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Clap for carers: a statement

Anarchist Communist Group and Haringey
Solidarity Group

29th March, 2020

We TOTALLY respect, appreciate and support all that those in the NHS are doing and putting themselves through, along with millions of other essential workers. But, we have concerns that the Clap For Carers gesture will be seen as a smoke screen for the government's handling of the current situation.

Whilst it was a way for ordinary people to show their genuine support for care workers, it also takes the spotlight off the state for their pathetic attempts at protecting and supporting essential workers, whilst at the same time shoring up the business sector and donors to their parties. The governments lack of foresight and mismanagement is nothing short of astounding.

Our care workers need more than a two-minute round of applause – as heart felt as it was from all of us. They need us to support their demands for the tools they need to do the job effectively. They don't have enough personal protective equipment, resulting in staff are being asked to work in dangerous environments. They don't have enough staff and its bloody criminal that we ask retired NHS staff to cover when we have

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known for years we have between 30,000 and 100,000 vacancies in the NHS. NHS staff have been undervalued and under paid for years by successive governments of all colours. The financial crisis was brought about by the financial sector yet public sector workers and the poorest in society were made to pay for it.

NHS staff are crying out for support from the state – support that isn’t coming. We are told more Intensive Care beds are needed; more ventilators; more Personal Protective Equipment; and more testing. Yet staff are still waiting for much of this to be delivered, a lot of which should have been in place already. The private sector is apparently helping but at what cost? Why can’t we commandeer all private hospitals, and NOW? Why does Prince Charles get tested when frontline NHS staff do not? It begs the question, who else is being tested before the NHS staff? Who should be tested first? So much for “we’re all in it together”, we’ve heard this lie before.

Staff are scared that they are returning home to their families and spreading Corona Virus. They need to be protected. We have 1,000’s of empty student accommodation rooms and hotels. Why can’t they use these?

NHS staff are telling us on all social and main stream media that they don’t have the resources. Politicians say they do. Who do you believe. Parasites lie in bad times as well as good.

The crisis is bad at the moment. But when we come through this we need to build on the support the general public have for public sector workers. Don’t retire to your normal life when the crisis is over. The NHS (and millions of others) need active support. The odd demonstration just isn’t good enough when we can suddenly find billions now to rescue the economy. After this crisis we need to mobilise and force any government to adequately staff the NHS; to have huge resources in place (as people die all the time and can be saved if we put money in the right place); and to pay working class people like health care workers a proper bloody salary.

If we don’t mobilise now, it will be business as usual after this crisis. And that means sod all benefits for all those people we/you clapped for a minute on Thursday and huge sodding profits for the rich, like Virgin boss Branson and Dysons boss James Dyson who will make a small fortune “helping” produce ventilators.

*Some members of Haringey Solidarity Group
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