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Formerly **Militant**

'One giant leap':
how political
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the moon landing

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must continue,
until we are free"

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photo World Economic Forum/CC

STOP BORIS

GENERAL ELECTION NOW



photo Paul Mattsson

Boris Johnson, the Eton-educated millionaire and Trump wannabe, seems to be heading to Number 10, put there by around a hundred thousand members of the Tory Party, less than 0.35% of the electorate.

party rank and file, Johnson has stood on a programme of tax cuts for the rich and corporations, combined with a Tory Brexit at any price.

Without doubt, the next Tory government, whoever leads it, will mean continued misery for the majority.

The capitalist class is also looking on in horror, however, because - while both Tory leadership candidates stand for the interests of the elite, the 0.1%, the Tory party can no longer be relied on to consistently act in the long-term interests of British capitalism.

On the contrary, the Tories are coming off the rails, and even

threatening to shatter into pieces, leaving big business with no party it can depend on to reliably do its bidding.

The working-class majority, however, should draw confidence from the meltdown in the Tories. This weak, divided Tory party can be forced out of office.

The workers' movement needs to take advantage of our class enemy's weakness and urgently fight for a general election and the election of a Jeremy Corbyn-led government on a socialist programme.

■ Continued on page 2

Playing to the overwhelmingly wealthy, mainly elderly, Tory

PROSPECT OF CORBYN-LED GOVERNMENT TERRIFIES CAPITALIST ESTABLISHMENT



What we think

>continued from front page

The stepping up of increasingly frenzied attacks on Corbyn by the capitalist media, senior government civil servants, and the pro-big-business wing of the Labour Party is a sign of their fear that a Corbyn-led government is on the agenda. Corbyn was right when he declared to the Durham Miners' Gala that the reason for the "incredible level of media hysteria" was "the programme that Labour offers, of redistribution of power, of wealth, of investment in a decent future, for an end to the privileges of the few in order to advance the cause and the need of the many - that is what they are upset about." While Corbyn's programme is actually very modest, the capitalist class are terrified by the enthusiasm it could create among millions of working and middle-class people who have suffered endless austerity.

The current dirty-tricks campaign gives a glimpse of the lengths the capitalist elite would go to sabotage a Corbyn-led government. To succeed in building a society for the many not the few it would be necessary to act decisively to take

power out of the hands of the capitalist saboteurs. They will do all within their power to prevent the implementation of a radical programme in the interests of the majority.

To achieve this would require nationalisation, under democratic workers' control, of the major corporations and banks that dominate the economy. That would lay the basis for the implementation of a socialist programme. After more than a decade of capitalist austerity, decent jobs, homes, pensions, and high-quality free education could be offered for all, alongside measures to prevent the destruction of the environment.

It is now nearly four years since Jeremy Corbyn was elected Labour leader. The chaos in the Tory Party means that he could become prime minister before the year is over. As the Socialist Party has warned from day one, the obstacles in achieving this are inside the Labour Party as well as outside. Without fail, whenever it seems possible that a Corbyn-led government could be on the agenda, the pro-capitalist wing of the Labour Party step up their attempts to sabotage him.

Panorama documentary

This was the only reason for the Panorama documentary attempted hatchet job on the Labour leadership. The

documentary consisted almost entirely of completely unsubstantiated claims by ex-Labour officials that antisemitism was rife in the Labour Party. While action should always be taken against any genuine cases of antisemitism in the workers' movement or elsewhere in society, there hasn't been any evidence that Labour has a particularly high incidence of it, either provided by Panorama or any other source.

Unsurprisingly, a complete absence of evidence has not prevented a renewed onslaught against Corbyn by the Labour right. As ever, deputy leader Tom Watson led the charge. He was followed by more than 200 Labour staff and former staff who signed a letter demanding that Corbyn resign unless he could "renew trust with Labour employees". Labour leaders in the House of Lords joined in the attack as did, according to reports of a Parliamentary Labour Party meeting, the Chair of the Parliamentary Labour Party, John Cryer MP, and the pro-capitalist shadow Brexit minister, Keir Starmer.

It could not be clearer that the pro-capitalist Blairite wing of the Labour Party is set on undermining Corbyn, and - if they judged they could succeed - removing him. They have the backing of the whole capitalist establishment. They will act to try and prevent the election of a Corbyn-led

government and, if such a government is elected, to try and prevent it taking any decisive measures in the interests of the working-class majority.

Faced with this renewed onslaught against him Corbyn has broken his silence to criticise the 'many, many inaccuracies' in the Panorama programme. Len McCluskey, left general secretary of Unite, launched a broadside against Tom Watson on the issue. It is vital that all the necessary conclusions are now drawn. The history of Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party to date has been one of mass groundswells of support defeating the attempts of the right to remove Corbyn but, as soon as the right are pushed back, the Labour left returns to trying to pacify the Blairites by making concessions to them.

Most recently, this was graphically demonstrated by the suspension of left MP Chris Williamson and then, within a day of his reinstatement, his resuspension under the pressure of Blairite Labour MPs. Shamefully, Jon Lansman, leader of a supposedly pro-Corbyn, pro-left organisation, Momentum, supported his resuspension. This approach of endless concessions must cease. Inevitably, it has led to confusion and a growing disillusionment among those who were initially enthused by Corbynism.

Mass campaign

It is urgent to launch a mass campaign to deselect pro-capitalist MPs, as part of a programme to transform Labour into a workers' party. This would include democratising the party, bringing its structures under the control of its working-class members and supporters, particularly via the trade unions, and a return to the kind of federal structure Labour had when it was founded. It would also mean launching a campaign for Labour councillors to be prepared to lead a fight against Tory austerity instead of implementing it.

Alongside transforming the structures of the Labour Party, it is vital a battle is waged politically to transform it into a party with clear socialist policies in the interests of the working class. This includes the question of Brexit. No surprise that Tim Dexter, one of the main figures attacking the Labour leadership in the Panorama documentary, has now left the Labour Party to work for the 'Peoples' Vote' campaign. For many of the Blairites a central part of their campaign to undermine the Labour leadership is fighting to shift Labour into support for a second referendum to reverse Brexit.

If Corbyn were to follow their recommendations it would severely damage the prospects for a Labour government. The scale of the working-class vote for Brexit in 2016 was a cry of rage against the capitalist establishment and the misery being inflicted on the majority in the wake of the 2007-8 economic crisis. If Corbyn is seen to be acting at the behest of that establishment to reverse the result of the referendum it would finish him in the eyes of an important section of working-class voters. Unfortunately, the Labour left's continuing vain attempts to compromise with

the Blairites have resulted in widespread confusion about the party's stance on Brexit.

The only way to correct this, and to start to cut across the division that exists between working-class Leavers and Remainers; is to launch a serious campaign to demand a general election now, linked to a clear socialist programme in the defence of the interests of the whole working class.

Unfortunately, this was not sufficiently clearly stated in the agreement reached between the five biggest Labour affiliated trade unions on the issue. The statement was from both right and left union leaders. It correctly argued that the workers' movement should campaign against a Tory 'no deal' Brexit but, in that scenario, that the trade unions should campaign for a public vote with Remain as the only alternative, rather than sticking to demanding a general election and for a Corbyn-led government to negotiate a new deal.

Nonetheless, the claims by much of the capitalist press that the trade union statement was putting forward blanket support for Remain is not accurate. On the contrary, their second option was for a snap election, Labour to negotiate a new deal and for that to be put to a confirmatory vote. Len McCluskey made clear in a letter to Unite members that in his view:

"If we were successful in achieving an election victory, then I am confident we would achieve a good deal to exit Europe which would leave Labour in a position to campaign in favour of the deal. Although it is correct to reserve our commitment until we see the nature of such a deal."

Socialist programme

Labour could win a landslide if it stands on a socialist programme. The 2017 manifesto could be a starting point, but the manifesto should also include, for example, reversing all cuts to council services, scrapping Universal Credit, and a pledge to nationalise Honda Swindon, Ford Bridgend and British Steel under democratic working-class control, along with any other companies which carry out closures and job cuts in the name of Brexit or otherwise. This should be combined with nationalisation of the major corporations and banks to really take the levers of power out of the hands of the capitalist saboteurs.

If a Corbyn-led government came to power on such a programme it would create huge enthusiasm among the working class in Britain and internationally. It would then be in a powerful position to negotiate a Brexit deal in the interests of the working class. Such a deal would take as its starting point opposing all pro-privatisation anti-working class EU laws, including repeal of all anti-trade union legislation, and abolition of anti-state aid and nationalisation rules. On that basis it would be possible to make a successful appeal for solidarity to workers across Europe to support the Labour government's stance and to fight for a socialist Europe.

■ Also see "What now for Brexit?", the editorial of the July-August edition of *Socialism Today*, no. 230 at socialistparty.org.uk

Durham Miners Gala 2019
 photo Paul Mattsson



Excellent response to Socialist Party building fund appeal

Ken Douglas

Socialist Party national treasurer

Our members and supporters have responded magnificently to our appeal following the purchase of our new premises. We will be moving shortly and are currently in the process of fitting out our new headquarters.

In addition to the purchase price of the building and all the costs associated with that, there are also the costs of moving and fitting out the new offices. For instance, installing all the cabling and power points will cost over £10,000; moving the press will cost around £4,000; the intruder alarm system £2,000.

A longstanding member in the Southern region responded to our appeal and donated £10,000 - an ex-

cellent donation which will help pay for the new data and power points currently being installed.

We also appealed for comrades to buy a brick for £20 for the new offices and Ruthie McNally from Worcester responded immediately, donating £20.

Can you help us with a donation towards our moving and refurbishing costs? In addition there are still over £25,000 in outstanding pledges - if you haven't yet redeemed yours please can you do so as soon as possible.

- Visit socialistparty.org.uk/donate (put "building fund" in comments)
- Donate with your card over the phone by calling 020 8988 8777
- Or make a cheque payable to "Socialist Party" and send it to Building Fund, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

The Socialist's publication schedule

The Socialist newspaper has entered its fortnightly summer schedule. This is to accommodate the office move, related technical changes, and summer holidays.

This issue of the Socialist, 1050, will run from Thursday 18 July to Wednesday 24 July.

During the transition to our new premises there may be temporary interruptions to our communication and production.

We thank all readers and sellers of the Socialist in advance for your patience and assistance. We will return to our regular weekly schedule soon.
The editors

Have you got news for us? DEADLINE: Friday before publication date - urgent news: Monday

020 8988 8777 editors@socialistparty.org.uk @socialistpaper

Editor: Christine Thomas
 Workplace: Scott Jones

News: Ian Pattison
 Opinion: James Ivens

Campaigns/International: Dave Carr
 Sales: Chris Newby

Photographer: Paul Mattsson
 Website: Judy Beishon

A WEEKEND OF DISCUSSION & DEBATE ON SOCIALIST IDEAS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

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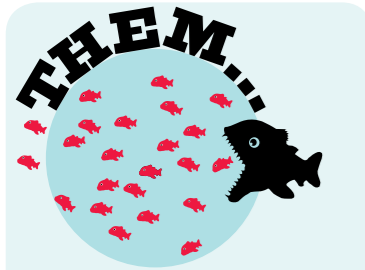
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■ Poverty pain

Three-quarters of frontline family support workers have witnessed increases in extreme poverty and destitution among the people they work with, according to a survey published by poverty charity Buttle UK.

But the government has ignored what the workers doing the work say, and claim the opposite is happening. With both Tory leadership candidates promising more tax cuts for the rich and austerity for us, we need a general election to kick them out.

■ Tory-fuelled tragedy

London mayor Sadiq Khan has rightly said there is a link between poverty and the tragic rise in youth violence, and promised £360,000 to fund community projects.

But Labour councils have dutifully passed on Tory cuts. Youth services have been cut by 40%, rising to 91% over three years in some areas.

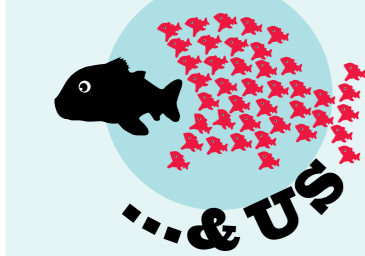
Sadiq Khan has pushed gentrification, forcing poor people out of London, and attacked striking workers. These politicians should refuse to attack communities or stand aside for anti-cuts candidates.

40%
Cut from council youth services

■ Parking space property

Landlords are making millions of pounds from flats the size of car-parking spaces, the Times has discovered. It's yet more evidence that capitalism is incapable of providing proper homes or a decent standard of living.

We need rent control and council homes now, and the construction giants should be nationalised so we can democratically plan building cheap, sustainable, suitable homes for all.



■ Have you got news for the fishes?
Email editors@socialistparty.org.uk

Health visitors strike for the first time ever

Jon Dale
Secretary, Unite union EM/NG32
Nottinghamshire Health branch
(personal capacity)

Health visitors in Lincolnshire believe theirs is the first health visitors' strike anywhere in the country. The 58 specialist nurses, members of Unite the Union, voted for action by an 84% majority.

The council is undermining the professional role of a health visitor, introducing a two-tier service. Instead of preventing childhood and family problems, health visitors will be box ticking or running from crisis to crisis.

'Level 1' health visitors no longer have specialist responsibilities, so will be de-skilled. This will put young children and families at risk - and risk the smaller number of 'Level 2' health visitors burning out with a heavy caseload.

In 2017, health visitors were transferred from the NHS to the Tory-controlled county council. Although NHS and local authority workers have had (small) pay rises since, the council refused to raise

health visitors' pay. They have each lost over £2,000 a year.

The council claims it can't pay more, but found £292,000 to pay its former chief executive for six months' work! Its central government grant has been slashed from £211 million to £20 million over the past eight years.

The council should refuse to pass on these cuts, or stand aside for campaigners who will.

Two 24-hour and two 48-hour strikes were initially announced, starting on 15 July. A further six days were agreed at a mass meeting after the first picket.

Similar issues are brewing up across the country. Nationally, the number of health visitors has fallen 25% since 2015.

Newborn babies, young families and health visitors are paying the price. This Lincolnshire strike may be the first but is unlikely to be the last.

National strike action is needed, uniting all public service workers against all cuts.

■ *Messages of support and donations to membership.eastmids@unitetheunion.org*

■ Stop the two-tier service, pay up now!



photos Jon Dale



Wales: chronic NHS underfunding exposed

Joe Fathallah
Cardiff East Socialist Party

The terrible conditions faced by patients and staff at the A&E at the University Hospital of Wales, the biggest in Wales, have been exposed.

Staff have been reduced to tears due to the lack of time and resources available to properly care for patients. Some patients wait over 20 hours in the assessment unit.

The waiting facilities are often cramped and uncomfortable. There's no privacy in the lounge. Food and water are regularly unavailable.

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales scrutinised the hospital in March. Their report made clear that "during the course of our inspection, we saw many examples of staff being kind and compassionate to patients. We saw staff treating patients with respect, courtesy and politeness."

Clearly, this is an issue of underfunding and lack of resources.

This is Cardiff's only A&E, with a population of around 350,000. But with large parts of the south Wales valleys also reliant on the hospital as their closest A&E, 1,080 beds must provide for over half a million people.

According to 2015 OECD figures, the UK has around 2.6 hospital beds



per 1,000 people. Germany has over eight, and Japan over 13!

But the University Hospital of Wales hasn't always been this strained. The A&E at Cardiff Royal Infirmary (CRI) closed in 1999 - a short-sighted step which has contributed to the current crisis.

Although some healthcare facilities are still provided, including GP surgeries and a sexual health clinic, the loss of beds has contributed to the terrible crisis.

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, which manages both hospitals, has agreed an action plan to address some of the report's findings. But this means that the Welsh Assembly must fully fund our NHS to provide the care we need.

Socialist Party Wales says:

- Re-open the A&E unit at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary to relieve the pressure on University Hospital of Wales
- End the staff shortages - for the recruitment of hundreds of new doctors and other health professionals
- Increase the number of A&E doctors to reduce stress and encourage recruitment
- Reverse all privatisation plans in Wales, including hospital pharmacies
- Welsh government must reverse all funding cuts to the NHS
- It should launch a mass campaign alongside health boards, NHS unions and patients to demand adequate funding for the Welsh NHS from the Westminster government

Fraudsters thrive and claimants suffer in despicable Universal Credit scam

Jeremy Davidson
Hull Socialist Party

Thousands of people on Universal Credit have been left up to £1,500 worse off following a criminal scam where fraudsters obtain personal details of vulnerable claimants.

Often impersonating staff for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), these criminals steal information from unsuspecting victims in need of financial support and create fake applications on their behalf.

The scammers apply for and receive a slice of the advanced loan, given to claimants as a monetary buffer to get them through the minimum five-week waiting period before their first payment.

Outrageously, reports say that when the DWP is informed of the fraudulent claim, the claimants are stopped from returning to their legacy benefits, despite being worse off on the new Universal Credit system. They don't even have any knowledge that a claim has been made on their behalf!

The government consistently stated that Universal Credit would reduce benefit fraud. But the reality is a sharp rise in fraudulent activity, leaving benefit claimants worse off.



photo JJ Ellison/CC

Shambolic

These alarming revelations are yet more evidence that the Universal Credit system is not fit for purpose, just like the shambolic, incompetent, pro-austerity Tory government.

Universal Credit was never designed to provide for and support the most vulnerable in our society. Rather, it is an attempt by the Tories to save money on welfare spending.

A close friend of mine, who recently qualified as a teacher, had the misfortune of falling seriously ill. She's a single mother, so she received £107 a week in working and child tax credits to help make ends meet.

She applied for Universal Credit due to her disability. But these payments were immediately stopped, even though she's entitled to them for another eight weeks.

She got an advanced loan of £950 before her Universal Credit payments begin in September. Not only is she receiving less financial aid, but when Universal Credit payments start, she will have to pay back £78 a month, for a year, to cover the loan!

The Tories' system leaves vulnerable people like my friend poorer, but also demands they pay back the money they were entitled to in the

first place! This despicable practice has to end now.

The demand to replace Universal Credit with wages and benefits that people can genuinely live on must be accompanied by a fight for a general election to end this Tory government.

These calls have to resonate from the organised trade union movement, potentially the most powerful force in society, and many union members are on Universal Credit themselves.

This call must come from Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party too. The working class has suffered severely over nine years of Tory austerity. The Tories and Universal Credit must go.

Socialism Today
The Socialist Party's magazine

July-August issue includes...

- What lies behind the huge land grab?
- Brexit: capitalism's dilemma, three years on

£3 including postage: **Socialism Today**, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD
- subscribe for £25 a year at socialismtoday.org



The Socialist Party fights for socialism - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.

As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

- Our demands include:**
- PUBLIC SERVICES**
 - No to ALL cuts in jobs, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
 - No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
 - Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.
 - Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and 'free schools'!
 - A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!
 - Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.
 - ENVIRONMENT**
 - Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.
 - Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
 - A democratically planned, low-fare, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.
 - RIGHTS**
 - Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
 - Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
 - Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
 - For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.
 - For the right to vote at 16.
 - MASS WORKERS' PARTY**
 - For a mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
 - Fight for Labour to be transformed into such a party: deselect the Blairites.

- WORK AND INCOME**
 - Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £10 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards a real living wage. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings. Scrap zero-hour contracts.
 - All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
 - An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.
 - Scrap Universal Credit. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
 - Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.
 - A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.
- SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM**
 - No to imperialist wars and occupations.
 - Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
 - A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
 - No to the bosses' neoliberal European Union and single market. For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!

Join the fightback!
Join the Socialists!

socialistparty.org.uk/join 020 8988 8777

@socialist_party text 07761 818 206 /CWiSocialistParty

Dave Gorton
Unite the Union LE/372 branch
officer (personal capacity)

NSSN CONFERENCE 2019: AT THE HEART OF TRADE UNION STRUGGLE

The hall was again packed for the 2019 annual conference of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN), the rank-and-file trade union organisation set up initially by the RMT transport union and its late, and missed, general secretary Bob Crow in 2006.

Particularly welcoming was the amount of new faces. From workers currently in struggle to those who might soon be entering it, those looking for support and solidarity, as well as trade union organisers wanting to share experiences in mobilising working-class people in 21st century austerity Britain.

Indeed, it is this networking which trade unionists, anti-cuts campaigners and socialists find most invigorating about the event - either by discussing individually with each other or in the official workshops organised as part of the conference. Two of these workshops - on fighting the cuts and organising workers for climate change strike and protest action in September - were so well-attended, they were, in effect, mini-conferences!

Delegates also got to listen to calls for action from well-known names in the trade union movement. The NSSN now has ten national trade union affiliates, and general union Unite, the RMT and the Communication Workers Union all sent their general secretaries or another senior officer to speak. Amy Murphy, president of shop workers' union Usdaw and Socialist Party member was also a platform speaker.

Real picture

These are difficult times for trade union activists, not only in Britain but internationally. It can seem that the whole of the union movement is in decline and there's unanimity among leaders about retreating in the face of onslaught. But this is a false picture.

Obviously, there are some union leaders who have completely capitulated to capitalist governments and big business, often because they fear the drive for socialism more. But it is bodies like the NSSN which can unite and strengthen the workers' movement from bottom to top.

Socialist Party members have had many disagreements and run-ins with union leaders in the past - and there will continue to be those in the future as well! But it would be a mistake of huge proportions to turn our back on the movement.

Those workers facing low pay, job loss, speed-ups, the whole gig economy as well as an increase in bullying and harassment at work, in the drive for increased profits for the few, would never forgive socialists who turned aside and left them to their fate, while they fruitlessly sought alternative routes to system change.

Our job is to combine and assist the various strands of opposition to capitalism and big business not to abandon one and hunt for non-existent short cuts.

As Karl Marx said 150 years ago, it is the working class which is in



photo Mary Finch



NSSN conference stood in solidarity with a victimised Asda worker who spoke on the day about proposed contract changes the company is making. Following the conference Hull Trade Union Council organised solidarity leafleting outside Asda at Mount Pleasant Hull and got a fantastic response from shoppers and passers-by alike. The solidarity protest on 15 July was the first day of what will be a rolling programme of solidarity at other Asda branches in the Hull area photo Hull TUC



Guildford school student climate strikers photo Mary Finch

nationalshop stewardsnetwork

2019 NSSN TUC lobby

Sunday 8 September, 1pm

Holiday Inn, Kings Road, Brighton, BN1 2JF

shopstewards.net



Glasgow equal pay striker Lyn Marie O'Hara photo Mary Finch

the unique position of being able to overthrow capitalism and start to construct a new society. This position is because the working class, at the centre of the production and distribution of goods and services, has the overwhelming majority in big towns and cities, which makes it specially qualified to take over the running of society.

Its struggles inevitably become political struggles.

And, in a very small way, this NSSN conference demonstrated that position. The workers who spoke of their own strikes and battles did so empowered by their own actions and the support given by the local general public.

Whether it was an indefinite stoppage of library workers in Bromley, or firefighters in Worcestershire, the Mitie strikers at Southampton General Hospital or the hugely significant strike of council workers in Glasgow for equal pay.

Indeed, the latter demonstrates that - victorious - great shifts can even be achieved under the most appalling conditions capitalism throws at us today. Conference gave a huge welcome (and a standing ovation) to Lyn Marie O'Hara, one of Glasgow Union's historic equal pay strikers.

This dispute transferred over £600 million to the pockets of working-class people, where it belonged! Socialists support every move that seeks to end gender or other inequality, but here is another example that real material gains for women in Scotland were won by ordinary workers taking united action.

Pole of attraction

The NSSN is not only here to stay, it continues to build influence and act as a pole of attraction for workers beginning to see the necessity of entering in to struggle to fight for a better life for all.

First-time attendee - Neil from the Fire Brigades Union said afterwards: "The conference was a great opportunity to speak with other union officials about their successes and the obstacles they are yet to overcome. For me, it renewed my determination to continue the fight against the deterioration of my members' terms and conditions."

One of the most immediate tasks is to build up support and link workers' organisations around the call for the 'earth strike' on 20 September. The conference welcomed school and college students from Guildford, Leicester and London who spoke about walkouts at their schools and the need to build the fightback against climate change.

The workshop on climate change heard former PCS union assistant general secretary Chris Baugh deliver an impassioned but practical appeal for workers to get involved, to include strike action for those able to deliver. But the NSSN will also be reaching out to unorganised workplaces in towns and cities throughout Britain, assisting with meetings, demonstrations and even 'pickets' in workers' lunch or rest breaks.

We don't want any worker to feel they can't participate because they aren't yet organised in a trade union. In fact, we will be using this as another means of building the union movement.

VICTORY FOR STAGECOACH BUS STRIKERS

Dave Beale
Chair, Unite union Lancs Community branch (personal capacity)

Union militancy pays! That's the immediate conclusion to be drawn from the magnificent and successful recent struggle of Unite union Stagecoach bus workers in central Lancashire.

Selected days of strike action in pursuit of a 50p an hour pay rise have been organised over several weeks by the Unite Stagecoach branch covering Preston and Chorley.

This has been provoked by Stagecoach's wage policy to pay different rates in its various companies across the North West and to rip off Preston and Chorley bus workers accordingly.

Stagecoach poured in vast amounts of money to try to break the strike, bringing in managers from all over the country to drive through picket lines.

In response, the pickets were extremely well-attended and very determined, with extensive wider support from other Unite branches.

As Unite planned to crank up the action with extra strike days scheduled, cracks in the employer's facade appeared - and at the end of June, Stagecoach capitulated!

The company offer was a staggered pay increase from £10.85 to



Stagecoach strikers read the Socialist in June photo Tom Costello

£11.30 an hour by April 2020. This was put to a ballot of Unite Stagecoach members in Preston and Chorley, with a recommendation to accept. Members have now accepted the offer unanimously.

The eventual goal of eliminating the pay differentials across Stagecoach-owned companies in the region could now become a credible union demand.

The success of the strike, which has been widely publicised locally and to some extent regionally, demonstrates to workers in both the bus and other sectors that decisive and well-organised industrial action can be worth the gamble and can force significant concessions from recalcitrant employers.

Read more at socialistparty.org.uk

Newham housing repairs workers announce strike dates

East London Socialist Party

Unite the Union members employed by Newham Council in its housing repairs service have agreed dates for the start of strike action. This follows a 100% yes vote in the ballot.

A mass meeting on 10 July agreed a vote of no confidence in local managers as well as agreeing a plan of action which included effective picketing along with a series of demonstrations. The shop stewards committee, the leadership of the campaign, were warmly applauded by the mass meeting for the role that they are playing.

The strike action is to protest



against plans to implement a new pay and reward scheme that could cut pay by up to 20%, to make unauthorised deductions from pay, and in opposition to bullying, a management 'jobs for the boys' culture and serious breaches of health and safety, including exposure to asbestos.

The union has approached the lead councillor for the service, John Gray, for his assistance to resolve the dispute. This is a Labour-run council. Councillor Gray is also a senior Unison union representative in London. Unite rightly stated that in light of his union position, we would expect his support for workers taking action against pay cuts.

His response was to claim a conflict of interest and a refusal to meet with the local Unite representatives. This highlights once again how important it is for Labour Party members to deselect councillors who are not willing to stand up for the people who elected them.

The strike dates are 2, 5, 20, 23 and 27 August and 11 September.

The message from the mass meeting was clear. We take action and make sacrifices by striking now - to stop our pay being sacrificed tomorrow.

Bradford NHS workers strike against privatisation

Bradford Socialist Party

Seven unbroken days of strike action by estates and facilities staff at Bradford hospitals have blown the lid off the simmering pot of workers' struggle in the NHS. Picket lines numbering in the hundreds, an unplanned midweek march, and support from the passing public have brought the fight against privatisation into the spotlight.

The proposed transfer of hundreds of staff from direct NHS employment to a 'wholly owned subsidiary' has hit a nerve. Unison union organisers on the picket line have reported dozens of new members since the ballot for strike action.

Anger at the likely effect on their pay and conditions is coupled with fury at the idea that they could be removed from the NHS and into private hands.

Many of us spoke to are prepared for that fight to include indefinite strike action, although an escalation to a fortnight of strike action is likely the next step should negotiations not result in the complete removal of the privatisation plans.

Photos from inside Bradford hospitals were shared around the picket line. These included the sight of mouldy bread, uncollected hazardous waste and worse. Further days without these crucial members of

COUNCIL SEEKS TO TAKE BUDGET DEFICIT OUT ON SCHOOL STAFF AND PUPILS

Helen Pattison
East London Socialist Party

"You can't keep cutting jobs and simply expect teachers and support staff to pick up the extra work. We are not prepared to see our members driven into the ground nor see the children's education suffer", said Vendra Premkumar, Redbridge National Education Union (NEU) branch secretary.

Despite having one of the lowest spending on teachers-per-pupil in the whole of Labour-run Redbridge, the council is now demanding another £500,000 of cuts are made to clear the deficit at Ilford County High School.

The latest proposals would see pay cuts for some teachers and a major increase in workloads. For the NEU members this was the last straw. They had put up with vacant posts not being filled, increased workloads, bigger classes and less time for preparation and planning of lessons, but now "enough was enough".

The members voted 91% in favour of strike action. So far three days of solid strike action have taken place which have shut the school.



photo East London Socialist Party

On 9 July the NEU called a parents' meeting to put forward the workers' case and counter the management propaganda. Parents were shocked to hear about the low level of spending on teachers, while at the same time the school had spent £400,000 on outside consultants last year alone.

They also couldn't work out why the schools' privatised caretaking and cleaning services costs were the highest in the local authority.

The council's response was ridiculed when it said that the figures were wrong because teaching costs had accidentally been placed under

catering costs in the accounts. As NEU regional officer Glenn Kelly said to the meeting: "It adds new meaning to the idea of cooking the books".

The parents readily agreed to Glenn's proposals to join with the union to jointly lobby the school governors and the council to demand where the money has gone. The workers are set to vote on a proposal to escalate the action with a three-day strike in early September.

Socialist Party members who have been on every picket line were thanked for their support of the strike at a recent strikers' meeting.

From our history - the 1974 Imperial Typewriters strike

HOW OPPRESSED WORKERS FOUGHT BACK AGAINST RACIST 'DIVIDE AND RULE'

Heather Rawling
Leicester Socialist Party

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the 14-week Imperial Typewriters strike which had national repercussions. It involved courageous, mainly Asian women workers new to struggle, ruthless employers who used divide and rule tactics and a racist union convenor and full-time official. It was to pave the way for the more famous Grunwick strike a couple of years later.

In the 1960s Leicester had relatively full employment, mostly in its hosiery, engineering and boot and shoe industries. The city had survived the depression of the 1930s better than other parts of the country.

However, the economic boom years that followed World War Two had ended by the early 1970s. Leicester's manufacturing industry was struggling. Foreign competition was blamed as the hosiery owners moved plant to developing countries where labour was cheaper.

In 1972, 27,000 Ugandan Asians, legally UK citizens, were forcibly expelled by Uganda's tyrannical ruler President Idi Amin, with some of them settling in Leicester.

Asians from India had been brought to Uganda as part of British Imperialism's divide and rule policy. Many had jobs in the civil service, professions, and so forth, and were materially better off than most African Ugandans.

Idi Amin - who had come to power through a military coup in 1971 - scapegoated the Asian population, accusing them of disloyalty, non-integration and commercial malpractice and expelled them with only days' notice.

The influx of Ugandan Asians into Leicester coincided with the end of the long post-war economic boom. British workers had been promised ongoing economic stability and

employment. But workers were now suffering from pay restraint and job losses under the Conservative Ted Heath government. The racist and fascist National Front (NF) made much mischief out of this, blaming this new wave of immigration.

The NF had polled 9,000 votes in the previous elections in Leicester and had their national headquarters on Humberstone Road only a mile or so from the Imperial Typewriter factory. However, there were many who actively opposed the National Front and in the mid-1970s workers organised to prevent the NF from selling their racist newspaper on the streets of Leicester.

Militant and the Militant-led Labour Party Young Socialists mobilised thousands of youth, black and white, on more than one occasion, to oppose the National Front, often being met with police brutality for their efforts.

Some of the Leicester Ugandan Asians found work at Imperial Typewriters. Its shareholders undoubtedly looked forward to the profits they could make from a growing pool of 'cheap East African Asian labour'.

Political consciousness

These workers were now being discriminated against, denied bonuses and promotion. A rapid change in their political consciousness occurred as they were plunged into the ranks of the working class.

The Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU - forerunner of Unite) at the factory should have fought for equal pay, but instead the union leaders sided with the bosses and allowed them to divide the workforce on race lines.

In the course of their demands to the union convenor, Reg Weaver, the Ugandan Asians found out that they were being cheated on their bonus. And he was complicit in this.

They were being paid on a target of 200 or more machines, rather than 168 that the white workers were



Striking Asian workers at Imperial Typewriters march through Leicester demanding equality and social justice photo The People's Flag Ch4 programme

receiving. They were also being blocked for promotion or access to the higher-paid jobs in the factory and wanted to elect their own shop steward from their section.

The dispute broke out on May Day. Workers from four firms in Leicester walked out: 300 workers at the British United Shoe Machinery; 300 at the Bentley Engineering Group, 200 at the General Electric Company factory in Whetstone, and 39 Asian workers at Imperial Typewriters factory.

The other factories went back but Imperial Typewriters didn't and the strikers convinced 500 more workers to strike.

During the February 1974 miners' strike, Ted Heath called a general election on 'who runs the country?'

He didn't get the answer he wanted. Labour won most seats. Labour leader Harold Wilson became prime minister and the miners won most of their demands. The Imperial Typewriters strikers must have followed and learnt from how the miners had organised and won their dispute.

Right-wing bureaucracy

They did their best to work within the trade union structures. The right-wing bureaucrats did their best to undermine them, blocking their struggle with rules and regulations at every step.

TGWU negotiator and full-time official, George Bromley, a magistrate and a stalwart right-wing member of the Leicester Labour Party said: "The

workers have not followed the proper disputes procedure. They have no legitimate grievances and it's difficult to know what they want. I think there are racial tensions, but they are not between the whites and coloureds. The tensions are between those Asians from the sub-continent and those from Africa. This is not an isolated incident, these things will continue for many years to come. But in a civilised society, the majority view will prevail. Some people must learn how things are done..."

Bromley took the side of the bosses in this dispute.

The trade union council used bureaucratic rules to prevent the strikers from speaking at one of their meetings. But the strikers did receive

support from the wider labour movement and community.

Militant supporters and Leicester West and South Labour Party Young Socialist members were active on the picket line, in the meetings and raising their dispute in the labour movement. The strike gained support from other workers at Corah's a major hosiery factory and other factories.

Asian women defied the stereotype of the time as being passive. They were active on the picket lines and gave scabs a hard time.

The TGWU refused to make the strike official so there was no strike pay.

The strike had an impact on Asian youth who demonstrated in support of the strike and later would play a

major role in preventing the National Front from organising in the city.

The strikers elected leaders and held mass meetings. They began to get support from other workers and grew in confidence. So the company sacked them.

Tom Bradley - the right-wing Labour Leicester East MP who later defected to the Social Democratic Party - played a disgraceful role and told the strikers to return to work, as did Reg Weaver the factory convenor.

It became a bitter dispute. There was daily mass picketing and intimidation and arrests from the police. On Sunday 19 May, the strike committee called a mass meeting and 2,000 people demonstrated.

As the strike entered its tenth week,

George Bromley accused the strikers of being funded by China. Benny Bunsee, a political activist, had been adopted by the strikers as one of their leaders. In fact the strikers were suffering extreme financial hardship, despite some successful fundraising.

Although the strikers won their demands, shortly afterwards Imperial Typewriters owner, Litton, decided to close down its Leicester and Hull factories - sacking over 3,000 workers - claiming they were unprofitable.

In response, workers at the Hull site went into a lengthy factory occupation and demanded action by the Labour government.

The Imperial Typewriters strike was extraordinary. The strikers had been forced quickly to adopt the methods of trade union struggle, instinctively turning to their trade union, despite its right-wing and racist leadership.

They were also let down by Jack Jones the left-wing TGWU general secretary and national organiser Moss Evans, who instead of actively supporting the strikers promised an inquiry but then referred the inquiry to the regional officials who had already refused to back the strikers!

Inspiring

The courage and militancy of this group of workers was inspirational. The mainly Asian women at the Grunwick film processing factory in north west London drew on the Leicester workers' experience when they struck in 1976.

A major part of that dispute was

the solidarity action by other trade unionists, especially postal workers, along with mass picketing of mainly white workers who joined these Asian women on the Grunwick picket line.

The Imperial Typewriters dispute holds many lessons for workers today, not least understanding the ruthlessness of the bosses and that even if you have a just cause, workers need to fight have any chance of success.

Also, notwithstanding the limitations of some leaders both locally and nationally, the trade unions are the fundamental collective organisations that workers turn to in order to defend and advance their interests and which have the potential power to defeat the bosses.

And even when workers lose a dispute, union struggle can still have a positive and inspiring impact on other workers.

Socialists therefore should carry out patient, consistent work alongside their fellow workers and trade union members; to raise their political sights and confidence to engage in struggle.

In order to remove rotten union leaders that act as a brake on struggle and to turn trade unions into combative workers' organisations, socialists should also campaign for regular democratic elections, and the right of recall, and indeed contest leadership positions.

Accountability to the rank and file also requires that full-time union officials should receive no more than an average skilled worker's wage.

Exhibition Imperial Typewriters

Andy MacQuillan
Leicester Socialist Party and
Unison member
(personal capacity)

Newarke Houses Museum in Leicester is celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Imperial Typewriters dispute. Some inspiring historic photos are displayed showing Asian women and youth in particular, defiant and united in their struggle.

There are oral accounts of the struggle, including a Socialist Party member who was a student and Militant supporter at the time.

Shamefully, one poster shows Leicester City Council advising the expelled Ugandan Asians not to come to Leicester because the city was 'full':

"In your own interests and those of your family you should accept the advice of the Uganda resettlement board and not come to Leicester."

The exhibition shows how the fascist National Front tried to exploit the influx of Asians into Leicester, which coincided with a rise in unemployment and wage stagnation. But it also shows that solidarity was built including black workers, Gujarati and Punjabi speakers and Muslims. Rank and file trade unionists, regardless of colour or faith, understood the importance of the strike and the need for a united struggle.

However, the exhibition glosses over the disgraceful role of the trade union leaders, locally and nationally, at the time. The local right-wing local TGWU leadership was openly racist and supported the bosses against the striking workers. The left-wing national leaders were lukewarm in their support and proposed an enquiry which dragged on for seven months, even if it did exonerate the strikers.

The strikers won all of their demands only to see the factory close shortly afterwards. However the struggle paved the way for greater unity between workers, reduced support for the National Front and galvanised the Asian youth in combatting racism,

■ The Strike at Imperial Typewriters exhibition runs until 26 October 2019. Newarke Houses Museum & Gardens, The Newarke, Leicester, LE2 7BY



Two years after the Imperial Typewriters strike, exploited Asian women workers at Grunwick film processing factory in London went on strike. Their action became a cause célèbre for the trade union movement. Above, the National Union of Mineworkers (Arthur Scargill with megaphone) lead a mass solidarity demo

Unity of the working class

"Our struggle has taught us also that black workers must never for a moment entertain the thought of separate black unions. They must join the existing unions and fight through them. Where the unions fail in their duties to black workers they must be challenged to stand up for their rights.

"The union is an organisation of all workers, regardless of race, colour or sex. Right now the trade union movement in Britain is functioning as a white man's union and this must be challenged. In challenging this, we believe in the unity of the working class. This unity must be solidly established in deed and not in words. It is the main task of the trade union movement to create this unity."

■ Strike Committee statement Imperial Typewriters 1974, quoted in the Labour Party Young Socialists pamphlet 'Black Workers and the Labour Party'.

Interview: protests over killing show potential for workers' struggle in Israel

Mass protests blocked roads across Israel after the 30 June killing of 19-year-old Ethiopian-Israeli Solomon Tekah by an off-duty cop in the Kiryat Haim area of Haifa, an Israeli port town on the Mediterranean Sea. The Socialist spoke to **Eli Yossef**, a shop steward in the ancillary section of a hospital in central Israel.

Tension has been building up for a long time, as 15 Ethiopians, many of them children, have been killed since 2003. Nothing was done to the perpetrators.

The murder of this lad - it was horrific. He was shot in the heart, for no reason, by an off-duty policeman.

The policeman claims that his gun discharged accidentally. [Solomon's family lawyer, however, says that it "was a murder, not manslaughter."]

Everyone is shocked by the speed that the protests erupted. Within hours, demonstrators were blocking roads everywhere and the whole country was shut down.

This shows what power the working class has if it is prepared to fight. If this kind of struggle had been organised a few years ago, we could have prevented the privatisation of the country's gas reserves.

At the moment, the struggle does not have clear demands. They want an improvement in the attitude of the state to their community.

In 2015, 40% of the inmates of the main youth detention prison were Ethiopians. But Ethiopians are barely 1.5% of the population.

The Ethiopians do the worst jobs, with the worst conditions. They face racist oppression from the state.

Last week a 17-year-old lad was shot by the police here in Ramla. Not an Ethiopian, but he belonged to the same class. The state uses brutal police repression against the most exploited layers of the working class.

Unfortunately, sections of the working class have allowed the ruling class to play the game of 'divide and rule'. At the moment there is a lack of a leadership which can unite the working class.

Inbal Hermoni, leader of the social workers' union, has a good position of supporting the Ethiopian protests. But the Histadruth [trade union federation] should be stepping in. It should be supporting the protests - not just in words, but also in action.

The capitalists seem strong at the moment. But their system is a giant with clay feet. When we have a fighting leadership which unites the working class, then the ruling class will have a bigger problem.



Mass protests by Ethiopian Israelis also took place in 2015 photo Lilach Daniel/CC



The Socialist Inbox

Do you have something to say?

Send your news, views and criticism in no more than 150 words to editors@socialistparty.org.uk - or if you're not online, Socialist Inbox, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Who are the 0.01%?

There is a group of 5,000 people, 90% male, mostly living in London; 40% of their total income is unearned, and 15% don't work at all. Who am I talking about?

According to an article on a recent academic paper in the Economist (29 June), this is the 0.01%: the 5,000 people who made at least £2.2 million each in the financial year 2015-16.

Since 1995, their share of overall income has tripled, with 2015-16 being their second-best year in recent decades. As the Economist comments: "It is likely to have risen still further since then." The article concludes that "a better understanding of the 0.01% may reveal that the gap between rich and poor has been widening more than many people thought."

Reformists will of course demand increased taxes on the incomes of the super-rich. While Marxists would support such measures, we are well aware that the rich will employ all manner of methods to retain their wealth. One of these is disguising just how much they have, as the Economist article comments: "Very rich people are particularly likely to under-report their income."

That's why we always raise alongside any such demand measures to make evasion impossible, by taking over the sources of that wealth: the commanding heights of the economy, the banks and big business. By putting these into public ownership under democratic workers' control and management, the wealth generated by society can be planned to the benefit of all.

Iain Dalton
Leeds



Take the wealth off the super-rich photo Paul Mattsson

Twin towers' legacy

"On June 11, a frail and gaunt Luis Alvarez, a former New York City detective, appeared before the US House Judiciary Committee to demand an extension of the compensation fund for the first responders to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center's twin towers on September 11, 2001. Luis said: 'This fund is not a ticket to paradise, it's to provide our families with care'..."

"Luis died on Saturday 29 June, aged 53, of colorectal cancer which he traced to the three months he spent in the rubble of the twin towers. His death

brings a grim milestone closer - the toll of first responders to the atrocity is approaching the 2,977 killed in the atrocity, and could surpass it this year." (The Times, 1 July)

When that happens, US capitalism will have contributed to killing more victims than the terrorists! Firefighters, emergency health workers and police personnel were heaped with praise at

the time, but were given no protection against asbestos and other carcinogenic building materials. Almost 20 years later, they are still having to demand financial assistance.

Let us also not forget the twin towers attack was the pretext used by George Bush Jr and his 'second-in-command' Tony Blair to authorise an invasion of Iraq, causing hundreds of thousands to die.

John Merrell
Leicester

Cashless con

I recently went to a craft beer festival and was told that all the food stalls were card only. While it didn't particularly bother me as I have a bank card, it focused my attention on the slow but sure growth in cashless businesses.

While most people have bank cards, there are a significant number of people who are unable to get cards from banks, or who have to manage their budgets in cash due to low pay. They could be progressively more marginalised and find it harder to buy life's essentials.

This in turn might open up another avenue for loan sharks and gangsters to prey on the poor.

Socialists fight for a nationalised banking sector which can guarantee accounts for the poor, but what is also needed is a living income for everyone.

Clive Walder
Birmingham

We reserve the right to shorten and edit letters. Don't forget to give your name, address and phone number. Confidentiality will be respected if requested.

Ian Pattison
Socialist Party national committee

On 20 July 1969, for the first time in history, humans walked on the moon. Since 1972, we haven't been back.

In 1961, US president John F Kennedy promised to put a man on the moon "before this decade is out." Following those words, the government ploughed a huge amount of resources into space agency Nasa. Its annual budget rose 60-fold in just a few years to almost \$50 billion in today's money.

The moon landing captivated a generation then and still does now. 600 million people watched it happen on TV. But what drove people to land on the moon? Was it scientific exploration, or to test the limits of human endeavour?

The answer is no, even according to Nasa. Geophysicist Paul Lowman, writing for the Nasa website in 2007, accurately said: "The primary motivation for sending a man to the moon was political, not scientific."

Kennedy told Nasa administrator James Webb that the moon landing should be the organisation's top priority "for political reasons, international political reasons. This is, whether we like it or not, an intensive race. We hope to beat them."

Ideological battle

The US was locked in an ideological battle. The space race was part of the Cold War - the proxy conflict fought over five decades between the world's two superpowers at the time, the capitalist United States and Stalinist Soviet Union.

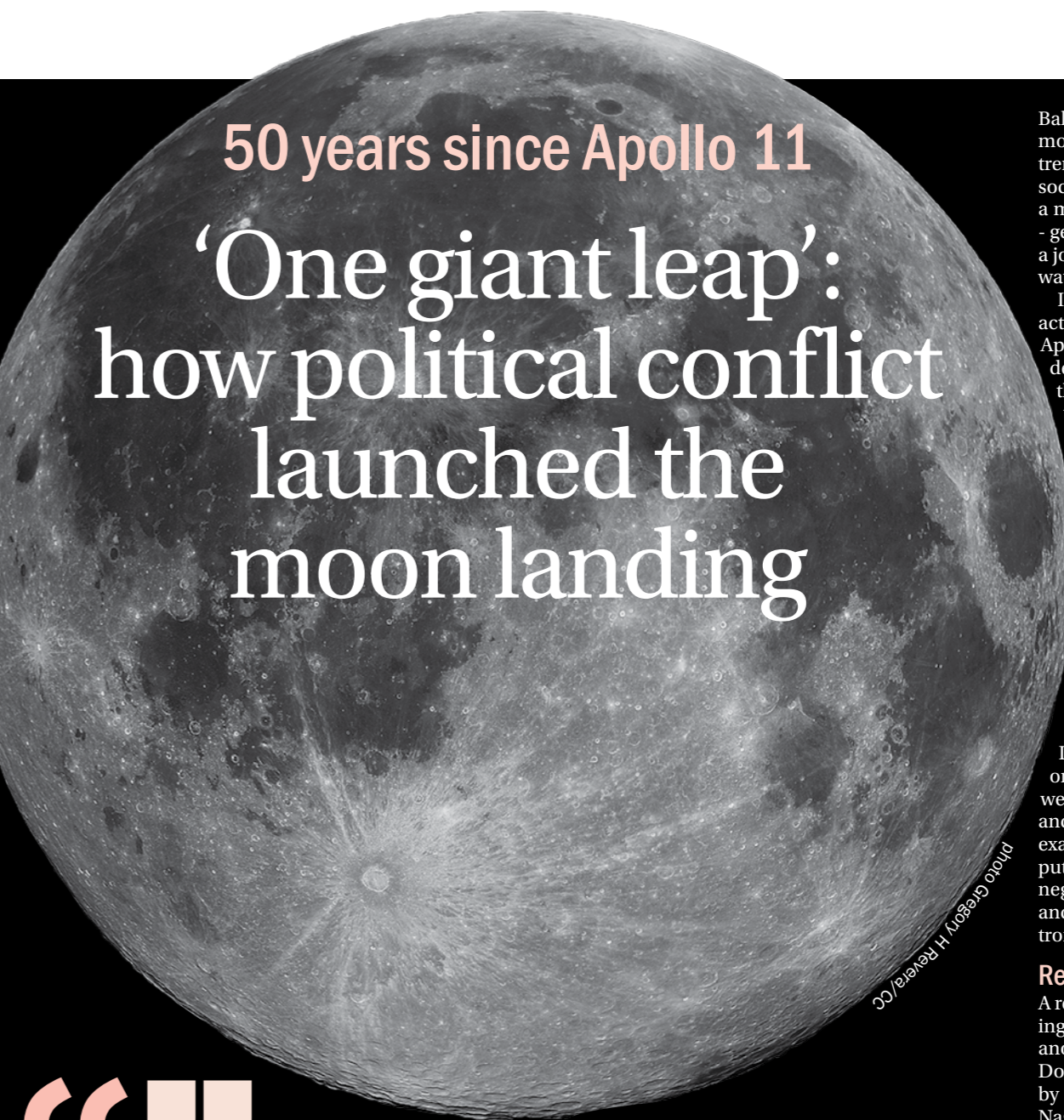
Winning the space race would be a propaganda coup in that struggle between two irreconcilable social systems. The Soviet Union achieved a string of firsts: first satellite, live creatures to orbit Earth, moon landing, man and woman in space, spacewalk.

The huge expense put paid to both space programmes in the end. But before that, all the US had left to 'prove' capitalism's superiority was getting the first person to walk on the moon.

Kennedy told Webb this was the only reason why Nasa came to possess "fantastic" sums of money. "Otherwise," Kennedy admitted, "we shouldn't be spending this kind of money, because I'm not that interested in space."

The 1917 workers' revolution in Russia had established a publicly owned, planned economy - an existential threat to big business and the super-rich around the world. The planned economy propelled Russia from a backward, semi-feudal country to a global superpower.

Leon Trotsky, one of



50 years since Apollo 11

'One giant leap': how political conflict launched the moon landing



The space race was part of the Cold War - the proxy conflict between the capitalist United States and Stalinist Soviet Union



Apollo 11 photo Nasa



Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, first person in space



Astronaut Buzz Aldrin during the first moonwalk photo Nasa



Sputnik, first artificial satellite

Baldwin commented that the moon landings "illustrate the extreme limitations of a capitalist society... The phrase 'they can put a man on the moon but they can't get the trains on time; keep me in a job; provide the world with clean water; etc' is common."

In fact, hundreds of civil rights activists did protest around the Apollo 11 mission launch. They demanded that Nasa support their movement, use its expertise "to tackle the problem of hunger," and that ten protesting families be allowed to view the launch.

US president Richard Nixon cancelled future planned moon landings. They weren't tenable as the world sank deeper into economic crisis, with an explosion of social movements, industrial strikes and revolutions in the 1960s and 1970s.

We can't escape the class struggle in space either. On 28 December 1973, US astronauts on the Skylab mission reportedly went on strike over high workload and lack of rest time. Although the exact nature of their action is disputed, the crew did successfully negotiate more time for leisure, and changed for the better how astronauts are treated in space.

Renewed race

A renewed space race is now opening up. George Bush Jr promised another US moonwalk by 2020; Donald Trump has promised one by 2024. This is unlikely given Nasa's different focus and lower levels of funding today. Maybe the Chinese regime will manage one by 2025, maybe not.

James Ivens, writing in Socialism Today magazine this month, explains that "the propaganda value of planting a flag on the moon is not a goal in itself anymore, although that is part of the motivation for the emerging powers that have yet to do it."

"More than that, they see the moon as a staging post for exploiting and industrialising near space." Bosses are "seeing the profit potential in satellites, near-Earth tourism, and mineral extraction."

Nasa estimates that 400,000 engineers were needed, over several decades, to successfully land the first person on the moon. A socialist world, based on public ownership and democratic planning by the working class, would free spaceflight from the interference of profit and prestige. That would allow us to pool the resources of humankind, to learn and explore for the benefit of all.

Further reading

- 'Mars awaits: capitalism's designs on the cosmos' in the latest issue of *Socialism Today* - buy and subscribe at socialismtoday.org
- 'The geopolitics of space' - after the 2003 Columbia disaster - at socialismtoday.org
- '40th anniversary of the moon landing - what steps has humanity taken?' at socialistparty.org.uk

Residents, housing activists and pensioners mobilise to stop eviction

Roger Bannister
Liverpool Socialist Party

Irene is a pensioner living in a small terraced house in Liverpool's Kensington area, where she has lived for years.

Irene suffers from stomach cancer, and walks with the aid of a crutch. She is a private tenant of the Mysteria property company, which recently sent her a Section 21 eviction notice (Section 21 allows landlords to evict tenants on a 'no fault' basis).

Kensington is an inner city area, just outside the city centre, immediately beyond the area dominated by two of the city's three universities. It's here that landlords can obtain higher rents from turning dwellings into multi-occupancy rentals for students rather than for single families or individuals like Irene.

Irene initially turned to a campaigning group called Acorn, which supported her at a court hearing and called a mass lobby to show support for her, and to prevent an eviction by bailiffs.

On 4 July, local residents, Acorn supporters and pensioners

from the Merseyside Pensioners Association turned out in her support, protesting loudly outside Irene's house while she attended her court hearing.

After an hour or so Irene returned, and broke into tears as the protesters cheered her arrival. She told us that the eviction had been delayed for six weeks. We will build for an even bigger turnout then.

News of the delay led to an impromptu march down a neighbouring street, to the applause of residents who came out of their homes to see what was going on.

Clearly tenants need better legal protection, security of tenure and statutorily enforced fair rents.

Universities, most of which are cash rich despite government austerity, should build appropriate accommodation for students, at rental prices that students can afford.

More importantly, this miserable system of capitalism, that allows property companies to behave in such an inhumane manner, should be overturned, and replaced with a socialist society, where housing is allocated to all on the basis of need, as opposed to the current profit based system designed primarily to benefit the greed of the rich.



Protesters against eviction gather outside Irene's home photo Roger Bannister

Stop the fire service cuts

Richard Worth
Torbay and South Devon Socialist Party

Proposals by our fire authority to cut eight fully staffed fire stations and axe 30 fire engines were described by one councillor as "turbo-charging austerity", putting lives at risk.

The cutting of fire stations is part of £8 of million planned cuts to Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS), with job losses of more than 40 firefighters.

Frontline services, full-time fire

cover and jobs have already been slashed following the combining of Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue services into one authority in 2007.

DSFRS has carried out £12.2 million in cuts in the last five years. But due to a lack of funding from central government, a further estimated £8.4 million of cuts are to be found in the next three years. These latest proposals would see the biggest, most devastating cuts ever.

Firefighters have not had a pay rise and the retention and recruitment of firefighters has become difficult,

leading to an already understaffed fire service.

James Leslie of Devon and Somerset Fire Brigades Union (FBU) said that "these proposals represent the biggest cuts to front-line services anywhere in the country" and [we] "will not tolerate these dangerous plans and we plan to mobilise against them."

Trade union councils in Exeter and Torbay have pledged support to the FBU, and the Socialist Party will support action including strikes by the FBU, and help rally people against these cuts.

On 13 July, Socialist Party members ran a stall in Newton Abbot against the cuts to the fire service and the NHS. The response from people was overwhelming.

A retired firefighter pointed out how a fire engine can only be in one place at any one time. With an increasing population due to many new homes being built, the services should be increased, not cut.

Many people showed outrage at the planned cuts and voiced their full support to their valued firefighters.

We sold 24 copies of the Socialist and received many donations to help support the work of the Socialist Party in its fight against all cuts to public services.

Campaigners force U-turn over NHS privatisation

Ste Armstrong
Warrington, St Helens and Halton Socialist Party

Working-class people in Halton are celebrating after NHS bosses were forced to abandon plans to hand the local urgent care contract to a private company. This followed a rapid and determined response by campaigners including local Socialist Party members.

The original plans were to include charging for elective operations like hip replacements and breast reductions (see - 'Charging scandal in Warrington and Halton NHS Trust' on socialistparty.org.uk).

What this amounts to is people 'choosing' to live in pain because they cannot afford operations which should be provided free.

This was quickly dropped, but shortly after it was announced that a "preferred bidder" for the urgent care had been found.

A coalition of Socialist Party mem-

bers and other left-wing groups organised a rally outside Warrington and Halton Hospitals as well as other locations across Runcorn and Widnes, uniting the local community in opposition to these plans.

Vigilance

While we should welcome this small victory, we should be wary of the wording of the statement by the trust, which said that these services will continue to be provided by the NHS "in the interim".

The Socialist Party will continue to put pressure on the NHS, local politicians and the Tory government to announce a permanent end to the privatisation of healthcare provision in Halton and throughout the country.

We want a properly funded NHS that ensures treatment free for all, based on need and not on the ability to pay. And we fight for a socialist government which puts the needs of working-class people before profit and the rich.

Durham Miners' Gala



Listening to the speeches at the Miners' Gala photo Paul Mattsson

Strength and history of unions on show

Emma Dawson
Newcastle Socialist Party

An estimated 200,000 people attended the 135th Durham Miners' Gala on 13 July, one of Europe's biggest celebrations of trade unionism and the labour movement.

Dozens of bands and banners flooded the streets, with the first marching band starting just after 8.30am. The procession continued well into the afternoon as it made its way towards the racecourse.

Speakers included Unite union general secretary Len McCluskey and Jeremy Corbyn.

Corbyn's speech focused on the

effects of austerity and the failures of the current Tory government, as well as his commitment to an inquiry into Orgrave (see the Socialist, issue 1048) on day one of a Labour government. He also touched on support for the nationalisation of rail, mail and water services, which was well received.

Numerous stalls lined the racecourse including those from major trade unions, as well as from a variety of groups including Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners.

The Socialist Party stall offered a variety of political literature which proved popular with people. Socialist Party members were armed with petitions and newspapers, with around

200 copies of the Socialist being sold and £100 raised for the fighting fund.

Although I had been aware of the gala for a long time, the 2019 gala was in fact my first. The scale and sheer size of the event is hard to appreciate until you are among the crowds. It's a testament to the strength and history of the trade union and labour movement and its future. The stalls provided a good opportunity to stock up on books and badges and meet people behind various campaigns.

Despite the occasional heavy rain, it was a really good day and one which will leave many, including myself, looking forward to next year's gala.

Leicestershire - No more austerity!

Heather Rawling
NUT union life member and Unison (personal capacity)

'We will pay you £60 to attend a consultation session with Leicestershire County Council.' I couldn't believe that I had heard the man correctly. £60 to tell them what I think of them. Count me in!

The evening was designed to get people to appreciate how the poor councillors were agonising over the cuts they had to make.

The council has had a £100 million cut in its revenue support grant and the director of finance said it needed to make £75 million in cuts even though the population is set to rise by 107,000.

Also, Special Education Needs costs are set to rise by 22% and the

numbers of children in council care are set to rise by 13% each year.

So, already families are struggling to cope. Here is where we, the public, came in. The consultation was to imagine we were councillors, look at the figures and say where we would make the cuts. Then the councillors could claim this is what we wanted!

So I asked how much the council had in reserves. It's £100 million. The council is a hung council with a small Tory majority. Councils don't have to make cuts. The director of finance muttered something about illegal budgets, but he was informed that using reserves is not illegal.

Leicestershire County Council has already cut £200 million since 2010. Children and young people's services and adult social care, the biggest budgets, have already been

cut to the bone. Any further cuts would mean that the council would be in danger of not fulfilling its statutory duties. Leicestershire is not the only council in this situation.

We have already had more than a decade of austerity and misery as working-class people have been forced to pay for the capitalist economic downturn. The labour and trade union movement should organise a fightback to defend jobs and services.

Labour councillors should refuse to vote for cuts and instead organise a mass campaign of communities and trade unions to demand funding from the government. Liverpool socialist council in the 1980s showed the way.

I have given the £60 to the Socialist Party fighting fund to further that fight!



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Socialist Party Fighting Fund

	£ target	£ received	April-June 2019	Final Chart
East Midlands	1,850	4,105		222%
North West	2,100	4,492		214%
Eastern	1,200	2,302		192%
Northern	750	1,329		177%
Wales	2,300	3,020		131%
South West	1,800	2,296		128%
Southern	1,600	1,980		124%
London	6,100	6,979		114%
West Midlands	2,600	2,941		113%
Yorkshire	3,300	3,389		103%
South East	750	680		91%
Other	5,650	1,248	22%	
TOTAL	30,000	20,416		116%

Socialist Party members and supporters made a tremendous effort to get to nearly 90% of the target for the May to July fighting fund quarter. Determined to maintain our great record on the fighting fund, members raised over £11,000 over the course of the 'Collectathon' fortnight running up to the end of the quarter.

Well done to the 27 branches who reached 100% or more of their targets - five branches raised over 200% and four branches raised over £1,000 each. Branches are now planning their campaigns to make sure that they hit their targets in the next quarter.

Ken Douglas
Socialist Party national treasurer

Donate today!

If you agree with what you read in the Socialist, consider making a donation to the Socialist Party's fighting fund:

- pay by card on 020 8988 8777
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GREECE ELECTIONS: SYRIZA OUSTED AMID VOTER DISILLUSIONMENT

Socialist policies and working-class mass action can end austerity

Niall Mulholland
Committee for a Workers'
International (CWI)

The recent general election in Greece saw a heavy defeat for Syriza (Coalition of the Radical Left) and a victory for the right-wing New Democracy. This follows four years during which the Syriza-led government approved mass privatisations and cuts at the behest of the 'Troika' (International Monetary Fund, World Bank and EU) despite coming to power on a wave of anti-austerity anger.

Greek people have suffered ten years of austerity under three 'bailout' agreements, with outgoing prime minister Alexis Tsipras's Syriza overseeing the last package. Greece's national output (GDP) has fallen by a staggering 25%. Around 18% of the population are jobless - the highest in the eurozone. Over 400,000 young Greeks moved abroad to find work. Over 30% of the population live in poverty.

From 2015 to 2018, the government voted for the Troika's 'memorandums' and introduced anti-worker legislation, including further restrictions on the right to strike. A primary budget surplus until 2060 was agreed with the Troika which means the prospect of decades of austerity.

Tsipras called the snap election after poor showings for Syriza in the European elections. But his desperate throw of the dice failed. Voters punished Syriza in the polls after a €86 billion 'bailout', agreed last year, meant enduring yet more austerity.

The prospect of either of the two main austerity parties winning - Syriza or New Democracy - saw voter turnout drop to its lowest since 1974. 42% of the population did not vote. Support for Syriza from young voters and the working class fell.

It was New Democracy, the right-wing party that Syriza ousted in 2015, that returned to power, with a working majority. New Democracy won nearly 40% of the vote compared to 28% in the September 2015 elections and 33% in the May 2019 European elections.

Syriza's vote fell from 35% in 2015, to just under 31%. A big factor in why Syriza did not fall further is because it appears to have taken many of the votes that formerly went to the cuts-making social-democratic Pasok (renamed 'Kinal', which got 8.1%). Widespread working-class



Rather than use this powerful mandate to reject the Troika and austerity... Tsipras capitulated

fear of the hard neoliberal policies of New Democracy also appears to have stemmed the flow away from Syriza somewhat.

The Greek Communist Party (KKE) failed to pick up support, achieving 5.3% (5.5% in 2015 elections). Other left parties, like Anatsarya and LAE, lost votes compared to previous elections.

Diem25, the new party of Yanis Varoufakis, the former finance minister under Syriza, managed to get over the threshold to enter parliament. But this group talks of an 'alternative' to the bosses' EU and a negotiated end to the worst of austerity - all previously rejected by Brussels.

One bright spot in the election was the fascist Golden Dawn losing all of its seats. Mass anti-fascist protests and scandalous court trials involving leading Golden Dawn figures helped lose them support.

Syriza was catapulted to power in 2015 after five years of deep recession and a series of strikes - including general strikes and mass protests - promising to stop austerity.

Many on the left presented Syriza as a model for across Europe. But Syriza, mired in reformist policies despite the socialist rhetoric, had no intention of mobilising the Greek working class on a clear anti-austerity and socialist programme and making a class appeal to the European working class.

At the time, the CWI advocated the adoption of bold socialist policies as the only way to end the misery of the working class. This would have included rejecting the memorandums, nationalising the commanding heights of the economy under democratic workers' control and management, and imposing capital controls and a state monopoly on foreign trade.

If this led to Greece being kicked out of the eurozone and EU, a socialist government would have appealed to the working class of



New Greek PM Mitsotakis is a neoliberal former banker photo kremlin.ru/CC

Ousted Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras photo kremlin.ru/CC

Europe to struggle against its own cuts-making governments and the bosses' EU, for the socialist transformation of the continent.

Instead, the Syriza government sought to negotiate for modified austerity packages. But even this was too much for the EU ruling classes. Syriza was forced to sign an austerity package in February 2015. Under immense pressure from the ruling class to force through the cuts and from an angry working class in opposition to the cuts, Tsipras gambled and called a referendum on the austerity package.

Tsipras hoped a Yes vote would allow him to say he was following the will of the people who hated the cuts but feared being forced out of the eurozone and possibly the EU even more. But the No vote won with 61%, indicating the huge level of anger at billions of euros of social attacks being planned.

Capitulation

Rather than use this powerful mandate to reject the Troika and austerity, to take into democratic public ownership, control and management the main levers of the economy and to start the socialist reorganisation of society, Tsipras capitulated. Syriza imposed a €13 billion austerity package that saw pensions slashed and the continuing nosedive of economic production and incomes. Today, over 40% of Greek youth are unemployed.

Syriza's dramatic swing to the right on economic policies is inevitably reflected in other areas. The riot police have been bolstered. Inhumane camps were set up for refugees fleeing conflicts in the Middle

East. Tsipras cultivated close ties with Israel, and Egypt's despotic General el-Sisi.

The ruins of the 'Syriza project' provide harsh warnings for other Left parties, like Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party in Britain.

From this serious setback to the Greek working class and big disappointment for many on the left across Europe hard political lessons can be drawn.

The crisis of the capitalist system today is such that no 'left populist' party can meet the needs and desires of the working class with a 'reforming' programme that refuses to countenance breaking with that system.

As Greece starkly shows, it will be the ruling class that tames the left governments in these circumstances. The Greek left suffered big setbacks and demoralisation and has gone through splits in recent years. The unions appear acquiescent in many cases.

The series of general and partial strikes against austerity were never seriously developed by the union leadership, to pose the question of who runs society and working-class power.

For Marxists, it is not a question of throwing up our hands in despair. The situation in Greece is very difficult for the working class and Left today but that means clarifying programme, ideas and how to rebuild are more important than ever.

It is not a time for the Greek left to turn their backs on the trade unions, no matter the rotten role played by some of the union leaderships. Marxists in Greece, as elsewhere, must be in the unions, arguing for



New powerful working class forces need to be built, in particular drawing in the younger generation, to take on Greek and EU capitalism

combative policies against austerity, in preparation for the industrial struggles that will inevitably erupt given capitalism's incapacity to deliver the goods for working people. Prime Minister Mitsotakis has signalled that he intends to make new attacks against the working class.

The CWI supports building genuine left unity and a fightback, on a pro-working class, socialist programme. This should involve, among others, militant trade unionists, anti-fascist campaigners, radical social movements and viable parties and forces of the left, including the KKE (Communist Party), which despite its leadership's sectarianism, still commands significant working-class support.

New powerful working-class forces need to be built, in particular drawing in the younger generation, to take on the forces of Greek and EU capitalism.

On a wider scale, only the adoption of resolute socialist policies and the mass action of the organised working class can see an end to austerity and the transformation of society.

Sudan masses mobilise against state repression

No support for 'transitional government'

John Gillman
Reading Socialist Party

Harrowing scenes are now coming out of Sudan of the 3 June massacre, where doctors report well over 100 people were murdered by the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and general 'Hemeti' Dagola's brutal Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia.

With the suspended internet now restored, videos and testament have been shown on mainstream media of mass shootings of protesters, along with police beating people with sticks, concrete tied to the feet of victims who were then dumped in the Nile, rapes, and even doctors and medical staff being shot.

Despite all of this, it did not force the masses into submission. Just like during the Arab spring of 2011 in Tunisia and Egypt, the Sudanese masses lost their fear of the regime and turned out on 30 June to defy the government once again, with huge demos in all the cities.

With a threatened general strike, the TMC conceded to talks brokered by the African Union's Peace and Security Council and the Ethiopian government.

The TMC and the opposition, Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), cobbled together a power sharing deal that leaves five members of the military alongside five civilian appointees chaired by a retired military figure. The deal is supported by the US, British, Saudi and UAE governments.

Divisions at the tops of the regime were revealed, with reports of an attempted military coup carried out by sections of the military that were opposed to the deal being negotiated.

Protesters returning to the streets on 13 July were not happy with the mass murderers of the TMC being left in place. They are exerting pressure on opposition leaders in the FFC, reflected, at the time of writing, with the drafting committee failing to finalise an agreement on power sharing.

This proposal leaves the murderers of 3 June in power and is unacceptable to many of the protesters.

No support

There should be no support for such an agreement or any coalition with the military tops or pro-capitalist leaders. It aims to pacify the mass movement, with promises for future elections in three years, so the military can regain brutal control over the situation, with further repression certain to follow.

The involvement of the African Union is not to ensure the masses win the change they desire but to act as a brake on the revolution. They fear it spreading beyond the borders of Sudan to other countries in Africa.

The revolutionary events in Sudan - with all the problems of capitalist crisis unresolved and intolerable conditions for the workers worsening - have the potential to reignite the 2011 'Arab spring'. That is why

the TMC has received the backing of reactionary regimes in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

All this deal represents is the corrupt ruling capitalist class and the tops of the military clinging onto power. With their fingers in all parts of the economy and profitable links to foreign regimes, including Hemeti Dagola being paid by Saudi Arabia to send troops to fight their war in Yemen, the TMC want to maintain their power and privileges.

As the revolutionary movement has developed over recent months, organised committees are developing, organising the general strike, protests and community defence. Trade unions repressed under the dictatorship are being rebuilt. This is where the movement should be built.

Independent organisations of the working class - armed with socialist policies to end the economic crisis and rule of the military - are the only force in society that can build a united movement to overthrow the capitalist elite.

The huge protests should be the basis for a clear call for a revolutionary constituent assembly, as a means by which a genuine government of the workers and poor can be directly elected and begin to carry through the revolutionary change needed.

The protests should be developed into an indefinite general strike to overthrow military rule and bring to power a government that would implement the popular call for



photo Naomi Byron

elections to a constituent assembly.

A genuinely revolutionary constituent assembly would bring the murderers of 3 June to justice, purge the military and judiciary, release all political prisoners, establish a free press, freedom for political parties and the trade unions to organise and put an end to the persecution of ethnic minorities.

To consolidate these policies and to provide food, fuel, health care, education, housing, jobs, justice and end corruption, a government of democratically elected representatives of workers and the poor is needed that will implement

socialist measures through the nationalisation of the banks, industry and foreign monopolies.

But to secure revolutionary change, an appeal will need to be made to the workers and poor of Egypt and other neighbouring countries to join the movement for socialism and aim to build a genuinely voluntary socialist federation of Sudan and neighbouring states.

The urgent task facing socialists and workers in Sudan is building a revolutionary mass workers' party capable of carrying through these tasks and securing the fruits of this revolution.

"The revolution must continue until we are free"

Socialist Party Wales reporters

Several hundred people representing the Sudanese diaspora in the UK met in Cardiff on 14 July to celebrate their culture but also to discuss the ongoing revolution in Sudan.

There were speakers from across

the political and generational spectrum. One speaker from an organisation representing Sudanese lawyers spoke in favour of the recent agreement between movement leaders and the Transitional Military Council.

This went down well, especially with older, professional layers in the

room - possibly because it means that there is an apparent pause in the horrific violence - but many of the young speakers on the podium and in breakout discussions did not agree.

"Why would we ally with the butchers who have killed and raped our people?" a young Sudanese woman asked. Another remarked: "We have lost so many people, we cannot stop here, the revolution must continue until we are free". And a young Sudanese man suggested: "We need to stay out on the streets to sweep aside the military and the system that supports them".

The Socialist Party was invited to speak and was greeted warmly. Our speaker, Gareth Bromhall - also assistant secretary of Swansea Trade Union Council - brought solidarity greetings from the trade union movement and talked about the importance of international solidarity.

Gareth raised the socialist demands of CWI supporters which was met with a round of applause



Sudanese diaspora discusses the revolution photo Gareth Bromhall



Hong Kong protesters reject chief executive's promises

On 9 July, Carrie Lam, Hong Kong's chief executive (appointed by Beijing) declared that the controversial extradition bill that has sparked weeks of mass protests is "dead". Her opponents - now battle-hardened demonstrators who fear the imposition of direct Chinese rule on their territory - have said they do not believe her. In a recent article **Clare Doyle** of the Committee for a Workers' International looks at the way forward for the demo. See socialistworld.net

SOCIALIST CHANGE TO END CLIMATE CHANGE

- Build student unions
- Spread the strikes
- Defend the right to protest
- Link up with workers and trade unions to prepare for 20 September
- General election now
- For a democratic socialist plan of production based on the needs of the majority and the environment, not the private profit of a few

Joshua Allerton

Wolverhampton and Black Country Socialist Party

The official climate change advisers for the government have exposed the Tories as being all talk and no action. John Gummer, the Committee on Climate Change chair, compared them to characters from Dad's Army!

They state that "the government has delivered only one of 25 critical policies needed to get emissions back on track." Despite Theresa May announcing Britain would lead the world by having net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, the government is already off track to achieve its previous target of 80%. Not very impressive for a government aspiring to host a critical climate conference next year.

The Committee on Climate Change calls for more green space in parks and gardens to help cool cities and reduce flood risks. Urban green spaces have shrunk from 63% in 2001 to 55% in 2018. Hard surfaces in towns are known to make floods worse, but there has been an increase of 22% over the same period.

System change

Unsurprisingly, the Committee on Climate Change doesn't call for the system change needed to tackle climate change. Instead, it calls for "business friendly" policies. The government's lack of action on climate change is very business friendly, putting profit first.

The Committee on Climate Change has grumbled about the issue, but with glacial melting in Antarctica potentially becoming irreversible, we have no time to risk with a profit-driven government. Mass action is needed to remove this government and force a general election.

To truly prevent climate change from killing our planet, we need public ownership - especially of the industries that cause the most pollution. To win that requires mass workers' action and a socialist alternative.

A socialist system could reduce emissions and environmental harm by removing the profit motive, massively investing in green technology and public transport, and allowing the working class to democratically plan production.

Young people and students have sparked this movement with strikes every month. Together with democratic workers' organisations, school student unions can help organise the next steps of the struggle and fight for the socialist change we need to stop climate change.

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