economy in the world. The world wishes to trade with us, and we can be free to trade with the world, unrestricted by the EU's fetters.

Outside the EU we can develop our economy, free to invest to rebuild industries, free to protect services, free to draw up our own trade policies. For that freedom, we have to leave the EU. ●



Europe in chaos – the ticking time bomb

Of all the times in recent history to be told that leaving the EU would be a “leap in the dark”, now must be the most ludicrous. It is becoming ever clearer that remaining would be to stay on the Titanic while it’s heading for the iceberg.

The EU is falling apart in front of us. Daily the migration chaos deepens. A referendum in the Netherlands in April at the request of citizens outraged at the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement. Another in Hungary with the question, “Are you in favour of the EU being allowed to make the settlement of non-Hungarians obligatory in Hungary, even if the parliament does not agree?”

In February Germany threatened Poland with sanctions for introducing new laws that it doesn’t like. It has also threatened financial sanctions against any country not abiding by EU decisions on issues such as migration.

Austria convened a summit of Balkan countries, without inviting Greece or consulting with Brussels, to agree how to stop the migration flow.

Read more

See also “Are we witnessing the death of the European Union?”, CPBML News (cpbml.org.uk/eudeath).

Last year Denmark held a referendum to keep its own criminal justice system, rejecting EU cross-border policing.

Throughout the EU, the home of “free movement”, the borders are being rebuilt. Schengen? What Schengen?

Could it get worse? Yes. Germany wants to incorporate Turkey into the EU – which would give “free movement” to a further 79 million people.

The Greek bailout has failed. What chance another one? All the impoverishment, all the pain, and Greece’s economy is in a worse state than before.

The eurozone has become a prison for the nations of Europe, condemning them to stagnation and rule by the European Central Bank.

Here’s a chilling thought: the outfits now telling us that Britain would be walking off a cliff if we leave the EU are the very same crowd who told us in 1999 that we would be courting disaster if we failed to join the euro.

Back then it was the same unholy alliance of the CBI, the big banks and the TUC that told us it was euro or bust. Often the very same people then as now.

In fact, Britain will be better off

outside the EU. Less than 10 per cent of our trade is with the EU (80 per cent is internal). Over half our international trade is with countries outside the EU. It won’t be easy. There may be short-term pain. But staying will be disastrous.

The EU is not a place of safety. On the contrary, it is a place of political, economic and social peril. It’s the most reactionary government entity in the world, with the most anti-growth and anti-working class policies. And it represents the past, not the future.

Voting for the status quo in the June referendum is impossible. A vote to remain would be an open display of weakness, giving the green light to centralise more power in Brussels, with Britain eventually forced to give up its currency and control over its borders.

Leaving the EU will be the start of true European solidarity based on mutual respect and independence. It will be joining with those workers across Europe who see the divisive reality behind the EU’s fake “brotherhood”, which in fact sets country against country.

Seize the hour! Leave this failing bloc! Vote for freedom, independence and a future! Vote for Britain! Vote Leave! ●