



A closer look at the issue of Holiday Pay

Workers have always had to fight for their rights. Nothing was handed to them on a plate.

Workers' rights were always won through collective action and political and industrial struggle. The law governing labour was, and remains, an instrument of economic policy which develops in line with political, economic and industrial pressure.

Despite a trades union campaign from the start of the last century the Holiday with Pay Act was only introduced in GB in 1938 and even then the "right" was extremely curtailed. The importance of paid leave and time for leisure was echoed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UK government did not implement the 1993 Working Time Directive until 1998.

A right

The recent case has simply highlighted a failure to pay workers their entitlement in respect of holiday pay. This is not a privilege, but a right. The suggestion that workers should not be paid their full entitlements and that they should now be denied those entitlements by way of a "cap" is the real scandal.

The Workers Party fully supports all workers in their demands for proper pay, including holiday pay. The latest Global Rights Index has shown that the UK is among the worst offenders in Europe in relation to the violation of trade union rights.

Non Standard

This is part of a deliberate global strategy to exclude workers from employment rights through "non-standard" forms of employment, which include temporary work; part-time, on-call, and contracts with zero or variable working hours; temporary agency work; and bogus self-employment.

Precarious work is inevitably associated with low pay and job insecurity while increasing profit, in particular for the large monopolies, while driving down wages, fuelling poverty, inequality and debt.

The proposed strategies of reducing corporation tax and the top rate of tax for high earners will not lead to sustainable well-paid employment nor will it reduce inequality.

Inequality

The scale of income inequality in the UK is staggering. Wealth is even more unequally divided than income. Low pay for ordinary workers is in stark contrast to the bloated remuneration packages of company chief executives. Meanwhile, many major multi-national corporations pay zero corporation tax.

The Workers Party supports those workers seeking to enforce their rights to holiday pay. It is not a scandal that they have not been deprived of their rights in Northern by the imposition of a cap. If we want a cap, then let's have a cap on the scandal of outrageous levels of executive pay and let's have a cap on those measures which permit big business to minimise or eliminate their tax liabilities.

Perhaps then we could use the revenue generated to protect and expand public expenditure to meet vital social and economic need, finance our education and health systems and ensure that workers are paid their proper entitlements to pay.