

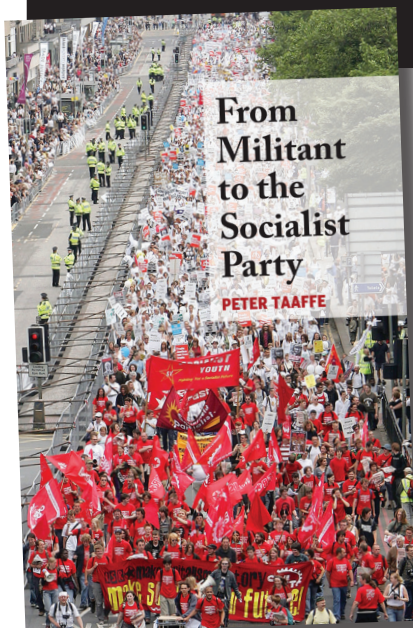
TORIES OUT!

CORBYN CAN WIN WITH A SOCIALIST, ANTI-AUSTERITY PROGRAMME

PUBLIC MEETING & BOOK LAUNCH

From Militant to the Socialist Party

by Peter Taaffe, Socialist Party general secretary



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Only by clearly putting forward a radical anti-austerity programme will Jeremy Corbyn be able to lead Labour to victory in this election against the Tories' government of millionaires. His clear call for voters to elect a Labour Party that "is standing up for working people to improve the lives of all" was a good start. If Corbyn leads a fighting campaign there is every chance that May could end in June!

Jeremy has rightly pointed out that the establishment will do all they can to prevent this. Who are 'the establishment'? In reality it is the 'capitalist establishment' – the capitalist class. 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 there are today around 100 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. 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 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.

The capitalist establishment, however, is strongly represented 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'.

The battle within Labour rages over Tony Blair's legacy and those seeking to continue it, and, on the other side, supporters of Corbyn who want to see working-class political representation. In this battle, the influence of Militant has been a touchstone, showing how it is possible for working-class people to organise and win.

MILITANT TO THE SOCIALIST PARTY

From Militant to the Socialist Party covers developments from the Blairite takeover of Labour to the first rumblings of the world economic crisis of 2007-08, and is the sequel to The Rise of Militant. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Stalinist regimes, capitalism's representatives proclaimed 'the end of history'.

But the struggles of workers and young people continued. From the Liverpool Dockers' strike to the mass movements against the invasion of Iraq, From Militant to the Socialist Party records the fightback, and highlights the lessons of these movements for today.

As Blair and New Labour implemented neoliberal policies, the fight for working-class political representation was, and is, a fundamental battle. While right-wing trade union leaders preached partnership with the bosses, trade union militants showed that a fighting strategy was possible.

This book is not written from the point of view of the side-lines, but by an active participant. The crucial discussions and debate among socialists as to the best way forward are explored here, to provide key lessons for those who want to build socialist ideas today.

The policies Jeremy Corbyn has raised are a good beginning - an immediate introduction of a £10 an hour minimum wage, an end to zero hour contracts, free education for all, mass council house building, rent controls, repeal of the anti-trade union laws, and nationalisation of the rail and energy companies. These should be combined with policies such as an immediate end to all cuts in public services and a pledge to immediately renationalise Royal Mail.

Of course, the capitalist media will scream that such modest policies are '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 can no longer afford to continue living in a society based on low pay, super-exploitation and unaffordable housing.

There is huge popular support for renationalisation of privatised public services. Jeremy should pledge to renationalise them all, 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 what about the banks? When the capitalist financial system was teetering on the brink of collapse New Labour did step in and effectively nationalise the banking system – but it was socialism for the bankers not for the rest of us! The bankers were bailed out while we suffered endless austerity.

Socialist nationalisation of the banks would bring them under democratic control, run in the interests of the majority – including low cost mortgages and loans for small business. These demands and others should be linked to the need for fundamental socialist change - for a society run in the interests of the majority instead of for the profits of a few.



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