Trump’s unilateral repudiation of the Iranian nuclear de-escalation deal has plunged the Middle East into a serious crisis.

Like a pyromaniac, he has poured oil on an already inflamed situation with Syria and neighbouring countries already devastated by a war that has lasted longer than World War One.

In its wake, new multifaceted wars and conflicts have broken out. On top of this, the recent Israeli missile strikes on Iranian forces in Syria could be a harbinger of a new war, initially between Israel and Iran/Syria but possibly leading to a new generalised regional conflagration.

There could also be ‘blowback’ for Europe with a new wave of refugees seeking safety in Europe as well as further terrorist outrages, which could spill over into the US itself.

Trump claims that in ripping up the current agreement this will end the threat of Iran “ever acquiring nuclear weapons”. However, the outcome could be the exact opposite: the eventual acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran and others, such as Saudi Arabia, in response to this.

The Guardian wrote: “Mr Trump’s invective relies on assertions that reinforce prejudices but have no basis in truth.” It completely refutes the claim that Iran was on the “cusp of acquiring the world’s most dangerous weapons”.

The deal did allow Iran to continue to enrich uranium but “it neither allowed nor [was it] technically able to use this process to produce weapons grade uranium”. The Guardian concluded that the Trump speech was “extranged from the truth”; a polite way of saying it was a pack of lies.

Stop Israeli state slaughter
Protest against Trump’s UK visit on 13 July
For a socialist alternative to division and conflict

>Continued on page 2

photo Paul Mattsson
The Trump administration is threatening “devastating sanctions” against those such as the Iranian government who support theeses efforts to undermine Trump’s global status. The havoc wreaked by the US in Iraq and elsewhere, and the ever-present danger of war, is an outcome of economic retribution. Trump’s actions are more likely in the short term to cement support for the status quo.

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

"The more they kill us, the more the anger increases" said Ahmed. The Gaza Strip has been under a de facto blockade for over ten years, with class solutions to the problems of each country and the region as a whole.

There has also been constant open defiance in Iran on issues such as the refusal of women to wear the hijab.

Trump from the infographic which he has already ignored.

Even before his latest outrage Trump had stabbed in the back the ragtag of the Palistinians with the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel at long last. Already by losing that turf was an intensified. According to Patrick Cockburn, “Israel and American flags will flutter in the streets and there will be $10 billion billboards with the face of Mr. Trump on them.”

At the same time tens of thousands of Palistinians turned out in protest. Scores of them were killed, and hundreds more injured by the extremely lethal repression by the Israeli army.

Trump and the neoconservatives that surround him may not score a quick and easy victory as they imagine. Before his threats, the intifada hardens in Iran, and even the ‘reformist’ Rouhani government has found itself on the defensive.

The Gaza Strip has been under a de facto blockade for over ten years, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

The memory of its war with Iraq is seared into the minds of the Iranian people. In fact, US imperialism had sought to once more try and break through the conditions of the Iranian masses — would not automatically be blunted in the regime, but three more years of war were expected to culminate on 15 May, the ‘Great March of Return’, is scheduled to mobilise.

The protests, which have attracted many thousands, week after week, have been met with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)

The Gaza Strip in recent weeks has seen one of the most important waves of Palestinian protests against the ongoing brutal siege enforced by Israel, in collaboration with Egypt, with extreme lethal repression by the Israeli government. At the time of writing, over 150 people have been killed, and 10,000 injured as the Israeli capitalist government attempts to prevent a mass movement at all costs.

Socialist Movement (Socialist Party’s sister party in Israel/Palestine) joins a protest in solidarity with the people in Gaza (15-5-18)
No-one is at the helm of the government’s plan for Brexit. There is chaos at every level of the capitalist state as it threatens to crash out of the EU.

The government’s Brexit plans have been defeated in the House of Lords an unprecedented seven times. It is not clear that the Lords, whose function it is to safeguard the strategic interests of the capitalist class, will allow the government to get through anything but a ‘soft Brexit’ or a Brexit by possibly through committing Britain to membership of the “EU lite” - the European Economic Area (EEA). This is because sections of the Tories, and the other main parties, that are most connected to the strategic interests of British capitalism are working towards the same goal. That would enrage the Tory base and threaten the Tories at a time when they are already mortally wounded by the unpopularity that implementing austerity has brought them.

But the European Union occupies a key part of European capitalism’s strategy to compete with the other world powers, by partially overcoming the limits of the nation state that obstruct the further development of the market.

**Capitalist mission**

The capitalists will go to great lengths in order to preserve this project, even destroying the political structures through which they currently exercise their power in order to achieve that mission.

Their ‘clearest-headed political initiatives’ are on course for a head-on collision with right-wing Tory populists who rely on stirring up resentment on social issues like immigration to build a base of support.

And ‘hard Brexiters’ like Johnson, Gove and Davis are gaining ground: newly appointed home secretary Sajid Javid has dipped a toe in the party’s campaign by signalling that he is opposed to Theresa May’s preferred option of a ‘customs partnership’ with the EU, preferring maximum facilitation.

Disagreements currently contained within the cabinet could break out into the open at any point, and quickly develop beyond the control of the Tory leadership and the class of billionaires which stands behind them.

Corbyn’s Labour Party could drive a wedge through the Tories at these points of weakness and smash them to smithereens, were it not for the crimes against us, and some people are really afraid [to participate] in this situation.

But the majority support it and think it’s a great initiative, which helps attract the world’s attention to our situation.”

The movement is popular, he says, and is not controlled by any of the political parties. Even the organising committee, which includes representatives from the different factions of the Palestinian national movement, doesn’t control every initiative on the ground. He believes there will be a continuation of the protests even after 15 May.

And he has another message. “On both sides there are victims. Our situation in Gaza is simply catastrophic.

“The Palestinians are suffering a lot. And the Israelis are sometimes suffering from insecurity.

“So we have to find a solution that will work for both sides. Israelis my age should open their eyes more. What the Israeli government is doing is very wrong.

“They should oppose it. If they demand [a change on this issue] from their government, I think we have a chance for a future.

“We should all rise up against oppression and injustice and demand normal life, life that would guarantee equality for everyone.”

**Single market**

Umunna is, sadly, not alone. Labour peers, breaking ranks from Corbyn’s call for a “jobs Brexit”, are instead calling for membership of the EEA and the Single Market, with all the anti-worker restrictions that come with it.

Dogging on Corbyn after the antisemites smear, Labour peers have caused their party’s leadership of “paralysis” and “cowardice.” If the Labour right gets its way, the party’s autumn conference - still a week away - will be marked by the invisibility of Momentum’s leaders and others on Labour’s left - will overrule Corbyn on Brexit and sign up to the Tory establishment.

Brexit did for Cameron and Osborne and finished Ukip off as well - at least for now - but it only created an opportunity which the left must seize. It is not too late for Corbyn and the Blairites have created an opportunity to end capital-

**Continued from page 3**

“The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees has been facing a devastating crisis since Trump announced the withdrawal of US funding. NGOs (supplying work and services) are collapsing because of a sharp decline in international funding.

“Israel has also stopped transfers of budgets as well. NGO employees who are lucky enough to get paid, get only 30% to 40% of their salaries”.

The crisis of the NGOs was reviewed in an article published last month by Ahmed, an NGO employee himself - coordinator of the ‘We Are Not Numbers’ project, which publishes the daily stories of young Palestinians. Half of the population in Gaza is under 18, about one million people.

An entire generation has grown up in this catastrophic reality. It is from among these young people that the current protests have grown.

“The first demonstration I attended was on the second protest day, 31 March. Thousands of people took part, and what impressed me at first was the positive atmosphere, people waving flags and shouting slogans for freedom.

They were far from the fence, maybe 800 metres away, near the first row of houses. The closer I got to the fence, and it wasn’t much, there were more angry protesters, calling slogans, and the Israeli soldiers shot those people.”

In order to paint the opposite picture of reality, Israeli government propaganda branded the demonstrators as the violent factor in the picture. Ahmed asks “who is the victim of violence in this distorted equation?”

The Israeli establishment press, slavishly serving again and again as a government propaganda tool to create security hysteria, highlights damage to agricultural fields caused by ‘Molotov kites’, while ignoring the extreme organised violence directed around the clock against the residents of the Gaza Strip and their protests.

The protest organising committee made it clear that it was not interested in a direct confrontation with the army.

Ahmed noted that in the face of demonstrations which include “angry young people deprived of any source of normal life,” the Israeli army uses lethal weapons including, according to medical teams, particularly damaging exploding bullets (possibly dum-dum bullets).

We asked Ahmed to what extent he thinks people are deterred from participating in the demonstrations. “Most people support the protest, but there are those who say it is pointless, it will not stop the siege and the crimes against us, and some people are really afraid [to participate] in this situation.

But the majority support it and think it’s a great initiative, which helps attract the world’s attention to our situation.”

The movement is popular, he says, and is not controlled by any of the political parties. Even the organising committee, which includes representatives from the different factions of the Palestinian national movement, doesn’t control every initiative on the ground. He believes there will be a continuation of the protests even after 15 May.

And he has another message. “On both sides there are victims. Our situation in Gaza is simply catastrophic.

“The Palestinians are suffering a lot. And the Israelis are sometimes suffering from insecurity.

“So we have to find a solution that will work for both sides. Israelis my age should open their eyes more. What the Israeli government is doing is very wrong.

“They should oppose it. If they demand [a change on this issue] from their government, I think we have a chance for a future.

“We should all rise up against oppression and injustice and demand normal life, life that would guarantee equality for everyone’.

**Exclusive: interview with Gazan activist**

Ross Saunders
Royal wedding opulence... during longest pay squeeze in 200 years

Bea Gardner
Southampton Socialist Party

The cost of Harry and Meghan’s marriage will be 110 times that of the average couple - 1.785 times including security - according to estimates by wedding planner Bridebook. This extravagance is a window into the lives of the super-rich who have not suffered the decade of austerity we have.

It should be a national outrage that the taxpayer will fork out £300,000 on just one marquee for the night, when rough sleeping has more than doubled since Harry’s brother got married in 2011.

They will move into a grace-and-favour 21-bedroom “apartment” in the grounds of Kensington Palace, says House Beautiful. Meanwhile, two-fifths of their fellow Millennials are still stuck in overcrowded and extortionate private rentals by the age of 30 (see ‘Young people trapped in private rental’ at socialistparty.org.uk).

Just a glance at the anticipated costs of the day exposes the bitter reality of class division in Britain. Almost a year’s pay on the UK median salary will go on sausage rolls alone.

£300k
The cost of just one marquee, when rough sleeping has doubled since 2011

And Markle - a privately educated celebrity who is soon to be the Duchess of Sussex - is not subject to the fear and insecurity that face most migrants and refugees starting out in Britain. (See ‘Royal wedding exposes them-and-us visa system’ at socialistparty.org.uk).

But while many working class people will be seething at the inequality behind the headlines, the royal wedding couldn’t have come at a better time for the Tories. They hope the round-the-clock coverage will distract the public, at least temporarily, from the catastrophe that is their weak and divided government.

Royal pageantry has long been used by the ruling class to divert attention from its problems - weddings in particular since World War One. But the capitalist establishment is foolish if it thinks a wedding is enough to soothe the effects of a decade of austerity.

In 2011, some might still have been clinging to nostalgic notions that we were “all in it together.” But we are now in the middle of the longest pay squeeze in two centuries according to the Trade Union Congress.

We all know the super-rich have continued to get richer while we foot the bill. There should be no place in society for freeloaders feudal relics. We say: stuff the wedding - abolish the bill. There should be no place in society for freeloaders feudal relics.

Fighting for the future!

Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

socialistparty.org.uk/join 020 8988 8777

Sunday Times Rich List 2018: Richest worth £724bn... as 100,000 kids fall into poverty

Andrew Carss
Salford Socialist Party

£724 billion. This is the combined wealth of Britain’s 1,000 richest. The Sunday Times has produced its annual Rich List, and the working class can see who is dipping their hand in our pockets.

The top 1,000 have increased their worth by 10% in a year. In the same time, another 100,000 children fell into poverty - making 4.1 million, a third of all kids - according to the Department for Work and Pensions.

In real terms, average wages are still lower than they were in 2007. The Tories have offered NHS workers a miserly below-inflation pay ‘increase’. Wages are recovering slower than even after the Great Depression, according to the Trade Union Congress.

£21bn
Grangemouth oil refinery boss Jim Ratcliffe is the richest person in the UK

The top spot this year has been claimed by spin-in-chief unibuster Jim Ratcliffe, net worth £21 billion. Back in 2013, the Ineos chair and majority owner used the livelihoods of thousands of workers as leverage to extract £134 million from the taxpayer for his oil refinery at Grangemouth.

In real terms, average wages are still lower than they were in 2007. The Tories have offered NHS workers a miserly below-inflation pay ‘increase’. Wages are recovering slower than even after the Great Depression, according to the Trade Union Congress.

£21bn
Grangemouth oil refinery boss Jim Ratcliffe is the richest person in the UK

1 out of 50
In the top 50 political donors in this year’s Rich List only one was not a Tory donor

Meanwhile, at the top of the pile, capital gains tax is 28%, and corporate tax just 20% - both lower than the higher rates of income tax. For all their spiel about “making work pay,” in Tory and Blairite Britain work is disincentivised for the super-rich.

They ferret away their ill-gotten gains in tax havens, where capital languishes until a profitable investment opportunity opens up for it. Under Jeremy Corbyn’s anti-austerity leadership, donations to Labour from the very wealthy have almost disappeared. Meanwhile, of the top 50 political donors in this year’s Rich List, only one was not a Tory donor.

Capitalist politicians tell us that if we stand up to the billionaire ‘masters of the universe’ and demand they pay more, they will simply leave the country, taking thousands of jobs with them. But working people create all the wealth in society - the bosses just take it.

The Times has lauded the “triumph” of the “self-made” billionaires this year. “94% of most wealthy made own fortunes” in the top 1,000, it claims. Really? Did Jim Ratcliffe make petrochemicals products worth £2.3 billion profit last year himself? Or was that, in fact, the workers whose terms and conditions he battered in 2013 while relaxing on a £130 million yacht?

The answer to billionaire thieves threatening to leave is to nationalise their business empires under democratic workers’ control and management. Britain is an enormously wealthy country. There is enough wealth to guarantee every person a decent standard of living - but not while supporting a billionaire class.

The Socialist Party fights for the nationalisation of the banks and top corporations as part of a democratic, socialist plan of production - and corporations as part of a democracy.
Belgium closed strike victory

A long-week series of strikes by Lidl workers in Belgium has led to increased staff at stores across the country. A strike broke out at one store in Doornbach over the dismissal of a sales manager, which also caused the issue of food safety.

The protest began on 15 May and continued for four weeks, with the strike that closed the store lasting for three days. The number of stores impacted by the strike was reduced to 150, where the company wanted to push for longer opening hours, including Sunday, a number of stores won on strike spontaneously, but soon began being joined by other less organised unions. By 27 April, 14 of 92 stores in Belgium were reported as closed by the company.

The strikes forced management to concede an extra 42 staffing hours per store every six months, but this was rejected by the SETCa/ BEZAK unions and the strike continued for a further two weeks until this trade union agreement. Key in winning this was the picketing of the first distribution centres in the south of the country, which also challenged the complete closure.

A legal action was possible across the whole of the retail sector. The Lidl strike in Belgium shows once again that shop workers do not have to take the strikes of management laying down.

TGI Fridays strike

Workers at TGI Fridays restaurants in Milton Keynes and Covent Gar- den, London, will take their first ever strike action on 15 May in a bid to ensure they retain safe conditions.

The first major change the new management has made is to open the clock in the shape of this year’s pay campaign. The union’s main aim is to ensure that the minimum wage can be raised. Put simply in a week, minimum employment rights split into two pay elections over the summer.

The threat of action has already attracted limited new shows the pay cap in other areas of the public sector. Think what might be achievable with coordinated strike action across the public sector.

The new management that took over the UK’s second largest pub chain earlier this year has been urged to get cracking.

Cleaski protesters at Kensington and Chelsea town halls - all of who have been migrant workers and members of the United Workers of the World trade union - are set to strike for the London Living Wage of £10.20 an hour.

They were elected to their posts in the early 1990s and have achieved limited gains above the national minimum wage of £7.83 an hour.

Cleaski, bosses have refused to im- plement the Living Wage. There are plans in place to raise the wage by 2020, but it will be too late for the majority of the workers.

The Living Wage of £10.20 an hour is “not about Tesco’s ability to pay, it’s about their refusal to pay. An- other Tesco depot just five miles up the road pays its staff £12.60 an hour more than in Dagenham.”

The strategy is clear. Tesco has shifted wages and conditi- ons, premiums and jobs in stores and call centres in recent years. Striking back against these attacks, and for better pay, will be absolute- ly necessary and for the new UCU president, Socialist Party mem- ber Amy Murphy, was elected with support for industrial action over the following months.

The pay cap in other areas of the public sector.

In a bid to ensure they retain safe conditions.

The first major change the new management has made is to open the clock in the shape of this year’s pay campaign. The union’s main aim is to ensure that the minimum wage can be raised. Put simply in a week, minimum employment rights split into two pay elections over the summer.

The threat of action has already attracted limited new shows the pay cap in other areas of the public sector. Think what might be achievable with coordinated strike action across the public sector.

The new management that took over the UK’s second largest pub chain earlier this year has been urged to get cracking.

Cleaski protesters at Kensington and Chelsea town halls - all of who have been migrant workers and members of the United Workers of the World trade union - are set to strike for the London Living Wage of £10.20 an hour.

They were elected to their posts in the early 1990s and have achieved limited gains above the national minimum wage of £7.83 an hour.

Cleaski, bosses have refused to im- plement the Living Wage. There are plans in place to raise the wage by 2020, but it will be too late for the majority of the workers.

The Living Wage of £10.20 an hour is “not about Tesco’s ability to pay, it’s about their refusal to pay. An- other Tesco depot just five miles up the road pays its staff £12.60 an hour more than in Dagenham.”

The strategy is clear. Tesco has shifted wages and conditi- ons, premiums and jobs in stores and call centres in recent years. Striking back against these attacks, and for better pay, will be absolute- ly necessary and for the new UCU president, Socialist Party mem-ber Amy Murphy, was elected with support for industrial action over the following months.

The pay cap in other areas of the public sector.
Chris Baugh is a long-standing PCS activist, holding a range of leading positions within the union. His career has been marked by his commitment to fighting for the rights of workers, particularly in the public sector. He has played a key role in numerous campaigns, including the pensions dispute of 2011, where PCS played a central role in leading the strike行动. His leadership has been characterized by his ability to bring together members across different sectors, emphasizing the need for solidarity in the face of cuts and austerity.

In his role as general secretary, Baugh has been a strong advocate forPCS's socialist approach, seeing the union as more than just a workplace for fighting wages and conditions. He believes that PCS must engage more actively in political campaigns, particularly in the UK's political landscape, where the left is fragmented and needs to come together to form a credible alternative to the current regime.

The election of Jeremy Corbyn has brought new dynamism to the Labour Party, and the question is whether PCS can play a role in supporting the new leadership. Baugh has not been shy in his support for Corbyn, arguing that a Corbyn-led Labour can be a vehicle for change, reversing the long history of austerity and inequality.

The union's approach has been characterized by its emphasis on the need for a radical programme, encompassing everything from the environment to civil liberties. Baugh's vision is for PCS to be not just a fighting union, but also a powerful force for social change, working closely with other left-wing organizations and parties.

Despite the challenges of the current period, Baugh remains optimistic about the future. He sees the elections as a critical moment for PCS, offering a chance to secure new mandates and move forward with a renewed sense of purpose. His message to members is clear: there is a lot of work to be done, but with solidarity and determination, we can achieve real change.
A huge Socialist Party ‘Tories Out!’ demo spread throughout 2018 saw momentum begin to build at the end of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) organised march and rally in central London on 12 May.

And if the route of the demo had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for workers’ the turnout would have been huge too - possibly even bigger than that of the TUC demo.

But in the event, the demo had to be flexed to fit the demands of the TUC march, amidst trade union disputes over pay, pensions and job action by the trade unions, linking the Industrial Revolution and its workers to the political battles of today.

As regular readers of The Socialist will know, the Socialist Party is currently under threat of eviction from our national headquarters. We have had a presence in London since the early 1990s and have been at our current premises for over 17 years. We believe that it is essential that our HQ remains based in the capital city. Therefore we have launched a fundraising appeal.

We do not have any rich backers. Our finances are based in working class communities, among workers, students and young people who have been hammered by austerity, debt and low pay.

But our members and supporters have been prepared to make a sacrifice to ensure that we have the funds we need to fight, with enough people power to defend the building.

We welcome. However, as Unite general secretary Mark Serwotka was joined by Tamil Solidarity and Usdaw shop workers’ contingent set to walkout on 18 May in a coordinated action affecting five rail networks.

There’s been acting to undermine Corbyn. Labour who don’t agree and have expressed in his speech, there are those in our movement who are trying to undermine Corbyn.

Jeremy Corbyn joined marchers at the end of the march called for it to be used and not more Tory and Blairite cuts and not more Tory and Blairite cuts. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

If the demand had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for working people’, turnout would have been huge too.

Now for coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

The Tories are weak. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

A huge Socialist Party ‘Tories Out!’ demo spread throughout 2018 saw momentum begin to build at the end of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) organised march and rally in central London on 12 May.

And if the route of the demo had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for workers’ the turnout would have been huge too - possibly even bigger than that of the TUC demo.

But in the event, the demo had to be flexed to fit the demands of the TUC march, amidst trade union disputes over pay, pensions and job action by the trade unions, linking the Industrial Revolution and its workers to the political battles of today.

As regular readers of The Socialist will know, the Socialist Party is currently under threat of eviction from our national headquarters. We have had a presence in London since the early 1990s and have been at our current premises for over 17 years. We believe that it is essential that our HQ remains based in the capital city. Therefore we have launched a fundraising appeal.

We do not have any rich backers. Our finances are based in working class communities, among workers, students and young people who have been hammered by austerity, debt and low pay.

But our members and supporters have been prepared to make a sacrifice to ensure that we have the funds we need to fight, with enough people power to defend the building.

We welcome. However, as Unite general secretary Mark Serwotka was joined by Tamil Solidarity and Usdaw shop workers’ contingent set to walkout on 18 May in a coordinated action affecting five rail networks.

There’s been acting to undermine Corbyn. Labour who don’t agree and have expressed in his speech, there are those in our movement who are trying to undermine Corbyn.

Jeremy Corbyn joined marchers at the end of the march called for it to be used and not more Tory and Blairite cuts. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

If the demand had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for working people’, turnout would have been huge too.

Now for coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

The Tories are weak. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

A huge Socialist Party ‘Tories Out!’ demo spread throughout 2018 saw momentum begin to build at the end of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) organised march and rally in central London on 12 May.

And if the route of the demo had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for workers’ the turnout would have been huge too - possibly even bigger than that of the TUC demo.

But in the event, the demo had to be flexed to fit the demands of the TUC march, amidst trade union disputes over pay, pensions and job action by the trade unions, linking the Industrial Revolution and its workers to the political battles of today.

As regular readers of The Socialist will know, the Socialist Party is currently under threat of eviction from our national headquarters. We have had a presence in London since the early 1990s and have been at our current premises for over 17 years. We believe that it is essential that our HQ remains based in the capital city. Therefore we have launched a fundraising appeal.

We do not have any rich backers. Our finances are based in working class communities, among workers, students and young people who have been hammered by austerity, debt and low pay.

But our members and supporters have been prepared to make a sacrifice to ensure that we have the funds we need to fight, with enough people power to defend the building.

We welcome. However, as Unite general secretary Mark Serwotka was joined by Tamil Solidarity and Usdaw shop workers’ contingent set to walkout on 18 May in a coordinated action affecting five rail networks.

There’s been acting to undermine Corbyn. Labour who don’t agree and have expressed in his speech, there are those in our movement who are trying to undermine Corbyn.

Jeremy Corbyn joined marchers at the end of the march called for it to be used and not more Tory and Blairite cuts. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

If the demand had been ‘Tories out’ instead of the vague ‘new deal for working people’, turnout would have been huge too.

Now for coordinated action to kick out the Tories!

The Tories are weak. Coordinated action to kick out the Tories!
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

Gentrification marches on

Readers of the Socialist may remember our letter regarding our next-door neighbour (see ‘The Socialist inbox’, issue 969, at socialistparty.org.uk). As a result of austerity and gentrification, all his patterns of life and support fell away and he was left with social services asking us, his neighbours, to feed him. Austerity and gentrification march on.

A couple of months after our letter, we sadly found our neighbour dead in his home. A quick sale followed, and his small two-bed house was bought up by a property developer. Within weeks it has been transformed, and it is now about to be sold for a property developer.

Within the massive grounds around here. I have the best thing is I can go walking around the back of my envelope. I don't have to put my prison number on it. There are no bars on my window. My room is bigger. Am not sleeping on a bunk bed. I can post and collect my mail. The only drawback is the visitors centre. It's too small, with a capacity of 25 - which you visit and write to me will keep me informed.

Yours in solidarity,
Chris Fernandez

Corbyn witch hunt

The current surreal campaign to undermine Jeremy Corbyn by tarring him with the poison of anti-Semitism undoubtedly affected the local election results, with many Labour supporters confused by the disarray in Labour's ranks. What are the facts?

- The prosecutors: the Tories, Blairite MP, Ruth Smeeth; the Scum, various right-wing journals - and the BBC, a relentless anti-socialist vehicle paid for by the taxpayer.

- The press exposed the big numbers of London councillors who are landlords or linked to building firms. We need rent control and council homes, not deals with property developers while the working class is forced out!

Paula and Ken Walthamstow, east London

Corbyn witch hunt

The current surreal campaign to undermine Jeremy Corbyn by tarring him with the poison of anti-Semitism undoubtedly affected the local election results, with many Labour supporters confused by the disarray in Labour's ranks. What are the facts?

- The prosecutors: the Tories, Blairite MP, Ruth Smeeth; the Scum, various right-wing journals - and the BBC, a relentless anti-socialist vehicle paid for by the taxpayer.

- The press exposed the big numbers of London councillors who are landlords or linked to building firms. We need rent control and council homes, not deals with property developers while the working class is forced out!

Paula and Ken Walthamstow, east London

Jailed TUSC agent writes

I would just like to inform your readers that I was arrested and held for ten and a half weeks in Nottingham Prison on 27 April. It should have been within first few weeks I was in Nottingham!

Sudbury is so different to Nottingham that my stress levels are already down. Nottingham is the second most violent prison in the country. There had been nine suicides before I arrived, I was told. It has been a bit of a nightmare for me at times, but your readers’ letters kept my spirits up.

In Sudbury I can have my meals sat down in a canteen! I have access to showers and phone whenever I want. I have a key to my room and can come and go as I please!

There are no bars on my window. My room is bigger. Am not sleeping on a bunk bed. I can post and collect my mail. My outward letters are not checked and I don't have to put my prison number on the back of my envelope.

The best thing is I can go walking around the massive grounds around here. I have already got a job gardening. It's so good to be out in the fresh air for walks and work rather than being bunged up most of the time.

They have some good facilities here to do education and work courses. The only drawback is the visitors centre. It’s too small, with a capacity of 25 - when you have over 500 prisoners!

I am being released on tag on 7 June - this means I will be on home curfew from 7pm till 7am till 27 September. I will have to look for work come June.

I hope, if my health is up to it, to attend Socialism 2018, as we have been to previous ones before. Once again, many thanks to your readers who write to me. I hope TUSC did well in the elections. Am not allowed to read the Socialist, but am sure people who visit and write to me will keep me informed.

Yours in solidarity,
Chris Fernandez

Lessons of history

The lessons we learn from history will continually appear as flashbacks, until the organisation of the masses brings these lessons to the forefront of all our minds. As activists, it is a responsibility not just to do - but to remember why.

Denise Tooley-Okonkwo Mansfield
Ronan Point disaster 50 years on - fighting for safe, affordable housing then and now

Bill Mullins
Lewisham and Southwark
Socialist Party

On 16 May 1968, 50 years ago, Ronan Point, a high-rise tower block in Newham, east London, collapsed killing four people and injuring 17.

The reason was, as the constructors knew only too well, that the system used to build the 25-storey block was fundamentally flawed.

But the side walls of her kitchen blew off and because they were supporting walls, the above four flats collapsed into her kitchen, the combined weight of the collapse went on to collapse all the floors below right down to the ground floor and like a house of cards the whole of one side of the block was demolished.

An inquiry later concluded that the building regulations were totally inadequate and should be strengthened, including the supporting joints between the walls.

But later on, after the block was rebuilt, with the stronger joints, the council was forced to demolish the block in 1986, and an independent architect concluded, after a forensic brick-by-brick examination of the demolished block that there were shocking defects in many parts of the building including that mains gas should never have been connected to such a block in the first place.

Ronan Point is part of a sorry list of building disasters including Lakethorpe House in Camberwell in 2009 where six people were killed and of course Grenfell Tower.

What runs through all this is the cold cruelty of the ruling class when it comes to the safety and security of the working class in our society.

But the story gets worse when we take into account the lack of organised national political opposition to the shenanigans of the bosses. Though there are many successful local campaigns by residents.

Recently in my own borough of Southwark the exposure of past crimes of negligence by the Blairite Labour leaders of the council was starkly revealed by the scandal of the Ledbury estate where four blocks were deemed unsafe because they were built using the same large panel system as Ronan Point.

The tenants had been complaining for over 20 years that huge cracks had appeared on the blocks and when they were forced to bring in their own independent expert advisors it was revealed that the blocks should never have been connected to the mains gas.

New measures
But it was not always like this and need not be so today either. The Labour government in 1947 introduced new measures to ensure that a mass council house building programme could get off the round.

For example they ruled that land that was needed to build these homes could be compulsory purchased at their present value - not at what the value would be once planning permission was given.

At the time an acre of agricultural land was worth only one hundredth of what an acre of urban land would cost.

They did this to ensure that when compulsory purchase orders were made of privately owned land then the owners could not make a huge profit. In other words the bulk of spending could go into the cost of the actual building material and labour costs to build the homes themselves.

This is what lies behind the unwillingness of Labour councils to borrow money to build council housing even if they were allowed to borrow money from the finance sector.

Under the post-war rules even the Tory government of Harold Macmillan in 1953 built more council homes than any government before or since.

The Tories later reversed the rules on land values so their mates in the property business could once again cash in on the higher land values.

Thatcher’s policies in particular in housing opened up a rich vein of property speculation for profiteering developers with the introduction of right to buy. As a result 40% of homes bought under ‘right to buy’ are now owned by private landlords and developers.

This was a seismic shift from building homes to meet a human need to instead where homes are only built to enhance the potential profits for developers. So it is no wonder that the media can label them ‘sink estates’ but there is nothing fundamentally wrong with putting homes into high rise blocks as long as they have the due care and attention to make them safe and secure.

After all, look at any of the blocks that were the well-off live, such as the Barbican flats in the City of London. They are well cared for and look entirely presentable to passers-by and no doubt have all the modern safety systems, such as sprinklers, built in.

The issue of safe, affordable housing can only be resolved completely under a socialist society. But we should demand and campaign now for the policies espoused by Jeremy Corbyn, such as a mass programme of council house building.

In the North East under the 1970s Labour government the scandal hit new heights when corrupt local councils collaborated with shady developers to build council high-rise blocks with, as soon became apparent, many built problems. This was featured in the BBC drama ‘Our friends in the north’.

Council estates have been deliberately allowed to deteriorate so that the media can label them ‘sink estates’ but there is nothing fundamentally wrong with putting homes into high rise blocks as long as they have the due care and attention to make them safe and secure.

Council estates have been deliberately allowed to deteriorate so that the media can label them ‘sink estates’ but there is nothing fundamentally wrong with putting homes into high rise blocks as long as they have the due care and attention to make them safe and secure.

Marching for safe homes in Newham in 2017 in the wake of Grenfell photo Mary Finch

Feature

Socialist

13
France, May 1968: week three

REVOLUTIONARY EXPLOSION AS TWO-THIRDS OF WORKFORCE JOIN STRIKE

On Saturday 18 May 1968, General Charles de Gaulle, president of France, was forced to cut short his state visit to Bucharest. He had wanted to provide a meal for the Romanian heads of state in the French embassy. But the food was never delivered - the French airline workers were on strike. When he tried to make a phone call, he was told the operator was on strike too. He protested - “but it is for General de Gaulle!” And he received the reply - “and what difference does that make to me? I am on strike for the whole world!”

When de Gaulle returned to France, he was no longer in control. Since the ‘official’ general strike on Monday 13 May, workers had continued to take action. Not only that, they were taking control of their workplaces and setting up committees to make decisions on running French society. Examples include prices in shops being determined by elected workers’ and peasants’ committees. In fact, shops could only trade if they had signs in their window signed by the different trade union federations that said: “This shop is authorised to open. Its prices are under permanent supervision by the unions.”

Reactionary ‘Committees for the Defence of the Republic’ had formed. But a fascist demonstration opposing the general strike was joined by a mere 2,000 people. In contrast, by Sunday 19 May, two million were on strike - including all public transport, the metal industry, nationalised industry, and even the banks. Picket lines were placed on petrol stations to ensure petrol only went to those who needed it, such as doctors. Striking footballers occupied their headquarters and demanded sport be run by and for the players and fans: “football for the footballers.” News and radio outlets were controlled by the workers.

Sud Aviation

It was the Sud Aviation metalworkers in Nantes who had been the first to continue striking after the official action ended. They locked their bosses in their offices and played the Internationale, the world revolutionary socialist anthem, over the speakers.

The strike spread quickly to all kinds of workers across the country - even actors and weather forecasters went on strike! Winning over the middle layers of society to the side of the working class is an important feature of a successful revolutionary movement. So is the willingness of the working class to fight to the end, increasingly apparent in May 1968.

On Monday 20 May, six million workers were out. All the ports and mines, the department stores, and the car manufacturers. The next day it was eight million, including nuclear power plants - more than half of all workers.

By Friday 24 May, two-thirds of the workforce were on strike: ten million workers. Joining by the mass

Further reading

For an overview, ‘France 1968: when workers were on the brink of taking power’ - and the previous weeks’ commentaries - visit socialistsparty.org.uk.

‘France 1968: Month of Revolution’ by Clare Doyle - £7.50 from leftbooks.co.uk - or free with a Direct Debit subscription to the Socialist at socialistsparty.org.uk/subscribe.


protests of the students, it was truly a general strike and a revolutionary situation. In reality, dual power existed. The official government structures were floating in mid-air with most decisions made by workers’ and peasants’ action committees. De Gaulle fled the country. When he tried to give a speech to the nation, it wasn’t aired by the worker-controlled television station.

Throughout the country, discussion and debate had exploded among workers and young people. Factories began to declare they were “on strike indefinitely.” Thousands of leaflets and posters were produced daily as ordinary people constantly discussed political ideas. Despite this incredibly powerful position of the working class of France, the leadership of the trade unions and the Communist Party of France were trying to hold the movement back and limit its demands rather than risk a revolution which could threaten not just capitalism but the Stalinist dictatorships in the East.

Workers had been increasingly involved in strike action in the run-up to May 1968. Wages had not kept up with inflation that totalled 45% over ten years.

Unemployment had grown, while those with a job were working on average 45 hours a week. Production lines in factories had been policed by employers’ armed guards.

So when the general strike began, it quickly grew as workers in every industry saw it as an opportunity to protest their conditions.

The demands of the movement went beyond this as the general strike took on a different character to normal strikes. As they occupied the factories with red flags hoisted above them, the workers’ slogans became “the factories to the workers” and “power to the working class.”

Workers began to plan production for their needs. For example, in the CSF electronics factory in Brest they produced walkie-talkies to help organise the strike. Printers either changed hostile headlines or refused to print newspapers attacking the strike.

Communist Party

Despite the obvious reality, the Communist Party and the leaders of the CGT union federation argued that any attempt to go beyond immediate economic demands was “adventurism.” In fact, they would shortly begin negotiations with a government that had no power and could have been swept aside. By doing so, they actually strengthened the position of de Gaulle and legitimised his regime.

The Trotskyist left had only small forces, such as the Internationalist Communist Party (PCI, French section of the Fourth International), which was calling for unity between Trotskyist groups. The PCI demanded rejection of de Gaulle’s proposed referendum on limited reforms to defuse the movement, and any negotiations with the all-but-defeated government and employers.

Instead they put forward demands for linking up the various workers’ and peasants’ committees, and the formation of a workers’ government. However, the PCI hadn’t built a base among the working class and wasn’t able to influence the decisions made by the action committees in the factories.

If, like the Bolshevik Party had done in the run-up to 1917, the Trotskyists in France had consistently built in the factories, then with the correct programme, they could have won the leadership of a working class already on the road to revolutionary change. Without this leadership, the Communist Party and the CGT were preparing to betray the movement.

Read more in the next issue of the Socialist: May 1968, week four - union and ‘Communist’ leaders back power back to defeated bosses.

Twitter: follow @France68LIVE

17-23 May 2018

@France68LIVE
Spain: Student general strike against sexist, capitalist ‘justice’ system

The general student strike on 10 May, called against the shameful light sentencing of the ‘wolfpack’ rapists, was a great success. More than one million students emptied classrooms and more than 100,000 attended over 60 demonstrations organised by the Sindicato de Estudiantes (SE - Students’ Union) and Libres y Combativas platform of SE and Izquierda Revolucionaria (CWI in the Spanish state).

Madrid city centre was filled by over 20,000 young people with an exceptionally combative atmosphere; the same in Barcelona where over 40,000 filled the streets of the Catalan capital.

In the Basque country, thousands marched in Bilbao, Gasteiz, Donostia and Irún, as well as in all provinces of Andalucía, Valencia, Galicia, Aragon, Extremadura, etc. Tens of thousands of students shouted loud and clear: “It was rape!”, “Sister, we are your wolfpack?!”, “I believe you!” and “Down with sexist ‘justice’!”

It was an extraordinary day of struggle in which students expressed their support and solidarity with the victim of the wolfpack as well as rejection of all such savage attacks, which we will not allow to continue, despite the ‘justice’ system protecting perpetrators.

We showed that the feminists who defend a programme of struggle and anti-capitalism are widening their influence. This is a feminism which is not afraid to call things by their proper name, does not hesitate to denounce the justice system which protects rapists. A feminism which fights the reactionary policies of the People’s Party (PP - the main ruling party of prime minister Mariano Rajoy), Ciudadanos and all others who pretend to be feminists while sustaining the capitalist system which oppresses and kills us.

The sentence handed to the wolfpack is part and parcel of the misery which the capitalist system and this corrupt right-wing government forces millions of women, young people and workers to experience on a daily basis.

They wish to send us a clear message: while there is persecution of those who struggle, there is impunity for sexist and corrupt politicians and bosses.

We made history once more in the struggle for freedom. But we cannot now let our guard down.

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:

- 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.

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.
- Reject ‘workfare’. 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.

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.
- Protect the right of a woman’s choice 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 pro-big business parties.

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!

What we stand for

- Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

Sweden: Socialist elected leader of 77,000-strong tenants’ union

Kristofer Lundberg, a leading member of Rättvisepartiet Socialisterna (Socialist Justice - CWI Sweden), was recently elected as leader of the 77,000 member tenants’ union in West Sweden - despite opposition from the union tops. See socialistworld.net for full report
Local campaigners fighting to save hospital services in Huddersfield have won an important victory. We were delighted and surprised by an announcement by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt on 11 May.

He said of the NHS bosses’ proposals for Huddersfield Royal Infirmary (HRI) that there are a variety of failings in their case. The proposals lack consistency, there is widespread scepticism, there is no evidence of adequate out-of-hospital care, the loss of beds is unjustifiable and there is no evidence of capital finance being available.

Hunt correctly concludes that the proposal to downgrade HRI is “not in the best interests of the people” of Kirklees and Calderdale. He has ordered the clinical commissioning group (CCG) to develop new proposals which take into account these misgivings. Their initial plan is dead in the water.

This outcome has completely vindicated the long and relentless campaign waged by Hands Off HRI over the last two and a half years. We’ve had mass demonstrations, lobbies in London, local organising groups and a huge fundraising effort.

It also supports the findings of the courts that ordered a full judicial review, which is currently scheduled to go ahead in June. There is little doubt that that decision to allow a legal challenge to the proposals has concentrated minds.

Hands Off HRI commissioned three professional clinical, financial and building experts to scrutinise the proposal in preparation for the court hearing. Their findings completely bear out Hunt’s observations.

Where does this leave the future of HRI? While delighted with this decision, Hands Off HRI recognises that this is not the end of the proposal to shut our hospital. It is the same CCG which is being asked to think again.

Hunt has ordered the relevant authorities to develop a new plan over the next three months. Hands Off HRI will be engaging with this process by submitting further evidence.

However momentum is now with our campaign and the whole town is lifted by the decision. There is renewed confidence that we can see this through to the end.

If you stand up and fight, you can win. It’s only a done deal if you do not.