TORIES DENY DIRE POVERTY

...LOOK AROUND YOU!

Tessa Warrington
Leicester Socialist Party

"I reject the idea that there are vast numbers of people facing dire poverty in this country." Those were the unbelievable words of Tory chancellor Philip Hammond.

In an interview on BBC Newsnight, Hammond discussed a recent UN report which describes poverty in Britain as "systematic" and "deliberate." It references the findings of the Social Metrics Commission that a total of 14.2 million people - a fifth of the UK population - currently live below the poverty line.

The report charts the normalisation of food banks, rising levels of homelessness and child poverty, drastic cuts to benefits, and severe restrictions on legal aid. This 'normalisation' apparently translates to selective blindness for Hammond, who was estimated to himself have a net worth of £8.2 million in 2014.

He continued: "I don't accept the UN rapporteur's report at all. I think that's a nonsense. Look around you, that's not what we see in this country."

Even Newsnight interviewer Emily Maitlis was compelled to disagree. "We're in Downing Street, so if I look around me I'm not going to see a lot of poverty, but if I went to other parts of the country I would."

Most of us don’t need a report to know the extreme level of poverty in Britain. Most of us see it every day; at work, on the streets, in the schools and at home. 1.5 million people experienced destitution in 2017, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Hammond, arch-defender of the super-rich elite and his own wealth, is not blind, but has in fact been the author of austerity, of poverty budgets for the working class, throughout his time as chancellor.

Average chief executive pay at 'FTSE 100' top firms has risen to 145 times that of their average workers, says the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Sir Angus Deaton, author of the review, warned the bosses: "There's a real question about whether democratic capitalism is working, when it's only working for part of the population."

The capitalists see mass anger brewing under the surface of society, and growing disillusionment with the pro-capitalist political establishment. In reality, they only care about lessening inequality to save their system and their wealth.

But under capitalism, there is no solution on offer, as ten years of global economic crisis and austerity have demonstrated. The alternative is the working class getting organised and fighting to build a new society, along the lines of a publicly owned, worker-controlled, democratically planned, socialist economy.

The working class has waited long enough. Jeremy Corbyn and the trade union leaders must call mass mobilisations for a general election to kick out the Tories. A fight for a Corbyn-led government with a firm socialist programme to end austerity would receive a massive echo, and could be a first step towards building a mass socialist movement to change society.
What we think

Unprecedented crises continue to engulf the two main parties. Conservative and Labour members are in open rebellion against the leaderships of their respective parties and, following the humiliation of Theresa May, Boris Johnson will not be able to command a parliamentary majority. The crisis in the Tory party is symptomatic of the problems facing the British political system. Over the last decade, austerity has turned the two main parties, Conservative and Labour, into vehicles for disaffected working class people to express their anger against the effects of austerity and of the crisis of capitalism. Boris Johnson is front runner to win the Tory leadership contest with wide support across the membership and among Tory members. But the crisis in the Tory party is not limited to the Tories but is the worst nightmare of the pro-capitalist Blairite MPs through an automatic reselection process as part of the democratic transformation of the Labour Party into a genuine workers’ party.

General election

All the Tory candidates shrink from the prospect of a general election. Their reasons are clear. Following the humiliating resignation of Theresa May, Boris Johnson will not be able to command a parliamentary majority if the election campaign goes well. Both the Conservative and Labour parties are determined to prevent it by any means necessary.

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Corybn must go on the offensive against the right with socialist policies

The election of a Corbyn government would create an opportunity for the working class to take control of the country. But a Corbyn government is not in any sense a socialist government. Instead it would be a government dominated by the interests of the capitalist class. The Corbyn government would come under enormous pressure to roll back the capitalist measures and to sell out the working class people who elected them.

The government further than it intended to go. And the fear of a labour victory under Corbyn is not limited to the Tories but is the worst nightmare of the pro-capitalist majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party, which are determined to prevent it by any means necessary. Following the poor result for Labour in the Euro elections the Blairites have renewed their attacks on Corbyn. The object of attacking their Blairite enemies and brothers in Change UK in the elections – splitting within a few months of being formed – may have disillusioned the Labour members from leaving Labour for now. Although some may be tempted to join UKIP and others to the SNP or the I expect that the pro-capitalist Blairite MPs will use the reselection process as part of the democratic transformation of the Labour Party into a genuine workers’ party.

The unions

This campaign will be intensified in the event of Labour losing the general election. The ‘corbynistas’ are determined to prevent ‘the Blairites’ from taking control of the Labour Party. They are determined to prevent the class war of the capitalist class versus the working class from entering the streets.

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THERESA MAY ADMITS TUITION FEES SYSTEM IS "BROKEN" BUT PLANS NEW ATTACKS ON STUDENTS

The British Prime Minister has admitted that the government’s tuition fees system has failed students, but she is planning to increase their debt burden.

Theresa May has admitted that the Tories’ so-called "free" education system is "broken," but she is planning to make it even worse.

"It’s clear that the current system is not working for many students," May said. "We need a system that works for all, and that’s why we are introducing a new approach to education finance that will mean that everyone can afford the cost of education and training." But May is planning to increase student debt even further.

The Conservative government first introduced tuition fees in 2010, and has gradually increased them in subsequent years. The government has also introduced other measures to make education more expensive for students, including cuts to maintenance grants and loans, and the introduction of new fees for foreign students.

May said that the government was "taking action to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to get the education they need," but the new proposals would mean that students would have to pay even more to access higher education.

"We are introducing a new system of loans and grants," May said. "This will mean that students can borrow more to cover the cost of tuition fees, and repay their debt only after they have graduated and are earning well." But critics have warned that the new system could be a "trap" for students, with many struggling to pay back their debts after graduation.

The plan has been widely condemned, with many students and education experts calling for a return to free tuition fees and a end to student debt. But May has said that she is committed to implementing the new system, and is determined to see it through.

The new proposals are expected to come into force in England from September 2019, but Scotland’s Labour government has said it will not implement the changes. Wales and Northern Ireland have announced that they will introduce their own systems of student finance.

May has also faced criticism over her handling of the Brexit crisis, as the country prepares to leave the European Union. Critics have accused her of failing to negotiate a deal that is good enough for the UK, and of allowing the country to be "bounced" into leaving the EU without a proper plan in place.

But May has said that she is committed to implementing the government’s plans for Brexit, and is determined to see them through.

"We have a clear plan for Brexit, and we are determined to see it through," May said. "We have a strong mandate from the people of this country, and we will not be deflected from implementing the will of the people." But critics have warned that the country faces a long and uncertain road ahead, as it negotiate its departure from the European Union.

The government has faced a series of challenges in recent months, from the ongoing crisis in Syria to the ongoing crisis in the UK’s health service. But May has said that she is determined to see the government through to the end of its term in office.

"We face many challenges in the years ahead," May said. "But we have the will and determination to see them through, and to ensure that the UK is a country that is prosperous and strong for the benefit of all its citizens." But critics have warned that the government faces a long and uncertain road ahead, as it negotiate its departure from the European Union.
**University and College Union conference for 2019: Preparing for struggle**

**About the briefing**

The UCU briefing will discuss the following topics:

- **The importance of trade union action**
- **The role of trade unions in industrial action**
- **The impact of the Tories on the TUC**
- **The implications of the Brexit vote for trade unions**

**Key speakers**

- Jo Grady, UCU General Secretary
- Robyn Jones, UCU Vice President
- Nick Hunt, Unison General Secretary

**Date and time**

The briefing will take place on [insert date] at [insert time] in the [insert venue].

**Further information**

For more information, please contact [insert contact details].

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**FIGHTING TO STOP SCHOOL MEALS PRIVATISATION IN BARNSLEY**

**About the campaign**

The Barnsley School Meals campaign is calling for the return of school meals to the public sector.

**Key supporters**

- Barnsley School Meals
- Barnsley Council
- Barnsley Trades Union Council

**Key demands**

- The return of school meals to the public sector
- The abolition of the profit motive in school meals

**Further information**

For more information, please contact [insert contact details].

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**UNIVERSAL CREDIT WORKERS’ STRIKE**

**Benefit processing workers in Wolverhampton have been leading the way in the fightback against Universal Credit.**

The strike is in its second week and has been backed by the TUC and trade unions across the country.

**Key demands**

- The end of Universal Credit
- An end to the profit motive in public services

**Further information**

For more information, please contact [insert contact details].

---

**NATIONALISE THE THREATENED GLASGOW ‘CALEY’ RAILWAY DEPOT**

**Prepare to occupy to defend jobs**

The Caley depot is currently facing closure threats from the government and private companies.

**Key supporters**

- The Scottish Socialist Party
- The Workers’ Party
- The Scottish Trades Union Congress

**Key demands**

- The nationalisation of the Caley depot
- A democratic vote on the future of the depot

**Further information**

For more information, please contact [insert contact details].

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**WELSH TRAIN FLEET WORKERS VICTORY AGAINST PRIVATE COMPANY**

**Key details**

- The workers were fighting against the privatisation of the Welsh train fleet.
- The victory was won through a combination of strike action and political mobilisation.

**Further information**

For more information, please contact [insert contact details].
China had a clear idea of how workers and young people could threaten that vital ‘oxygen’ for developing the military-police dictatorship resting on the old regime.

As in all revolutionary movements, there were varying times larger than it was in 1989. The Chinese economy is more than 30% of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. The iconic image (reproduced here as a painting) of a lone democracy protester marches on a straight line development towards the monolithic than previous ones.

Xi Jinping is, if anything, more successf...
Worcester libraries campaign victory

Sean McCauley
Worcestershire Socialist Party

We have won! Money has been found to secure the future of St John’s as well as Warndon libraries in Worcester. This is a victory for all those who have campaigned hard to save the library service in the area.

It shows that when we make a stand we can force our councillors to listen and to act. Socialist Party members in the city have led a vibrant and well supported campaign in St John’s. The county council now appears to have negotiated a deal with the city council for the latter to help fund each city library to the tune of £157,000.

This is welcome news if it proves to be the case that everything we have been calling for is guaranteed. We still want to check with our fellow campaigners in Unison, the local government union, that there will be absolutely no cuts in the hours worked by staff at these libraries, no redundancies or restructuring to the detriment of the staff.

We also still want to check that there will be no reductions in opening hours, no additions of unstaffed opening hours and no backdoor privatisation through alternative private means of funding.

Fight all cuts
The campaign to guarantee the long term future of library services in the city and indeed across the whole of the county is not over.

Make no mistake, in the future both councils will once more come to try to cut this service. We must be vigilant. There is only one sure-fire way to guarantee services and that is to mobilise local communities, as well as council workers, to fight austerity. We need councillors who truly represent our needs and we need fighting unions.

We demand an increase, not a decrease in funding in order to begin to put right a decade of cuts and we demand better services now. This year, however, we will see a 3.99% increase in council tax for a decidedly worse service.

Protesters condemn Tory candidate

Around 20 people gathered outside the Brown Cow pub in Bingley on 30 May, where former Department for Work and Pensions minister Ester McVey was launching her Tory premier campaign tour.

Tory leadership candidate Ester McVey presided over the disastrous roll-out of Universal Credit and has defended the rising use of foodbanks as a positive thing - she even briefly tried to make the case once again for this before being escorted inside by her minions.

It is clear that the election of McVey or any other Tory leadership candidate as prime minister will continue the disastrous anti-working-class policies of austerity.

That’s why what is necessary to change the situation, as our placards called for, is mass working-class action for a general election - she even briefly tried to make the case once again for this before being escorted inside by her minions.

Protesters condemn Tory candidate

Iain Dalton
West Yorkshire Socialist Party organiser
Step forward for campaign to reverse mobility pass cuts in Nottingham

LS26 campaign lobbies council to save their homes

Leeds Socialist Party members

"Leeds City Council hear us say, vote to save our homes today" was the chant that rang out from the tenants of Sugar Hill Close and Wordsworth Drive in Boulton, Leeds as they and their supporters lobbied the council to block plans from the landlord Pemberstone to demolish their homes and build luxury housing for sale instead.

With over 20,000 on the council house waiting list in Leeds none of these tenants are likely to be rehoused in council homes if they are evicted to make way for the development.

The campaign has found wide support within the labour movement. As the targeted housing is former miners housing, the National Union of Mineworkers has backed the campaign to the hilt.

So too has Leeds Trade Union Council. Executive committee and Socialist Party member Iain Dalton was one of the speakers who explained how the trade council has supported a number of campaigns against profiteering developers, including Oulton and Little London, and is calling for a plan to build council housing in the city instead.

The planning meeting ended after three hours of debate with the decision deferred. Socialist Party members locally will continue to support the campaign to save these homes.

Iain Pattison

East London Socialist Party

For decades, repairs on the homes on the Lawrence Street estate in Canning Town, east London, have been neglected. These homes have also been under threat of demolition. 30 residents met on 30 May to discuss their problems.

The kitchens are in a terrible state. The windows need fixing. "What about mould?", the chair asked. Most of the hands shot up.

Fly tipping and public safety are pressing issues. "Do you feel safe?" Everyone laughs. "Do you see police?" "No!", the room bellows back.

Everyone present filled in a survey with their issues. The campaign is going to keep a log, and hold the council to account. Most worryingly, the estate is threatened with demolition. This must end now.

Newham’s Labour councillors were meeting next door. Eventually one, Shaban Mohammed, turned up to the meeting with the local right-wing Labour MP, Lyn Brown. The MP didn’t say much. And didn’t stay long!

The councillor complained there is a housing shortage. Then build more council homes!

He said he used to oppose regeneration, before he was a Labour councillor. Now he wants "regeneration that works for tenants." If that means fixing the repairs pronto, great! But if that means demolish the estate and jacking up the prices, so tenants are forced out, absolutely not!

Before the councillor spoke, people were demanding repairs. After he spoke, there was talk of a rent strike!

The Socialist Party demands that the campaign starts by saying ‘we won’t move’, was echoed in the discussion. Just like the Butterfields who fully fought eviction.

The Labour council should immediately stop making cuts. And use its enormous reserves – £500 million in Newham – and borrowing powers to invest in services and repairs and build council homes.

Way forward for the Indian working class

Interview with Socialist Party general secretary Peter Taaffe on socialistworld.net

The unprecedented second-time victory of Modi, with an increased vote share, has shocked and worried many workers and young people. There is complete disparity among the left in general and Communist parties in particular. Nevertheless the Indian working class has a heroic history of struggle both for its own interests and for society...

see also pages 14-15

Neglected Newham tenants demand action

Ian Pattison

Clare Wilkins

Nottingham Socialist Party

On 20 May members of the Reverse Mobility Pass Cuts campaign, including the Socialist Party, lobbied the first meeting of the new Nottingham Labour Council. 50 councillors out of 55 are Labour.

All Labour councillors had been written to before the meeting asking them to confirm if they supported the campaign.

In September 2018 the council cut £100,000 that was being used to ensure that people with the mobility pass could use their passes on buses and trams 24 hours a day.

Now they can only be used as the national scheme allows from 9.30am to 11pm. This means that people have to pay to get to work, college and early hospital appointments. As disabled people are already disadvantaged, this has caused real hardship.

The stall asking for people to sign the petition to reinstate the funding was extremely busy. Over 1,000 people had previously signed it.

We also had a lot of people with learning disabilities and their support workers. They talked about the other attacks on disability benefits and services. Nottingham City Council has over £200 million in usable reserves.

Councillor Adele Williams, the new transport portfolio holder, stopped to talk to a family whose Downs Syndrome daughter now has to pay to get to her voluntary work in a local school. The councillor was at pains to say that she was listening.

Des Conway from the campaign had tabled two questions about the cut to the council.

Following a public outcry, the council recently reversed the plan to merge the Marcus Garvey Afro-Caribbean Community Centre with another centre, saying it would use £67,000 from reserves to keep the centre open while carrying out a review.

One of the questions submitted asked this set a precedent for using reserves and whether the previous portfolio holder, meant the council "will not fund the 24/7 usage of the mobility pass” rather than “cannot fund the 24/7 usage”?

David Mellern, the new council leader, did not directly answer the question but he announced that he would review the policy with the portfolio holder for transport within three months.

The campaign sees this as a step forward. It shows the importance of campaigning.

The Reverse Mobility Pass Cuts campaign demands that the council should:

- Reverse this cut
- Not increase charges and not introduce new charges to fund the 24/7 travel
- Stop making cuts and use its legal rights to use council reserves and borrowing powers to plug the funding gap
- Launch a mass campaign with disabled campaign groups, residents and the trade unions to force this weak government to fully fund council services

Socialist Party Fighting Fund

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£ target £ received April-June 2019 Deadline: 2 July 2019

If you agree with what you read in the Socialist, consider making a donation to the Socialist Party’s fighting fund:

- pay by card on 020 8988 8777 or socialistparty.org.uk/donate
- cheques payable to ‘Socialist Party’, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Donate today!
But if there was hope, it lay in the proles.

70 years since the publication of Nineteen Eighty-Four

Sexual harassment of LGBT+ workers shows need for unions to fight

Winston Smith

Socialist Party LGBT+ group

46% of LGBT+ people have faced sexual harassment at work, finds a recent report from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Of those, two in three did not report their experiences to anyone. A quarter of those chose not to report because of fear of being fired and the fear of being outed by others.

The report states that not enough is being done to support those who experience sexual harassment at work. Measures to prevent it need to go beyond tackling individuals’ behavior and address the institutional and systemic factors that contribute to a culture of harassment at work.

Socialist Party LGBT+ has been preparing support networks for LGBT+ workers for many years. We have been working with campaigns and organizations to provide support and resources to help those who experience sexual harassment at work.

We have been working to raise awareness of the issue and to build solidarity among LGBT+ workers. We are committed to fighting for the rights of LGBT+ workers, and we will continue to fight for a world where no one has to face the fear of sexual harassment at work.

Our members are the backbone of our work, and we are committed to supporting them. We will continue to work for a world where no one has to fear sexual harassment at work. We will continue to fight for the rights of LGBT+ workers and to build a world where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
INDIA: MODI VICTORY UNDERLINES NEED FOR REAL SOCIOSTAL FIGHTBACK

Jagjot Chandna
New Socialist Alternative (CWI India)

Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have won a landslide victory in the Indian 2019 general election. With this election, India has reached a turning point, as the BjP is now the single largest party and has won a majority of the 543 seats in the parliament.

The election result represents a significant setback for the left, which has been steadily losing ground in Indian elections for the last five years. The left-led coalition in Tamil Nadu, for instance, has lost its majority in the state assembly election held shortly after the national election. This election result marks the end of the post-1991 era of Indian politics, where the left-wing parties were able to hold their own against the right-wing forces.

The BJP's victory is a clear indication of the growing authoritarianism and anti-democracy in India. The party has been criticising democracy and the left as ‘anti-national’ and ‘anti-dialogue’ for a long time. India's international linkages and the global political environment have also been under threat.

The BJP is an extreme right-wing party that was formed in 1980 and is known for its Hindutva ideology. The party has been following a hardline policy, which includes the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the 2002 Gujarat pogrom, the 2004 Kandhamal pogrom, the 2009 Mumbai riots, the 2010 Delhi riot, the 2012 Delhi gangrape, the 2013 Patna blast, the 2014 Pulwama attack, and the 2019 Pathankot attack.

The BJP's victory has also been marked by the rise of Hindutva ideology in India. The party has been promoting the idea of a Hindu Rashtra, or a Hindu nation, which has been met with resistance from the Indian people. The BJP has also been promoting the idea of a Hindu identity, which has been met with resistance from the Muslim community.

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This year’s National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) conference takes place as the Tory crisis reaches a new stage with the resignation of Theresa May. But no Tory prime minister will act in the interests of workers. We need a general election to get rid of them all, their vicious austerity and anti-union laws. And the labour and trade union movement must mobilise to fight for it.

We call on activists to join the biggest annual gathering of rank-and-file trade unionists. It is open to everyone in the labour and trade union and anti-cuts movements.

Hear from some of the biggest union struggles, some of which have achieved important and inspirational victories, such as the Glasgow equal pay strikers and the Birmingham bin and homecare workers.

We’re delighted to give a platform to the Swindon Honda shop stewards, who are fighting to save their plant from closure. There will also be militant union leaders addressing conference.

There are both challenges and victories in our movement that will be discussed. We give our full support and solidarity to the thousands of steelworkers who are facing the catastrophic threat of insolvency.

As with the Honda workers, we call for British Steel to be nationalised to save jobs and communities. The U-turn by the government over probation privatisation shows that workers can win.

Many workers continue to be in dispute every week and we continue to build solidarity for them. Victories show that when workers fight they can win and if all these struggles are coordinated we can beat the bosses, kick out the Tories and end austerity.

The NSSN was initiated by the RMT and its former general secretary the late Bob Crow in 2006. Ten national trade unions now officially support our campaigning work, as well as many union branches, shop stewards committees and trade union councils.

The NSSN’s annual conference is where hundreds of trade unionists and anti-cuts campaigners come together to discuss and debate how we take the fight forward in workplaces and share experiences on how the bosses can be pushed back.

Come and join the fightback.