News that Labour would win a parliamentary majority if a general election were held tomorrow has spurred on Tory chancellor Philip Hammond to produce a report recommending a £5,000 reduction in tuition fees over a three-year course.

This latest, embarrassing retreat by the Tories demonstrates how desperate they have become to maintain power.

But any reduction in fees will be welcomed by students and it’s clear a big factor behind this is that the Tories fear a mass movement for free education.

The government has been under pressure on all fronts. Its justification for fees has been undermined, not least following the news of vast cash resources held by many universities.

The prohibitively expensive £9,250 a year maximum tuition fee has contributed to a drop in university applicants for the first time since fees were raised in 2012.

Inflation

The 6.1% interest rate for tuition fees disproportionately affects poorer students struggling to pay off the loan, as it rises with inflation. Better-off students who can repay it quickly gain the upper hand, even after entering the job market with the same qualification.

The interest rate includes an additional 3% on top of inflation which has never been fully explained by parliament.

This can add thousands to students’ loan repayments once graduates have reached the relatively low £21,000 earnings threshold. All this while university vice-chancellors’ pay averages £270,000 a year.

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Corbyn’s left-leaning manifesto policies, including to immediately introduce free education, proved extremely popular with young people during the election, winning seats in former Tory strongholds like Canterbury.

But unfortunately since then Labour has refused to commit to cancelling student debt despite Jeremy Corbyn’s hint during the election campaign that it would.

The Socialist Party and Socialist Students fight for abolishing tuition fees, cancelling student debt and a £10 an hour minimum wage to pave the way for a brighter future for young people.
Labour Party conference 2017

CORBYN’S SUPPORT MUST BE USED TO DEFEAT BLAIRITES

What we think

As the Labour Party goes into its third annual conference, the nature of the party and its anti-authoritarian policies are of growing concern to many on the left. They are of concern not only to the current leadership, but also to those who badly want to rid the party of the anti-socialist, anti-working class forces that have come to dominate it in recent years. These forces are represented by the right wing of the party, who have long enjoyed a privileged position, and who are now set to further their dominance at this conference, following the years of Blairite changes that drastically reduced the role of the conference as a decision-making body of the party.

Jeremy Corbyn has rightly insisted on limiting the number of conference plenary sessions to a maximum of 14, a move that was welcomed by many on the left. This is a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done to ensure that the conference is truly democratic and representative of the views of Labour members and activists across the country.

The conference provides an opportunity for Labour members and activists to come together to discuss the challenges facing the party and to work towards a socialist future. It is a chance for the party to show that it is truly a working-class party, and that it is committed to fighting for a fairer and more equal society.

Unfortunately, Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell have so far only rejected mucking it up when they were asked to power rebellions. As more and more vital jobs and services begin to go on strike, the danger is that the government will resort to more violent tactics in an attempt to quash the growing anti-authoritarian movement.

Corbyn supporters need to organize more extensively and efficiently than the right wing, adopting a pro-working class, socialist approach to organizing and campaigning. They need to be taking the fight to councils and workplaces, and to be building a mass movement of working people to fight for a socialist future.

The Socialist is calling on all Labour Party members to come together at the conference to discuss the challenges facing the party and to work towards a socialist future. We urge all Labour members to attend the conference, and to use it as a platform to discuss the issues that matter to them.

The Socialist is also calling on all Labour Party members to support the Corbyn leadership, and to work towards building a strong socialist movement within the party. We believe that the Corbyn leadership is the only way forward for the Labour Party, and that it is the only way to build a socialist future.

If you are a Labour Party member, we urge you to support the Corbyn leadership, and to use the conference as a platform to discuss the issues that matter to you. Together, we can build a strong socialist movement within the Labour Party, and work towards a socialist future.
Grenfell inquiry begins: not sufficient, not trusted

■ Jail the killers!
■ For an independent workers’ movement inquiry

Paul Kershaw
London Socialist Party and chair, Unite the Union housing workers’ branch

Three months after the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower the official inquiry has opened in the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms, Covent Garden. The elegant central London venue’s palatial surroundings underline the ‘them and us’ gap at the core of this inquiry.

Local people and trade unions have voiced concerns that the terms of reference for the inquiry are too narrow to draw crucial conclusions. Its chair, retired judge Martin Moore-Bick, allowed no time for questions and ignored survivors’ barrister Michael Mansfield QC when he attempted to raise them. They also reacted with anger to a decision not to appoint a survivor or local resident to a panel of assessors who will advise the inquiry. Moore-Bick argues that “to appoint someone as an assessor who has had direct involvement in the fire would risk undermining my impartiality in the eyes of others.”

So much for pleas for diversity and community representation! But his inquiry does have plenty of involvement from establishment figures who had direct involvement in the events that led up to this avoidable catastrophe. Why should working class people have any confidence in them?

Sir Ken Knight, the inquiry’s technical advisor:
■ responsible for a report that recommended against installing sprinkler systems as not “economically viable,” despite post-Lakanal fire recommendations that they should be installed in tower blocks
■ signed off ‘Reynobond’, used in the Grenfell cladding, as safe, when he was a director of Warrington Certification. His defence that he was “not aware” that he was director of the safety firm may have convinced the judge but simply won’t convince others

Sir Peter Bonfield, advisor to the inquiry:
■ responsible for a report in April 2016 which found that safety regulations in relation to cladding were “adequate”
■ facing anger after the fire, he announced his resignation. But it has now emerged he is still receiving his full six-figure salary, in addition to the new chief executive - presumably both paid from local tenants’ rent!

Robert Black, chief executive of Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) and so the Grenfell landlord, responsible for the period in which residents’ fire safety concerns were ignored:
■ facing anger after the fire, he announced his resignation. But it has now emerged he is still receiving his full six-figure salary, in addition to the new chief executive - presumably both paid from local tenants’ rent!

Kensington and Chelsea TMO says he is assisting multiple inquiries into the causes and aftermath, including Moore-Bick’s inquiry, and that this is a full-time job

Will comparable funding go to local residents wanting to document and articulate their side of the story?

Gavin Barwell, the housing minister who sat on recommendations to review building regulations after the 2009 Lakanal House fire in Camberwell, south London:
■ now Theresa May’s chief of staff. Moore-Bick appears unembarrassed that the narrow terms of reference of his inquiry have been agreed with Theresa May’s office
■ The terms of reference do include the government response in the immediate aftermath of the fire, but why stop there? Despite promises, just two families have been permanently rehoused.

A press officer told the Guardian that the number moved to permanent accommodation is not a “metric” the council is using. If local people were involved in the inquiry, they might ask why not.

It is essential that broader questions about why resident warnings were ignored, privatisation and lack of accountability, as well as the run-down of social housing and regulation are examined. Local people want the truth to be told and they want justice - as do firefighters, ambulance crew and hard-pressed council workers.

It makes sense to push the official inquiry as far as possible given its resources. But there is a need for an inquiry that does not downplay local residents and working class people, or let the profiteers and capitalist politicians off the hook.

Working with the local community, the trade unions should set up a parallel investigation. Unite, for instance, organises housing and construction workers among others. Imagine the effect if Jeremy Corbyn and Unite general secretary Len McCluskey, for example, were to convene an inquiry and, in the full glare of publicity, call on residents and workers to give their testimonies.

Such an inquiry could draw the wider political conclusions about the effects of privatisation and deregulation, and point the spotlight on all the main parties and their roles in national and local government defending the interests of big business ahead of working class people.

No excuses - install sprinklers now!

Just 2% of UK social housing tower blocks have a full sprinkler system, figures released after a BBC freedom of information request revealed. It also found that only one in three blocks had more than one staircase, another issue cited in fire safety concerns at Grenfell.

Following the Lakanal fire there were recommendations that sprinkler systems should be installed. These have been supported by the Fire Brigades Union.

Now London’s fire brigade commissioner, Dany Cotton, has called for retrofitting sprinklers saying “Grenfell should be a turning point. I support retrofitting - for me, where you can save one life then it’s worth doing. This can’t be optional, it can’t be a ‘nice to have’ - this is something that must happen.”

Landlords must act now on this and other fire safety concerns and they must report progress to tenants and residents.

Some have said they do not have the money, or that carrying out the work will result in cuts to other services.

The government has claimed that money will not be a reason not to do the work - but has dragged its feet when it comes to coughing up.

That is not acceptable. Start the work now - bill the government!
Fight expansion of disastrous ‘Universal Credit’ welfare system

Laurence Maples
Lambeth Socialist Party

Still recovering from the last crisis? Hold on to your wallet, Britain’s bankers are storing up another one. The Financial Conduct Authority has urged the government to tackle the explosion in consumer debt, which is now standing at £200 billion.

The Financial Conduct Authority bankers are storing up another one. Hold on to your wallet, Britain’s
time bomb: nationalise the banks!

Defuse the consumer debt ticking

Laurel Fogarty

‘Universal Credit,’ the Tories’ disastrous flagship welfare reform, is due to be rolled out to 50 new areas next month.

This is despite new figures showing the system’s harsh benefit cuts and long waiting times are driving claimants into serious debt.

Officially, recipients of Universal Credit will wait up to six weeks for their first payment. But according to the Trussell Trust many wait between ten and 13 weeks.

This drives many in Universal Credit areas, including those in work, to foodbanks to survive - at more than double the rate of the national average.

The huge delays also put families at serious risk of eviction and homelessness. Landlords can evict tenants who are over eight weeks behind on rent - a stark reality for many waiting for Universal Credit payments.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) figures show nearly half of new recipients of Universal Credit have fallen behind on their rent for the first time. One in five owes over £1,000.

Nearly half of current claimants are in rent arrears

50 new areas are due to launch the system in October

While it is easy to attribute the massive waiting times to incompetence or errors in the rollout of the new system, much of the delay is, in fact, callously built in to the structure of Universal Credit.

For example, there is a seven-day waiting period before a claim can be made. Then the DWP insists an official wait of up to 42 days is ‘necessary’ to ensure recipients are on a monthly schedule.

So even when the system works properly it leaves people in serious debt and at risk of homelessness. Nearly one in six recipients turn in desperation to payday loan companies to keep their heads above water.

Other attacks such as the ‘rape clause’ for child tax credits, and the massive delays in housing benefit payments, make Universal Credit a still more brutal system that is not fit for purpose.

As a start the rollout of Universal Credit should be immediately halted and reversed.

The Socialist Party opposes all barbaric cuts to the social safety net including the cynical hidden cuts at the heart of this ‘reform’. We campaign for an end to in-work poverty, a living wage for all workers, and living benefits without compulsion.

Join the fightback!
Join the Socialists!
**BIRMINGHAM BIN WORKERS VOTE TO CONTINUE ACTION FOLLOWING RALLY**

**CWI strike ballot - why I'm voting Yes**

**Deal concludes Barts health strike**

*We have raised our heads high*  

Paul Mitchell  
London Socialist Party

**Barts health strike**

A few Unite the Union members meeting outside of the hospital.

The London Socialist Party voted to accept an offer made by the company involving taking no action on next year’s pay. This move to Unite has been vindicated by the socialists. The move to Unite has been vindicated by the socialists. The move to Unite is a collective action.

John Whittick was branch secretary of the London Region of the Unions.

But increasingly the right-wing leadership from both management and the unions, the powers and the management is more dictatorial.

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The future for young people in Britain today looks very bleak. The Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) reports that within Britain - which is surpassed only by Greece for worst wage growth of the OECD countries - it is 18 to 21-year-olds who have been hit the hardest. Their wages have been cut by 16% in real terms between 2008 and 2016.

In an attempt to escape the trap of wage stagnation by getting a ‘good job’, many students attend university. But they often not only finish with well over £50,000 of debt, but discover that no such high-paying jobs exist. We study to get jobs which then aren’t offered to us and all we find in their place is precarious work for low pay.

So ubiquitous is the plague of zero-hour contracts that they are now a major contributing factor in poor mental health. According to research conducted by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies at UCL, those employed on zero-hour contracts are 50% more likely to develop mental health problems than those with secure work patterns.

Where’s the wealth?

With all these attacks on our living standards, you’d be forgiven for assuming that we’ve become poorer as a country in recent years. Yet the 29th annual Sunday Times Rich List published this year revealed that within Britain (the fifth richest country in the world) the richest 1,000 individuals and families increased their wealth by 14% over 12 months to £658 billion.

Yet ten years on from the start of the global financial crisis, it is becoming increasingly clear that we are not experiencing a simple blip in an uninterrupted upwards curve of growth for capitalism.

The problems young people face are instead rooted deeply in the inability of capitalism - an economic system which takes the creation of profit as its first and only priority - to socially and economically develop society in a way which delivers for the majority.

The super-rich hoard their vast accumulated wealth instead of investing that money in a way which would be socially useful for Britain’s young workers and students; in education, job creation, housing, apprenticeship schemes, as well as culture and the arts.

Their reticence is the product of capitalism, which fights tooth and nail to maximise profitability, and the global financial crisis which undermined its ability to make profit in the first place.

Corbyn’s Labour

It comes as no surprise then, that in polling recently published by YouGov, the Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn is a massive 46 percentage points ahead of the Conservative Party among 18 to 24-year-olds.

Corbyn is nine times more trusted than the Tories when it comes to the NHS, and ten times more trusted on the issue which defines today’s youth, of housing. Corbyn’s manifesto - which
Why do young people need Socialism?

Socialist society.

what would be possible under a capitalist system. Corbyn's pro-
posal gave a small glimpse of the chaos wreaked upon our lives by the ruling class. It's clear that the capitalist establishment would not passively accept Corbyn's policies if he were to enter parliament, and would do all in their power to sabotage his programme.

We have to be prepared to fight not only to collapse a government which represents the ruling class, but in the case of his election victory, to fight in support of Corbyn's programme, which goes against the interests of the capitalist establishment.

This would involve building mass movements of students, young workers and the wider working class. It would mean waging local battles to fight cuts to our education services, local jobs and community centres, right through to national campaigns and strike action coordinated by all the trade unions and the Trade Union Congress.

Young people needn't settle for fighting to win victories only to watch them be chipped away at by the ruling class later. We can fight for a socialist system - a society under which the vast wealth that exists would be owned and democratically controlled by the people who create that wealth, the working class.

This means the democratic public ownership and management not only of vital services such as the railways, the NHS, the utility companies and others; but also the financial institutions, the banks and loan companies in order to rationally plan the resources which would be needed to fund the growth and expansion of our society.

The Panama Papers scandal last year proved that we cannot control the money we don’t own, as the capitalist system will always be prepared to help the rich protect the obscene amounts of wealth they keep hidden from the rest of us.

A key step to permanently breaking the financial tricks of the capitalist class would be the immediate nationalisation of Britain's top 150 monopolies and banks under the democratic, bottom-up control of working class people, with compensation for the current owners given only on the basis of proven need.

Workers’ party

To fight for this new society, we need a political force which can provide leadership to such a mass movement; a party which can provide a continuous and consistent leadership politically and industrially.

The Socialist Party has campaigned consistently for the creation of a mass working class party in British society which can fulfil this role, and we appeal for anyone who agrees with us to join us in our fight for such a new force.

We fully support Jeremy Corbyn’s embryonic party and help us fight for a socialist future.

Get active!

1 October
Tories Out demo
Join Young Socialists’ red bloc on the 1 October Tories Out demo in Manchester - look out for the Socialist Students banner on Liverpool Road, outside the Museum of Science & Industry

22 November
education shutdown
Socialist Students will be organising substantial protests on campuses to coincide with budget day.
We’re calling for strikes, walkouts and occupations.
We’re demanding that the leadership of the NUS organises a huge national demonstration.
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**Protest to Pressure Labour to Scrap Haringey Re-development Plans**

Jeremy Corbyn has always spoken out against social cleansing, for preventing council-ruled spaces and the importance of building council-owned housing to solve housing crisis. He has also spoken out against privatisation and the need to build social homes, and having a_ttlout in London.

**Austerity**

He stated on this movement to assert Labour's commitment to opposing austerity and building more social housing and say that the 'Haringey Development Vehicle' should stop. He voted for Labour's supporting the movement.

**Oppose the HDV Green**

23 September, assemble at 22pm
Tottenham Green, nearest tube
Seven Sisters, march to Palmers Park
Pocket Living, a company claiming a vision to find “innovative solutions” to so-called intractable problems like landlords charging rents too high and bosses paying wages too low!

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Interview: the “socialist John Le Carré”

Edward Wilson is an author described as the “socialist John Le Carré.” His novel, A River in May, was published in 2002 and is set in Venice, where Edward served in the US Special Forces.

The brutal depiction of the horrors of that war are based largely on his own experiences. His latest, A Very British Ending, deals with the plot to overthrow Harold Wilson’s Labour government.

Do you think a government led by Jeremy Corbyn would face the same threat as Harold Wilson did? Absolutely.

Wilson was not a genuine lefty. He was an opportunist, although it might not be a popular thing to say today. He joined the University Club at university. I think Wilson would have liked to lead the left. He just wanted to be prime minister.

Wilson was a traitor. Yet Gaiman was their product—a genuine writer of politics. They were of the Left (or ‘Tory prime minister’ Harold Macmillan). Their latest, ‘A Very British Ending’, deals with the threat Wilson faced.

Do you think that Wilson was a socialist? He was an author described as the ‘socialist John Le Carré.’ His first novel, ‘A River in May’, was published in 2002.

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Definitely this issue needs to be addressed. You would have to ask the people involved. Such a phenomenon would not occur now with the super-rich and secret intelligence that Wilson had.

Wilson was a complete charlatan. She introduced me to her husband, a Conservative, they said—how interesting.

We know there are the people involved. Such a phenomenon would not occur now with the super-rich and secret intelligence that Wilson had.

What should writers today do about the influence of politics on their work?

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We know there are the people involved. Such a phenomenon would not occur now with the super-rich and secret intelligence that Wilson had.

You set a scene in Gaittkael’s home to show where his mother lay. The super-rich and secret intelligence of today is more desperate than the situation. I think Wilson had more friends than he showed. He was a member of the Liberal Club at university. I think Wilson was a charlatan.

He was an opportunist, although it might not be a popular thing to say today. He joined the University Club at university. I think Wilson would have liked to lead the left. He just wanted to be prime minister.

Wilson was a traitor. Yet Gaiman was their product—a genuine writer of politics. They were of the Left (or ‘Tory prime minister’ Harold Macmillan). Their latest, ‘A Very British Ending’, deals with the threat Wilson faced.

Do you think there is a definite role for writers to act as a mirror to reflect the real life of events? Should there be more writers who are political and engaged with their times? What is the role of the political in contemporary writing?

There is a real plot to develop on politics in contemporary writing. Whether you have a real plot to develop or not, you need to be a mirror to reflect the real life of events.

We need a mirror to reflect the real life of events. We need a mirror to reflect the real life of events. We need a mirror to reflect the real life of events.

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The role of the political in contemporary writing is to reflect the real life of events.
Brutal repression of Rohingya people sparks massive humanitarian crisis

C到位red dissident Aung San Suu Kyi collaborates with military junta

Clare Doyle
International Secretariat, Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI),
August 24 2017

It is the system that breeds war and division. They fear the mass revolts of working people and poor people, and may fear their hopes be soon realised!

Very soon afterwards, he and his co-fighters were arrested. Later, in 1962, generals of the Burmese army who had taken power were on nationalistic war against the British, and it was a state without independence.

In this context, there would have been no PKK unless Aung San Suu Kyi’s passive resistance would have been a strong enough weapon to the suffering of an oppressed people. She can serve as a source for a new people’s forces to clamp down on a whole system of violence currently.

The response of the army was to launch campaign of systematic killing hundreds of civilians and running at least 500 villages in the great flood of early 1967.

It is said that Aung San Suu Kyi had not used Muslim Rohingya candidates in the electoral belt her party in 2015.

Asylum seekers and refugees: that experts and policy-makers are failing to say anything about the situation of the Rohingya people, many of whom have been driven out of their homes by the army.

Norway's parliament has passed a bill that will allow politicians to use the country’s national pension fund to invest in public transport infrastructure.

International (CWI), a socialist international that organises in over 40 countries. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI) and supports the struggle of all workers against the bosses and their parties. The national alternative to the current system is a society in which the economy is run by the workers and service workers and the means of production are owned by the workers, not the state. The Socialist Party is affiliated to the International Socialist Party (ISP). The ISP is the socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.
Nurses are already well-paid, according to the Tory MP for Walsall North, Eddie Hughes. This is just the latest example of how out of touch with reality the Tories are.

Try telling it to my colleagues, who have experienced a 14% real-terms cut in pay since 2010. Try telling it to the nurses who are forced to use foodbanks in order to get by.

And it’s not just in the pockets of nurses where the pay cap causes harm. With 40,000 unfilled nursing vacancies, it has a direct impact on the delivery of care, with ward closures caused by staff shortages.

However, the Tories are in disarray. The parliamentary vote on ending the pay cap wasn’t even opposed by Theresa May. Our not so ‘strong and stable’ leader feared the damage a Commons defeat would inflict on her government.

A wage claim of 3.9% has been submitted by the health unions and it is a welcome start. But 3.9% is the same as ‘RPI’ inflation. So in real terms, it would mean wages only just keep up with price rises.

Health service workers need a decent, real-terms pay rise to start to make up for the lost decade of wage restraint.

There’s a rising tide of anger against austerity. In Doncaster, bin workers and staff in privatised care homes are balloting for industrial action in defence of their pay and conditions.

Coordinate the strikes
Then there’s the host of disputes reported weekly by the Socialist. The Birmingham bin workers, striking BA cabin crew, and the brave fight of staff at Barts NHS Trust in east London (see workplaces stories on pages 6-7).

The Socialist Party says these actions should be coordinated, and linked to struggle across the public and private sectors, in an uncompromising campaign against the government and austerity.

Nurses are angry. Colleagues of mine who once would never have considered industrial action now ask me when we are going on strike!

That time should be now. Let’s give the Tories a winter of discontent that finishes off their rotten government once and for all.