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Appeal to Yes Voters for Direct Action

Robert Lanark

23 September 2014

The Scottish Referendum campaign finally came to an end last Thursday with a vote of 55% – 45% in favour of remaining part of the UK.

Half the country is in mourning while the other half are sighing with relief.

So where do we go from here? Is that the end of the road or are people still willing to fight for change?

Although we are opposed to nationalism of any kind we can appreciate the enormous effort that went into the campaign for Scottish Independence; the thousands of people who gave up countless hours of their time manning stalls, knocking on doors and above all engaging in discussion about the Scotland they would like to see.

But more than this we respect some of the reasons that drove these people in their campaigning; protecting the NHS, reversing brutal welfare reforms, alleviating poverty for those on minimum wage and addressing the chronic shortage of social housing to name a few.

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Whether or not independence for Scotland could have delivered these gains the fact is now that route is closed. We must look to what else can be done.

Over the past few years a resurgent ruling class has speeded up the process of dismantling the hard fought gains that working people have won. Wages have fallen significantly, public services have suffered widespread privatisation, welfare reforms have driven families to food banks and forced unemployed people to work for free.

We have struggled against all these attacks on working class people and at times it feels like a losing battle. In Edinburgh a campaign against the privatisation of 70% of homecare services by the then SNP / Lib Dem Council found little public support. Despite the fact that elderly people were not being having their basic needs (such as food and medication) met the campaign could not drum up significant support.

A small but hard working group of campaigners across Scotland has consistently fought against benefit cuts and forced labour programmes with some success. However, each time we meet or protest we see the same small group of dedicated familiar faces.

And yet thousands of ordinary people, some already involved in political campaigning, but many that weren't, have dedicated themselves to the struggle for Scottish independence many of them citing privatisation, austerity and welfare reform as reasons for their campaign.

As for us we will continue in our fight to defend against attacks on working class people. Had there been a Yes vote we would have continued this fight in an independent Scotland.

We did not believe the SNP's argument that it would have suddenly become a progressive force had Scotland become independent. We have seen their willingness to cut, to privatise and to withhold support for vulnerable people for purposes of political gain.

We address this to all those people that campaigned for independence with the genuine aim of creating a better, more equal society.

If even some of those people are prepared to summon just a little of the effort they have shown they are capable of and throw their weight behind the fight against the brutal form of right-wing capitalism that is attacking us all whether we live in Spain, Greece, England or Scotland, then maybe we could begin to force our way out of the misery and exploitation being imposed upon us.