

2017 general  
election  
manifesto

# TORIES OUT!



**there are  
many complex  
reasons why  
nurses go to  
food banks...**

**Yes,  
mainly a system  
rigged in the  
interests of  
the super-rich**



## CORBYN CAN WIN WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES

### TORY AUSTERITY HAS BROUGHT US:

- 10% real terms cut in pay.
- A 1% pay cap for all public sector workers.
- Up to 5m struggling on zero-hour contracts.
- 200,000 hospitalised in 2016 due to malnutrition.
- 1m forced to go to foodbanks including nurses and other workers.
- The anti-Trade Union Act.
- The housing crisis and spiralling homelessness.  
Oh yeah, and the bedroom tax.
- Schools cuts, academisation, privatisation, and stressed out kids.
- Trebling student fees (with the Lib Dems).
- Racist and divisive rhetoric and policies.
- Threatening the very future of the NHS.
- Privatising our public services.
- Cutting corporation tax.

In other words, the Tories wreak chaos and destruction on our public services and living standards.

**Enough is enough!  
No more Tory austerity!**

### JEREMY CORBYN'S POLICIES ARE POPULAR:

- £10 an hour minimum wage, with no exemptions (backed by 71% of people)\*.
- Ending the 1% pay cap for all NHS employees.
- Banning zero-hour contracts.
- Introducing four new bank holidays.
- Repealing the anti-Trade Union Act.
- Building a million homes, half of them council homes and introduce rent controls.
- Ending the schools cuts. Properly fund all schools, increase staffing levels, cap class sizes.
- Introducing free school meals for all primary age children (backed by 53% of people).
- Introducing free education – abolishing student fees.
- Guaranteeing the right of EU citizens to remain in the UK.
- Re-nationalising the NHS. Reversing all threatened cuts and closures. Ending health service privatisation and bringing services into a secure, publicly-provided NHS. Integrating the NHS and social care for older and disabled people, and ensuring parity for mental health services.
- Bringing Britain's railways into public ownership (backed by 60% of people).

\*obviously there aren't polls on every issue but you get the idea!

**"If a Labour government is elected on 8 June, then we won't play by their rules either. They are yesterday's rules, set by failed political and corporate elites and should be consigned to the past. It is these rules that have allowed a cosy cartel to rig the system in favour of a few powerful and wealthy individuals and corporations. It is a rigged system set up by the wealth extractors, for the wealth extractors. But things can, and they will, change."**  
**JEREMY CORBYN**

**T**heresa May has called a general election gambling, based on the opinion polls, that she will be able to increase the Tories' currently puny majority. But hers is a very high-risk strategy. If Jeremy Corbyn leads a fighting campaign with socialist policies there is every chance that May could end in June!

Jeremy Corbyn's policies are popular. £10 an hour minimum wage is supported by 71% of people; and free school meal schools for all by 53%. Renationalisation of the railways is supported by 60% people, compared to only 20% who oppose it.

Unfortunately, over the last year Jeremy Corbyn's anti-austerity message, which has twice swept him into the leadership of the Labour Party, has not been heard by the majority of the population. Endless attempts to compromise with the pro-capitalist Blairite wing of the Labour Party have, to put it mildly, muffled his voice.

The Blairites dare to suggest that they hold the key to electoral success, yet they want to continue with the same old pro-austerity policies that have seen France's equivalent of Labour – the PS – reduced to 6% in the first round of the French Presidential elections.

After seven years of Tory misery voters have no interest in voting for an 'austerity-lite' version of Tory policies, the negative consequences of which many remember from New Labour's time in office.

Now, however, in the few weeks of an election campaign Jeremy Corbyn has a chance to reach the country with clear socialist policies. In a country where pay has fallen by 10% in real terms, nurses are forced to go to food banks because of poverty pay and a record 200,000 were hospitalised last year as a result of malnutrition, Jeremy Corbyn's anti-austerity message can win mass support.



**TORIES**

**Jo**

**SOC**

[www.socialistparty.org.uk](http://www.socialistparty.org.uk)

## Popular policies

The policy announcements already made by Jeremy Corbyn and his ally John McDonnell, the shadow chancellor, are the basis for a programme with broad popular appeal. They could transform the lives of the majority of people – providing a living wage, affordable housing, decent public services and more.

### ***But the capitalist establishment claims they are 'unaffordable'.***

These announcements are a good beginning which should be built on in the manifesto. Of course, the Tories and the capitalist media are already attacking these very modest policies as 'unaffordable' – by which they mean that they might be detrimental to the gargantuan profits

of the capitalist elite. We have to answer that the working and middle class cannot afford to continue living in a society based on low pay, super-exploitation and unaffordable housing.

There is no lack of money in Britain. The Tories claim that Labour's spending announcements so far include £45 billion of 'unfunded' announcements. Yet, levying capital gains tax even just on the extra wealth accrued since 2010 by the thousand richest people in Britain would bring in over £80 billion for extra public spending. Austerity is 'working' only for the rich. The anti-austerity policies put forward by Jeremy Corbyn are supported by – and in the interests of – the majority of the population. However, as Jeremy himself has warned they will face the inevitable opposition of 'the establishment'.

## For a workers', anti-racist Brexit

A clear anti-austerity programme – in the interests of the working class – should also define Labour's approach to Brexit. Workers who voted for Brexit did so primarily because they were in revolt against all the misery they have suffered over the last decade. Jeremy should make clear that he is fighting for a Brexit in the interests of the working and middle class majority.

It would be a mistake to allow the Labour right to pressure Corbyn into calling for membership of the single market, or even to include access to it in his

demands for Brexit, if by that he means acceptance of its neoliberal rules. Instead he needs to set out a programme based on repudiating the EU's anti-worker posted directives and privatisation rules that oppose nationalisation of companies and industries.

This should be linked to opposing racism and defending the rights of EU migrants, as Jeremy has done. It should not be confined to this country but on these policies reach out to the working-class across Europe who are suffering from the EU's austerity offensive.

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## Capitalism – a system for the billionaires

The 'rigged system' that Jeremy Corbyn refers to is run by and for a tiny number of wealthy individuals and companies; it is called capitalism. Today a tiny group of people, in Britain and worldwide, own and control industry, science and technique, and harness them in order to maximise their own profits.

Globally eight people own as much wealth as the poorest half of humanity; the greatest polarisation between rich and poor in human history. In Britain the majority of us have faced endless austerity while a tiny handful are raking it in – London has now got more sterling billionaires than any other city on the planet. There are around 125 major corporations that completely dominate the economy. It is the tiny elite that own those companies and their hangers on who are the real establishment and are determined to try and stop Jeremy Corbyn coming to power.

Jeremy Corbyn rightly name-checked Sports Direct boss Mike Ashley and former BHS boss Philip Green – who have both been caught in particularly vicious acts of exploitation – but they are not alone. Capitalism is a system based on production for profit and not for social need.

The exploitation of working class people is written into its DNA. Capitalism is increasingly not even capable of carrying out its historical mission of developing science, technique and the organisation of labour.

Capitalism today, despite the claims of 'recovery', has only economic crisis and endless austerity to offer the majority; hence the search for an alternative that has led hundreds of thousands of people to signing up to Labour in order to support Jeremy Corbyn and could potentially lead to a general election victory.

It is already clear that the capitalist establishment will do all they can to resist the implementation of Jeremy's policies, firstly by trying to ensure that he isn't elected. But this doesn't mean they will succeed.

Unfortunately, representatives of the capitalist establishment exist inside the Labour Party as well as out. As last summer's coup attempt showed the big majority of Labour MPs are desperate to ditch Corbyn. Contrary to their claims this isn't because he is 'unelectable' but because they fear he might be elected.

Back in 2015 Tony Blair declared that Corbyn becoming prime minister would be "a very dangerous experiment" which he wouldn't be prepared to risk. No surprise then that he is now going all out to try and prevent it happening – even suggesting that Labour voters consider supporting Liberal Democrats or Tories if they are 'pro-remain'.

If a pro-Corbyn MP had suggested people vote for non-Labour candidates the majority of MPs would be baying for their expulsion but you can be sure that won't apply to Blair.

On the contrary, many Labour MPs are not far behind him, with the likes of Wes Streeting and John Woodcock blatantly declaring they couldn't support Jeremy Corbyn as prime minister. Never before has it been so clear that Labour is two parties in one: A pro-capitalist Blairite party and a new anti-austerity party in formation.

The pro-capitalist wing will never give up attempts to strangle a new anti-austerity party. No more concessions should be made to them. We need a party that stands in the interests of the working class – not the billionaires!

## Socialist Party supports Jeremy Corbyn's anti-austerity stand

The Socialist Party fully supports Jeremy Corbyn's anti-austerity stance. Since he was first elected as Labour leader we have done all we can to support the anti-austerity party in formation in its battle against the Blairite right of the Labour Party.

Had the policies we have argued for – including democratising the Labour Party, allowing the readmission of expelled socialists, and introducing mandatory reselection of MPs – been implemented, the anti-austerity wing of the Labour Party would be in a much stronger position than they are today; where the Blairites

are circling ready to pounce beyond the general election, whatever its outcome.

This will be made difficult for them, however, if Jeremy can mobilise mass popular support to drive out the Tories. Mass rallies should be called in every town and city in the country. This should be combined with a gigantic trade union demonstration in defence of the NHS and education, and in opposition to austerity. The Socialist Party will do all we can to build such a campaign.

The Socialist Party is part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) which has pro-

vided a means for workers to stand in elections in opposition to austerity and cuts. TUSC was the sixth-biggest party on the ballot paper in the 2015 general election, standing 135 candidates across Britain.

TUSC has also continued to stand candidates in local elections, against right-wing Labour councillors who are carrying out savage cuts. But a general election in the current situation is different. The Socialist Party is recommending that TUSC does not contest this election but instead concentrates on campaigning for Jeremy Corbyn to be elected on socialist policies.

# WHAT THE SOCIALIST PARTY STANDS FOR

## Renationalise privatised public services

The billionaires who are already squealing about Jeremy Corbyn's profligate policies will do all they can to sabotage their implementation if he is elected.

To counter this, the workers' movement would need to organise active support for Corbyn's policies. This is no different to the outrage of the capitalists when the 1945 Labour government founded the NHS. However, it was met with enormous enthusiasm by the working class able for the first time to access decent healthcare.

For 30 years successive governments – Tory and New Labour – have privatised public services, leading to vast profits for the privateers, and the undermining of public services for the rest of us. There is huge popular support for renationalisation of privatised public services. Jeremy should pledge to renationalise them all, including Royal Mail, British Telecom and the energy companies, with compensation paid only to shareholders in genuine need. This does not mean simply repeating the nationalisation of the post-war era.

This time it should be based on popular democratic control involving service workers, trade unions and users. And why limit public ownership only to what was achieved in the past? The fact that the pharmaceutical industry was left in private hands when the NHS was founded costs tax payers billions through extortionate charges for medicines. It is estimated that the payments to the pharmaceutical industry costs the NHS around 10% of its annual budget, around £11 billion a year.

## Tax the rich and big corporations

Socialists argue that the rich should be the ones who pay for the economic crisis, and we support dramatically increased taxes, not for the working and middle classes, but for the tiny elite at the top of society.

For most of the 1970s the tax rate for the very highest band of income was 83%. Likewise, for most of the 1970s, big corporations paid 52% of their profits in tax. But that percentage has been reduced step by step to 20% today.

We support taxing the rich and big corporations, but we also recognise that the 'markets' – that is capitalism – will never meekly accept dramatically increased taxation and regulation.

The most common response to demands for higher taxes on big corporations is that it isn't a 'realistic' demand because they will avoid paying by leaving the country. What does this say about capitalism? If you are poor, and are found to be claiming a few pounds a week in benefits that you are not entitled to, you are called a scrounger, are demonised by the government, and can even face imprisonment.

Meanwhile when big corporations refuse to pay the levels of taxation agreed by a democratically elected government we are told we are being unrealistic for expecting anything else, and that the answer is to lower taxes to make Britain more competitive.

## No to the dictatorship of the markets – for democratic socialist planning

So what is the alternative to dictatorship of the markets? As a start we call for the nationalisation of the big banking and finance companies. Compensation to shareholders should be paid only on the basis of proven need. Not one penny should go to the speculators who are demanding that the working class pay for the crisis for which they bear responsibility.

A socialist nationalised banking sector would be democratically run by representatives of banking workers and trade unions, the wider working class, as well as the government. Decisions would be made to meet the needs of the majority – for example, offering cheap loans and mortgages for housing, to assist socially useful small businesses, and for the planned development of industry and services, and ending all repossessions of people's homes.

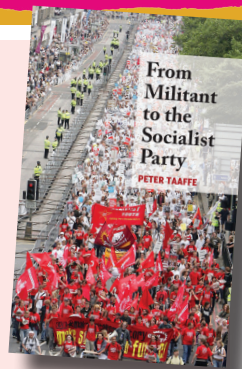
That would only be the start, however. Capitalism has led to enormous economic destruction. In Britain the economy has lost about 10% as a result of the great recession. Nor is there any prospect of a return to healthy growth. This is the real difference between now and, for example, the end of the second world war when the total national debt was far higher

## From Militant to the Socialist Party

covers developments from the New Labour takeover to the first rumblings of the world economic crisis of 2007-08, and is the sequel to *The Rise of Militant*.

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as a proportion of the economy than now – over 200% of gross domestic product (GDP) compared to around 81% in 2015.

Then, however, Britain entered a period of unprecedented economic growth, thereby shrinking the national debt. Today, the best prospect that can be hoped for under capitalism is a prolonged period of economic stagnation.

That is why a crucial step towards solving the economic crisis would be to take into democratic public ownership the 125 or so big corporations that control around 80% of Britain's economy. This would provide the possibility of developing a democratic, socialist plan of production that could very quickly transform the lives of millions.

**SOCIALISM**  
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**REVOLUTION**

See [www.socialism2017.net](http://www.socialism2017.net)

for details of Socialism 2017, a weekend of discussion and debate on how to fight Trumpism, the lessons of the 1917 Russian Revolution and more.

See [www.socialistparty.org.uk/whatson](http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/whatson) for other events