over the month.



## **INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY**

ay Day is a time when workers and socialists across the world demonstrate solidarity in the class struggle against the bosses. Its roots go back to the fight for an

eight-hour day in the 19th century - a campaign overdue for resurrection. And this May marks 50 years since the

incredible 1968 revolutionary movement in France. A heroic general strike put the working class in command. Capitalism all but fell.

You can read more in our feature in the



Socialist Amy Murphy elected president

For a fighting Usdaw, £10 now and an end to zero-hour contracts!

usdawactivist.wordpress.com

### May Day greetings from Socialist Party members in the

national education union

 Build for national action on pay and workload
Step up the fight against academies
For a genuinely comprehensive, socialist education system



send May Day greetings to postal and telecom workers across the world

We congratulate CWU postal members for stopping Royal Mail's attack on pensions, and urge telecom workers to vote against BT's pensions robbery



Revolutionary May Day greetings to the Socialist newspaper and all our comrades in England and Wales

United in struggle for a socialist world

socialistpartyscotland.org.uk



Socialist Party members on UNISON the public service union national executive council and service group executives (all in a personal capacity) April Ashley, Vicki Perrin, Jacqui Berry, Hugo Pierre, Steve North, Michelle Goodman, Angie Waller, Helen Couchman, John Malcolm, Adrian O'Malley, Steve Bell

May Day greetings from the Socialist Party members standing for the

PCS DWP

centre pages of this May Day special edi-

tion pull-out, the first article in a series

workers' action has the same power now

that it had in May '68. We are proud to

print greetings, as is traditional, from

some of the most combative organisa-

This record-breaking 16-page May Day

pull-out contains over 100 greetings, rais-

ing £7,500 for the Socialist - the workers'

paper that fights to the end for socialism.

tions of the working class today.

May Day greetings from

The Socialist believes coordinated

### Fight the jobs and services slaughter nationally. Branches must not be left to fight cuts alone. It's a national attack that deserves a national response.

Labour councils should set legal no-cuts budgets

- Reject the divisive NHS pay deal
- Oppose 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans' (STPs) and renationalise the NHS
- Defend migrant workers stop divide and rule and the 'race to the bottom'
  Fight for a £10-an-hour minimum wage
- Support mass council house building

Elect a government for the millions, not the billionaires



Paul Williams leftunity.org.uk

### Campaigning for better pay, terms and conditions

- Fighting office closures
- Campaigning for more staff

Vote Left Unity to re-elect a fighting, campaigning, determined leadership Fran Heathcote Dave Burke Janice Godrich John McInally Sian Ruddick Dave Semple Sarah Spencer Carrie-Anne Watkins Katrine Williams





On the 50th anniversary of the workers' and students' rebellion of France 1968, May Day greetings and solidarity with all workers in struggle in Britain and across the world









## the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**

OF COUNCILLORS 1983-87 to those Labour councils who carry out every cut demanded by the Tories We refused to cut and fought back successfully for resources which Thatcher had stolen from Liverpool. We call on Jeremy Corbyn to resist the blackmail of the right and to stand fast against all austerity. Our record includes:

May Day greetings from

**THE LIVERPOOL 47 GROUP** 

■5.000 NEW HOUSES BUILT **SIX NEW SPORTS CENTRES** 2.000 NEW JOBS AND

**EXISTING JOBS SAVED** ■£60m WON BACK FROM THE TORIES

We say NO to the capitalist EU and YES to solidarity of the European working class

**Onward to a Corbyn-led Labour** government

Paul Astbury, Pete Ferguson, Tony **Mulhearn, Terry Prout, Harry Smith** & friends John Marston, Dave Walsh S MANCHESTA

2017/2018



bringing the city's unions together since 1848



Vote Matt Kilsby in Eccles

**Vote Sally Griffiths** 

in Winton

May Day greetings to all socialists and trade unionists worldwide Merseyside Pensioners Association



Salford TUSC sends May Day greetings to trade unionists and anti-cuts campaigners everywhere

Save the nurseries! For a no-cuts council!

Promoted by Matt Kilsby, 1 Glenfyne Road, Salford M6 7GF on behalf of TUSC candidates in Salford.





ng to lose



The workforce from Mears Manchester would like to thank everyone that supported our dispute with fighting fund donations and simple messages of solidarity. This includes Unite the Union and its many branches nationwide that chose to back our struggle. Special thanks to our RO Andy Fisher. We couldn't have done this without your devotion to see it through Mick Whitley and Ritchie James RSs.

Alison Spencer-Scragg, Ged Cooney, Jamie Bramwell, Tony Woodhouse, Jerry Swain, Mark Soave, Julie H Phipps, and all our other friends in the South East. Also to Stuart Grice who helped raise funds and guide the reps through social media. Ian Allinson from Fujitsu for guidance and solidarity. A Special mention for Becci Heagney. Paul Gerrard and others from the Socialist Party for standing shoulder to shoulder with us during our pickets and demos.



RIKE



### the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**



UNISON

the public service unio

### May Day greetings from Unite **Liverpool Construction Branch NW/127404**

Campaigning for direct employment and proper regulation following the collapse of Carrillion and the two-year delay on the new Royal Liverpool Hospital he**UNION** 



# **GREETINGS FROM YORKSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY** In memory of Mary Jackson 1949-2018

Barnsley Save Our NHS demo being addressed by Mike Forster, chair of Hands off HRI



otesting against Bradforc Council's cuts to children's early years services



One of numerous RMT picket lines visited by Socialist Party members in support of the fight against driver-only operation



Fighting against council cutbacks in Huddersfield where leading Hands Off HRI campaigners are standing for TUSC

Socialist Party members at the Youth Festival organised by comrades through Hull TUC as part of its year of culture



Socialist Partv members on Leeds Pride 2018 Fighting to Save South Yorkshire Women's Aid from funding cuts inflicted by Doncaster's

Labour council

AIDT

Fight for Jobs Sheffield Socialist Students on the demonstration outside the Tory party conference

March against NHS cuts

in Grimsby, North East

Lincs, organised by local

Socialist Party members

Protesting in Harrogate against backdoor

privatisation of NHS staff across Yorkshire

through 'wholly owned subsidiaries'

Solidarity protest with McDonald's strikers organised by Socialist Party

members in Leeds TUC and Youth

coonald's

SOCIALIST

Socialist Party members

oin UCU picket lines at York

Jni, as we have throughout

Yorkshire in the recent

pensions' dispute

Campaign for Socialist Party member Steve Williams, 2017 TUSC andidate for Doncaster mayor













## the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**

France 1968

**Clare Doyle** Committee for a Workers International (CWI)

uch has changed in the half century since the revolutionary events of May 1968 in France. At that time there was still a 'cold war' between states with very different social systems - capitalism and private ownership of industry in the West and Stalinism in the East, based on bureaucratically run state ownership.

But the ruling elites on both sides of the 'iron curtain' feared revolutions from below, which would see power in the hands of democratically elected representatives of the working class.

The greatest general strike in history - when ten million workers paralysed the 'strong state' of president Charles de Gaulle - showed that such a revolution was possible. If it had succeeded, it would have spread like wildfire across Europe and worldwide.

1968 was a year of big conflicts and mass protest internationally, not least against the US' war in Vietnam. 17 March saw 100,000 on a mass protest at the US embassy in London and violent clashes, including police on horseback charging into the demonstrators.

Workers as well as students in Britain organised sit-ins to pursue their demands. Women machinists at Ford's Dagenham, east London, won their historic struggle for equal pay.

### Unrest

The month of revolution in France was preceded by a number of important strikes and unrest among students in schools and universities. Ten years of 'Bonapartist' rule under De Gaulle was stultifying society; an explosion was in the making.

Workers' living and working conditions were lagging behind economic growth. Inflation was eating into wages. In some of the big factories, production lines were literally policed by armed men hired by the bosses

Students in the universities and schools were angry about overcrowded classes, lack of flexibility in their courses and graduate unemployment

By the end of April 1968, armed police were sent in against their occupations and peaceful demonstrations. Battles raged and barricades were erected in the streets of Paris. Hundreds of students were arrested. hundreds more were hospitalised. The ruling class - the government

### Free copy of France 1968 book with every new direct debit subscription to the Socialist

socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe Or get the book on its own for £7.50 plus P&P leftbooks.co.uk

in particular - was split over whether to continue with repression or make concessions. This is a typical feature of any revolutionary situation as it begins to develop.

At the beginning of May 1968, government concessions actually emboldened the students But more demonstrations saw more injuries meted out by the police and sympathy from the middle layers in society grew rapidly. It was not long before voung workers joined in the demonstrations and the trade unions were forced to call solidarity action.

A one-day official general strike on 13 May saw five million workers around the country take action and one million on the march in Paris. The leaders of the sizeable 'Communist' Party (CP) had hoped this would act like the valve on a pressure cooker and that workers would be content to go back to work.

### **Future issues**

How the movement developed was detailed at the time and later in the newspaper Militant (forerunner of the Socialist) and elsewhere. There will be articles in the next few issues of the Socialist covering the events week by week.

No one could have predicted the speed with which the strike movement would develop as workforces across the country followed the example set by young workers at Sud-Aviation in Nantes who decided to stay on strike and lock their bosses up in their offices!

Car factories were occupied, shipvards, coal mines, schools, offices, hospitals, depots, theatres... Mass meetings were held, committees set up, red flags hoisted. Workers everywhere were singing the revolutionary anthem - the Internationale and discussing what contribution they would make to building a socialist society.

Farmworkers began sit-ins at farms and depots and their unions called for a national demonstration on 24 May. The forces of the state began to mutiny - conscripts, police, sailors, even the hated CRS riot police

By Friday 24 May, ten million workers - more than half of France's total workforce - were on strike. Violent battles raged on the streets of Paris.

On 25 May, tripartite talks began between the government, the bosses and the trade union leaders (who were still insisting that the struggle was not political!). After three days and nights of talks behind closed doors, a generous package of



reforms was agreed on wages, holidays, working time, etc.

These reforms were the product of revolutionary events but they did not quench the thirst of the millions of workers occupying their workplaces. They rejected them, striving for something else that their traditional leaders were incapable of articulating.

A rally on 27 May filled Paris' Charlety Stadium with 50,000 people to discuss a political alternative to Gaullism and capitalism. The CGT union federation announced a demonstration in Paris for the evening of 29 May - the day De Gaulle disappeared' from France saving: The game is up"!

through the capital but the workers'

leaders had no intention of taking power. Later, the CP leaders said the state was 'too strong', but the state was already disintegrating.

A classical revolutionary situation had developed. The ruling layer in tatters, the middle class clearly on the side of the working class and adopting its methods of struggle. The French working class was fully in action and ready for a fight to the finish

Workers in neighbouring countries were refusing to do the work of the striking French workers - printing government material, moving goods in or out of the country.

To carry through a successful transfer of power a revolution-Half a million strikers marched ary leadership is required with a mass base of support. What could

have been done to complete the revolution?

Linking up the strike committees on a local, regional and national level to form an alternative government was what was needed. This was put forward by active participants in the movement but their voice was small. They lacked a base in the workers' movement.

In 1968, Militant - forerunner of the Socialist Party - had no cothinkers in France. It had politically separated in 1965 from the Trotskyists of the Fourth International who had some forces, especially among the youth.

But they had been pessimistic about the European - including the French - working class, arguing that they would not move into action for

they were on the move again!

### the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**

### When workers were on the brink of taking power

at least 20 years. They concentrated on the student movement and on the revolt against colonial rule.

One of their leaders. Ernest Mandel, voiced their views in London at a public meeting in the spring of 1968. He was challenged by Militant's editor, Peter Taaffe, who insisted that the working class still retained its capacity to rise and confront French capitalism guite soon. Mandel disputed this, but, within a month, his false position was answered by the workers of France. With their revolutionary traditions

In the early days of the events themselves. Peter pointed out to a meeting in the London School of Economics that a sure sign of a revolution on its way in France was the 12 and 13 year olds trying to join the demonstrations. Their teachers were locking them in their classrooms... until they themselves went on strike! By the end of May 1968 the situation was rotten-ripe for a revolutionary takeover.

In Nantes, a committee was formed early in the movement, of representatives of workers, students and small farmers, which took control in the region of Loire Atlantique over every aspect of society - production, distribution and exchange. Food was brought into the towns by the small farmers. prices and fares were held down. the police were made redundant by students and workers patrolling the neighbourhoods.

had developed in every region and sent elected delegates on to a national council, committees of struggle could have become organs of workers' rule.

As in Russia in October 1917, a trusted revolutionary leadership would have taken all the necessary measures to bring the ranks of the existing state forces over to the side of a socialist government. They would also have made a direct appeal to the workers of every other country to follow suit and prevent the development of a military intervention from outside.

But the leaders of the major union federations and of the Communist Party of France were the ones who least wanted a successful revolu-If similar representative bodies tion. If workers could take power



omy, they knew, it would inspire the workers of the Soviet Union to throw the parasitic bureaucracy off their backs and reconstruct genuine workers' democracy. They literally betraved the French revolution.

It was the workers' 'leaders' who gave De Gaulle the confidence to return to France and call an immediate election, mobilising the forces of reaction onto the streets. The police and army moved in against strikers and left-wing organisations. Hundreds of militant workers were victimised and sacked. Various left organisations were outlawed.

In the June parliamentary election, the Gaullists gained and the Communist Party lost votes - standing, not for a new socialist society, but for 'law and order'. Yet within a year of losing a referendum on constitutional amendments. De Gaulle was gone, replaced as president by a man he had pushed aside as prime ninister, Georges Pompidou.

The initial gains for workers arising from the tripartite agreement were, as Militant had warned, undermined by capitalist exploitation in general, and inflation in particular

But the trade unions grew in numbers. Various social-democratic forces came together

> CWIT The Committee for a Workers International (CWI) is the socialist ational organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated. The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed ples against global capitalism fight for a socialist world.

in a developed industrial econ- | to launch a new Socialist Party with Francois Mitterand its leader in 1972. In less than a decade he was elected as president. The same year 1981, the Socialist Party was voted into government by a massive 55% of the electorate

Without an all-out programme of nationalisation and democratic workers' control and management even a 'socialist' government by name will eventually end up imple menting policies in the interests of the 1% - the capitalist class. This was the lesson not only of the Mitterand governments but of the ignominious defeat of 'socialist' President Francois Hollande and his government last year.

### 'President of the rich'

Today, France is embroiled in a new contest between the classes. Emmanuel Macron, the 'president of the rich, is determined to push through a programme of anti-working class measures. The workers and youth of France are determined to fight them.

A new 1968 is in the air. Eight out of ten French people view the events of 50 years ago positively. Popular left figures like Jean-Luc Mélenchon and Olivier Besancenot are calling for a united struggle and a fight to the finish, but the trade union leaders again are failing to give a lead.

History never repeats itself exactly and time is still needed to build a leadership that can take a revolutionary

movement on to victory In France and inter nationally. discontent and anger are welling up among students and young workers. A look at the greatest general strike in history will inspire a new generation with confidence that socialism can be won. not just in one country wherever it breaks out first - but vorldwide



### SOCIALIS PARTY SOUTH WEST

Comradely May Day greetings to struggling working class and middle class women and men everywhere striving to fight for social liberation from exploitation, persecution, poverty, ill health and degradation.

The 21st century already provides the material potential for creating an Eden on Earth. The theory and method of Marxism provides the means for its realisation - forward to socialism.

"There cannot be, nor is there, nor will there ever be 'equality' between the oppressed and the oppressors. between the exploited and the exploiters. There cannot be, nor is there, nor will there ever be real 'freedom' as long as there is no freedom for women from the privileges which the law grants to men, as long as there is no reedom for the workers from the yoke of capital, and no freedom for the toiling peasants from the yoke of the capitalists, landlords and merchants." - Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Soviet Power and the Status of Women (1919)

Organising in Bristol, Gloucester, Stroud, Cheltenham, Lydney, Trowbridge, Taunton, Exeter, Exmouth, Honiton, Torquay, Paignton, Brixham, Totnes, **Plymouth, Truro and Bournemouth** 



## "Cast off the chains that bind you.For we are many and they are few!"

Socialist greetings to trade unionists everywhere!

**Bob Crow, RMT** 



Campaigning for an end to poverty and injustice Fighting for the liberation of humanity from class society For a socialist planet!

**BRIGHTON UNEMPLOYED** WORKERS CENTRE LTD brings May Day greetings to all those fighting poverty, racism, imperialism ad oppression

May Day greetings from

**BRISTOL AND** 

DISTRICT

**ANTI-CUTS** 

**ALLIANCE** 

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SOLIDARITY

IN THE

STRUGGLE

AGAINST

AUSTERITY

ppose all benefit cuts and attack on the employed and unemployed

Wesay Oppose all attacks on claimants sabled people and the low-paid No to privatisation and PFI No to imperialism's wars Fighting poverty amidst plenty FOR INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Bill North - chairperson; Andy Richards secretary; Tony Greenstein - treasure 4 Crestway Parade, The Crestway, Brighton BN1 7BL; 01273 540 717



photo Mary Finc

May Day greetings from

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY

SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Flying the flag for

socialism again!

Sussex Marxists

socialist( students

In the best traditions of

No to austerity. end the pay cap and defend our NHS!





to workers and youth across the poverty, racism

reeze! Back the fight for £10 an hour now!

> FROM SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

Home of Tory Chancellor Philip 'Cuts" Hammond! Tories out 2018!

## the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**

### **SOCIALIST PARTY SOUTHERN REGION**

Socialist solidarity world fighting war. and inequality! For a socialist world!



From Socialist Party branches in Aylesbury, Oxford, Bracknell. Reading, Staines, Basingstoke, Portsmouth and Southampton



AT THE UNISON RALLY IN RUNNYMEDE, SURREY

### **TOWNSEND PRODUCTIONS**

May Day greetings to all from the theatre company that has been uring We Are the Lions, Mr Manage - the inspirational story of Jayaben Desai and the Grunwick strike: the truggle for dignity and respect for al workers - the fight goes on!

ee it in May at Coventry, Manchester Chesterfield, London, Hertford, rentford and at the Brighton Festival

Look out for new productions in 2018-19: The Ragged Trousered hilanthropists and Mary Macarthur and the Chainmakers Strike

Continue the fight to oppose all council cuts! Whoever makes them! Wherever they're made!

**RE-ELECT KEITH** MORRELL **COXFORD WARD**, SOUTHAMPTON **3 MAY** 



Re-open Kentish Road Respite Centre, full-time, fully funded. fully staffed by SCC!

### SOCIALIST STUDENTS AT SOUTHAMPTON. **PORTSMOUTH, OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITIES**

 UCU strike shows how to fight austerity! Build the fight for coordinated strike action to end cuts, student debt, pensions attacks and pay freeze! International solidarity with all fighting to defend education!



**BRACKNELL UNITE MEMBERS** send May Day greetings to socialists everywhere!



upporte ictorious campaign against losure of Chatsworth Neurorehabilitation Unit at Mansfield Community Hospital and East Midlands Congenital Heart Surger Unit at Glenfield lospital eicester





### the**Socialist May Day greetings 2018**



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HEALTH BRANCH TO ALL FIGHTING TO SAVE OUR NHS SOLIDARITY FROM BFAWU **REGION 3, MIDLANDS** 

# May Day greetings from RMT LONDON ENGINEERING BRANCH We demand socialism, equality and an end to

photo Paul Matte

political enslavement of the working class



### the Socialist May Day greetings 2018

