As we go to press, Johnson and his bosses’ Brexit deal remain suspended in mid-air. Unable to govern, Johnson’s only way out is a high-risk gamble on a general election, hoping against hope that it will win him a working majority.

The result of any election is uncertain. Right now the polls show a lead for the Tories of around 10%. But that could melt away once an election is called.

Johnson - like May and Cameron before him - heads a viciously anti-working class, pro-super-rich government. His bosses’ Brexit deal is not designed to ‘give back control’ to working-class people, but to give even greater control to big business to super-exploit workers and sell off public services.

The Socialist Party has been campaigning for a general election because it gives an opportunity to throw this rotten government of the super-rich out of office. This has not been the approach of the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party, however.

The pro-big business ‘Tories in disguise’ who make up the right wing of the Labour Party are openly campaigning against Corbyn winning a general election. Even figures on the left of Labour - like Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell - have prioritised campaigning for a second EU referendum before a general election.

The mistakes of the Labour left have made more difficult the terrain on which a pre-Christmas election could be fought. Nevertheless, if Corbyn comes out with a fighting, socialist manifesto he could transform the situation and win the general election.

Mistakes

At the same time, under pressure from the pro-capitalist majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party, Corbyn has focused on manoeuvres in Westminster rather than mobilising the working class to get the Tories out and to bring a socialist government to power. The result is that workers have heard no clear voice fighting for their interests in parliament.

The mistakes of the Labour left have made more difficult the terrain on which a pre-Christmas election could be fought. Nonetheless, if Corbyn comes out with a fighting, socialist manifesto he could transform the situation and win the general election.

The 2017 anti-austerity manifesto could be a starting point. But the 2019 manifesto should go further. It should also include, as part of a socialist programme, reversing all cuts to council services, scrapping Universal Credit, and a pledge to nationalise under democratic working-class control, the banks and major companies, along with those which carry out closures and job cuts in the name of Brexit or otherwise.

> Editorial: page 2
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The Socialist is written, read, sold and bought by ordinary workers, trade unionists, young people and Socialist Party supporters. We want you to write for the Socialist. Send us reports of your workplace and community campaigns, short letters on working-class issues, or ideas for other articles.

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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."
Karl Marx

ANTI-AUSTERITY, SOCIALIST POLICIES
CAN BE A WINNING FORMULA

AS the parliamentary Brexit crisis drags on, the already deep distrust of capitalist politicians is being further undermined. Johnson is straining every nerve in order to get a general election. In the process he is revealing how the capitalist class are prepared to bend, break or change their own rules whenever it suits them.

The Fixed Term Parliament Act was an undemocratic device cooked up by a previous Tory prime minister, David Cameron, in order to try and strengthen his weak coalition government. Now, heading a government so weak it cannot govern, Johnson has no hesitation in changing the law introduced by his predecessor in order to suit his interests.

Contrast that with the treatment meted out by the courts to groups of workers who, despite having an overwhelming majority for strike action, are banned from striking if the numbers who voted in the ballot are even one below the legal threshold.

As we go to press it seems as if Johnson could succeed in getting an election before Christmas. The task of the workers’ movement is to fight to ensure he doesn’t succeed in winning it.

Johnson’s risk
Johnson’s strategy is very high-risk. Despite his spurious claims to have ‘won the people’s vote’, millions of working-class people can only see a continuation of the misery imposed by successive Tory governments for almost a decade. And despite his attempt to mobilise Brexit supporters by promising ‘to get Brexit done’ or ‘die in a ditch’, he has done neither! As we go to press it seems as if Johnson could succeed in getting an election before Christmas. The task of the workers’ movement is to fight to ensure he doesn’t succeed in winning it.

Johnson’s strategy is very high-risk.

As we go to press it seems as if Johnson could succeed in getting an election before Christmas. The task of the workers’ movement is to fight to ensure he doesn’t succeed in winning it.

Endless attempts to compromise with the pro-capitalist Labour MPs have - as we warned - done nothing to stop the Blairites trying to undermine Corbyn. Instead, it has resulted in his anti-austerity message becoming almost inaudible.

As the 2017 snap election showed, a general election is an opportunity to change all this. If Corbyn comes out fighting with a socialist programme he can mobilise massive popular support. Calling for the immediate nationalisation of Royal Mail, for example, will be extremely popular with the postal workers who have just voted in big numbers to strike.

A pledge to kick all the profiteers out of the NHS - in contrast to Johnson’s willingness to open it up to US capitalism - would be popular with the vast majority of the population. In the last election, Labour’s manifesto pledged to abolish tuition fees; if this was repeated and expanded on - with a promise to write off all student debt - it would enthuse millions of students and graduates. Mass council house building, nationalisation of the energy companies, an immediate minimum wage of £10 an hour for all, along with a programme of demands and more could electrify Britain.

On Brexit, Corbyn needs to pledge to renegotiate it in the interests of the working class - refusing to accept the EU’s privatisation, pro-austerity laws. He would then be able to argue clearly in favour of his deal in any confirmatory referendum.

This programme should be combined with nationalisation of the major corporations and banks, to really take the levers of power out of the hands of the capitalist saboteurs that would otherwise do all in their power to prevent the implementation of pro-working class policies.

In the run up to the 2017 election, the Socialist Party argued that Corbyn could win if he fought on a socialist programme. At the start of the election campaign few believed us. While Corbyn didn’t win, however, he gained 3.5 million extra votes - the biggest increase for any party in a general election since 1945. This clearly demonstrated that it was possible to kick the Tories out, proved Labour did not stand on an ‘austerity-lite’ Blairite manifesto but put forward policies in the interests of the working class.

In the coming weeks, or at most months, the workers’ movement will have another chance to get the Tories - who have driven millions into dire poverty - out of office.
A ngrily mass revolts have been erupting in many countries across the globe. On Friday 25 Oc
tober, up to two million people demonstrated on the streets of Chile’s capital Santiago (see page 15). That was the eve of a weekend that saw up to 500,000 demonstrating in Barcelona for the release of politi
crists, anti-government pro-
tests across Iraq and a 105-mile long human protest chain in Lebanon.

In recent weeks, explosions of pro-
test have also broken out or been ongoing in Hong Kong, Ecuador, Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Bolivia, and Haiti - among others. Prior to these there was the ‘gilets jaunes’ flare up in France and the beginning of a revolu-
tion in Sudan which has already ou
ted President Omar al-Bashir.

These movements draw inspira-
tion from each other, sometimes echoing a tactic or symbol seen else-
where. Wherever they occur, they are re
calling past experiences of workers interna-
tionalism (CWI).

The organised working class has the
power. No to Trident.

Our demands include...

- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For
  a socialist Europe and a socialist world!
- Fight for Labour to be transformed into such a party: deselect the Blairites.
- No to imperialist wars and
  environmental pollution.
- 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, free for all, from the age
  of 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
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39 migrants found dead in Essex lorry container

■ Safe passage for refugees
■ Fight for jobs, homes and services for all

Argos Christmas bonus cut

Millennial workers were told by the Supermarket giant, who was caught on camera singing ‘ touchdowns in heaven ’ to TV viewers, that workers have been furloughed Argos workers’ Christmas bonus cut by £5.

Argos, 15,000 shop staff earn an average £20,000, contrasted with the £14 million offered per bonus to each of the workers. The decision by Argos was described as a “betrayal” by the work staff.

“The exclusion of the Christmas bonus is a further attack on the rights of workers. Not only have Argos taken away the Christmas bonus, but they have also reduced the number of workers who receive it. This is unacceptable and will lead to a loss of trust in the company.”

Capitulation

In the same way, migrant workers are used as a scapegoat. Capitalist politicians are desperate to drive the working class, self-inflating immigration for the low pay, insecure and exploitative jobs, services and products that actually serve from an upper class, who has had the money pay them off.

Before the Brexit Division division has been seen in degrading and casualisation of the economy, and its services. This is also seen in the workers’ movement, where workers are seen as the ones who serve from all we. From Argos, all workers should be brought together in the union to unite in the struggle to fight for improved wages, working conditions and union rights as well as against all forms of exploitation, oppression and capitalism.

The Socialist Party fights for the rights of migrant workers and all workers who are being exploited by their jobs and conditions at work. The Socialist Party fights for the end of the exploitation and exploitation of workers and all who are in the struggle.

The United Nations estimates that 18,000 people have died crossing the Mediterranean since 2014. The European Union has been charged with their man-...
PCS union general secretary election

Support Marion Lloyd - a history of workers’ struggle and a programme for the future

The election for the next general secretary of the PCS civil and public services trade union ran from 7 November until 12 December.

Socialist Party member Marion Lloyd (pictured right) won 39 branch nominations for general secretary. She is currently PCS BEIS (government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) Group President and on the union’s national executive committee, and is in the best position to challenge the incumbent, Mark Serwotka. Marion spoke to the Socialist and explained why she believes PCS members should vote for her.

Why are you standing for general secretary?

Because the current leadership is out of touch and doesn’t understand, let alone tackle, the day-to-day issues we all face at work.

The insistence by Mark Serwotka and his supporters that we can only have a national campaign on pay, and only pay, is wrong. Their failure to win two national pay ballots has not only weakened us but ignored pensions, jobs and office closures!

Members feel isolated - and left to fight alone.

Surely the most sensible thing to do is to link everything together, to develop a campaign that everyone can get behind and have confidence in. I would build that, working with reps, and go out to the heart of our membership.

That’s why I’m standing - to work with members and reps to build that campaign. One which inspires confidence and gets members involved.

What are the key challenges facing the union and its members? The above, together with equality and building membership.

Poverty pay levels within our membership are appalling. 10% of civil servants earn below the living wage. It is scandalous. We need an all-out campaign to improve our pay so that people can make ends meet.

We cannot repeat the failed pay strategy of Mark Serwotka. He insisted we should have another single ballot even after losing the last. Rather than listen, he insisted we did it again. What happened? We lost again. Not only has this made members furious, it also means that we’re left without any strategy on pay.

21 employer areas met the ballot threshold - including HMRC (revenue and customs department). This means if we had adopted the approach that I suggested - a ballot counted employer by employer - then things could be very different now.

Just imagine 21 areas used to pressure the employer, 21 areas campaigning and striking, 21 areas helping us build the campaign across the union. Just imagine a pay campaign pressuring an employer and a government in complete chaos.

The challenge to solve the problems caused by pay, is a key. We must particularly take up the struggle of those most affected - women, BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic), disabled, LGBT+, younger and older workers.

As a working mother, these issues remain close to my heart and I am determined to root equality properly into our bargaining and campaigning.

Challenge number three is to build our membership. 60,000 members lost under the current general secretary’s tenure. Staff will join a union winning for them.

This will strengthen the union in our workplaces and at the table. That’s why we must give resources to our reps on the ground.

What’s your position on the possible general election?

I want one, and as soon as possible. I am desperate, like many of our members, to get a Corbyn government elected on a programme to reverse pay decline and job cuts.

But I do not believe that we should affiliate to the Labour Party. We remember the Blair and Brown governments that cut 100,000 civil service jobs; privatised jobs and gave our members away to rotten companies which ruthlessly attacked our members’ terms and conditions.

Many of the MPs who supported these policies are still around and are trying to get rid of Jeremy Corbyn - why would we support them? We are a trade union - not an extension of the Labour Party - and both my opponents in this election would do well to remember that.

We should be using our influence to influence politicians to benefit us, not just throw money at them and let them off the hook. This is not what members want.

How will you be different from the current general secretary?

I will actively build a campaign to tackle the issues I have already highlighted. I will ensure that no group of members is left isolated and develop an approach which inspires confidence and a belief we can do something.

I am a working mother on a civil service salary. I know the daily challenges our members face because I too have faced redundancy in recent years and experience the pressure at work.

Unlike Mark Serwotka, who pledged to not take the full general secretary’s salary but does, I will stay on my civil service wage and publish details of the money I give back to PCS.

I remain, as I have done all my working life, completely committed to building our union and solving the problems we face at work. I know what to do and how to do it. I will work with reps and members to build the confidence we need so that members will join together to fight the employer.

“I have known Marion for over 25 years. She is one of the most hard-working and dedicated lay activists I have come across. She is the longest-serving current group president and has been a constant support to me (in HM Land Registry) as we fought two successful campaigns against privatisation.”

Michael Kavanagh
president PCS Land Registry Group (personal capacity)

“All the unions and their members need is a leader who has a vision for their members’ future. This is Marion Lloyd and I believe that her record as a campaigner - most recently leading tremendous victories for PCS members working for IS and Aramark in BEIS - has demonstrated great acumen and strategic awareness. If deployed across the union, her joined-up approach to organising, campaigning and bargaining is capable of taking members with us across all departments.”

Dave Lunn
vice-president PCS HM Land Registry Group (personal capacity)

“I am proud to be supporting Marion Lloyd as I believe that we need to go back to a member and activist-led democratic union. Marion has a proven record campaigning for members, saving jobs and preventing office closures, and is a life-long activist.”

Sarah Brown, president PCS Met Police Group (personal capacity)

“Marion has set out an excellent programme to build PCS’s strength from the shopfloor up, ensuring that the union’s bargaining agenda can be delivered, and winning a significant pay rise for all PCS members.”

Bobby Young, PCS HMRC assistant group secretary (personal capacity)
**United Voices of the World**

**London - ‘autumn of discontent’ against low pay and outsourcing**

Rob Williams
National Shop Stewards Network, chair

Independent union United Voices of the World (UVW) has launched an ‘autumn of discontent’ with strikes by outsourced, low-paid, mainly migrant workers.

There are strikes at five London employers - playground attendants at the Royal Parks, cafe workers in Greenwich University, hundreds of cleaners, caterers and porters from St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington, and workers at the Ministry of Justice and the headquarters of ITV and Channel 4.

They are coordinating their strikes on 31 October. Two others are ballotting for action too - St. George’s University and the University of East London. UVW has previously won important victories, including at the London School of Economics.

A central demand is for all outsourced workers to be brought in-house. This is the policy of Jeremy Corbyn and should be shouted from the rooftops as we inch towards a general election. This would draw a line in the sand, and push forward the policy of transport union RMT - a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour government with socialist policies.

Can you give your backing to Socialist Party member Jared in the RMT national executive committee elections? He’s standing for a ‘fit-for-the-future dispute’ - at socialistparty.org.uk

Get all the latest union news...

**UNI WORKERS’ PAY AND PENSION STRIKE BALLOT**

We are waiting for the result of the University and College Union (UCU) strike ballot. The union is asking its members in universities two questions. Will you strike for your pay? Will you strike for your pension?

The ballots closed on 30 October. The employers have broken their pension promise. They want to jack staff contributions up from 8.8% of pay to 9.6%.

Real-term pay has shrunk by 21% in a decade. Workers already voted to strike over pay earlier this year. But in that ballot, they didn’t meet the threshold in the ‘Tories and union laws.

Bea Gardner is the Postgraduate Research rep for the UCU at Southampton University. She spoke to the Socialist Party - which sends offensive.

This shows that established unions can also take action among precarious and contracted-out workers, providing they give a lead.

The planned national strike by 110,000 Communication Workers’ Union (CWU) members in Royal Mail could highlight to a new generation of workers the role of fighting trade unions. It can be an attractive force to all those facing the bosses’ offensive.

**RMT national executive election - London Transport Region**

**Fight the cuts, vote for Jared Wood**

Jared Wood opposes the £1 billion worth of cuts by Transport for London. He rejects shift patterns that are killing tube workers, fights for a four-day week, and also campaigns for the policy of transport union RMT - a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour government with socialist policies.

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Jared Wood

Paul Schindler, RMT Stations and Revenue, said: “During our fit-for-the-future dispute... Jared was instrumental in delivering effective industrial action that won back over 500 jobs.”

See Jared’s interview - ‘Uniting workers and public to fight the cuts’ - at socialistparty.org.uk

**Trade Union Conference Opposing Political Policing**

16 November at the Queen Anne Buildings, Greenwich University. Request a speaker from Cops by emailing opposingpolicesurveillance@gmail.com

Register for the conference by searching ‘undercover policing’ in London at eventbrite.co.uk

McDonald’s - Striking to end low pay.

Scott Jones
East London Socialist Party

Workers at six McDonald’s stores in south London will go on strike on 12 November. The members of the BFAWU bakers’ union are demanding a £15-an-hour wage, an end to youth rates, the choice of guaranteed hours of up to 40 a week, notice of shifts four weeks in advance, union recognition and respect and dignity at work.

Melissa Evans, who works at McDonald’s in Wandsworth Town says: “I need £15 an hour so I can show my son that poverty is not the only option. Me and my colleagues are coming together in a union to tackle poverty pay, insecurity of hours and lack of respect which has gone on at McDonald’s for too long.”

McDonald’s workers know full well that they are only paid a fraction of the value of the meals they produce and serve up. Lewis Baker, a McStriker from Crayford, who has walked out before says: “We are growing bigger with every strike.”

The action will take place the same time as action in other countries. BFAWU has organised previous McDonald’s strikes. The first in January 2018 in Crayford and Cambridge won the biggest McDonald’s UK pay rise for a decade. The second was a joint walkout with low-paid workers at TGI Friday’s, Wetherspoon and Uber Eats on 4 October 2018. The stores involved this time are Wandsworth Town, Downham, Balham, Deptford, Catford and Crayford.

By outsourced, low-paid, mainly migrant workers to be brought in-house. This is the policy of Jeremy Corbyn and should be shouted from the rooftops as we inch towards a general election. This is the policy of Jeremy Corbyn and should be shouted from the rooftops as we inch towards a general election. This is the policy of Jeremy Corbyn and should be shouted from the rooftops as we inch towards a general election.

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McDonald’s strikers at Watford in 2018 - who won a pay rise
Margaret

BUTTERFIELDswiper

We know victories don't last for ever. One day it is only two or three tenants facing eviction, another day it is 20, another day it is 50. Tenants between eviction and occupation, fighting the eviction of one landlord, waiting for legal advice, are aware that they are part of a much larger struggle. That the fight in one neighborhood is also a fight for all. That the battles we win are also victories for others. That victories and losses in one arena effect the whole of the housing struggle.

BUTTERFIELD WEREN'T BUDGE!

Three years since victory: Butterfields didn’t budge

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Three years since victory: Butterfields didn’t budge
Obituary - Bob Lee: 26 February 1954 - 20 September 2019

Socialist Party).

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Selling the Socialist

A week selling the Socialist in Cornwall

With time on my hands, when the depression allows, I am able to spend some time five days a week selling the Socialist newspaper. This is a week in my life on the streets.

Friday: I go into the centre of Truro. When I’m successful selling the Socialist, I encourage people to give their details to join the fight for socialism. Quiet day. Heavy showers don’t help, and I only manage to sell two.

Saturday: Back in Truro. The weather is the same, so no one wants to chat. I do manage to sell five.

Monday: I catch the train to Falmouth. Standing outside a well-known store, between showers, I manage to sell four. Despite the weather, those who bought wanted to talk. The talk was about Brexit and the need for a general election.

Tumultuous times to be living in. This is my favourite place, with some wonderful characters.

There also seems such a high rate of wasted youth - and adulthood. An epidemic of people with drink and drug problems, and homelessness. Although it might just be that the problems are more open in Penzance.

Some of the homeless stop and talk. Their stories are quite moving. In all, I sell six papers. Penzance leaves me drained but determined.

Wednesday: Back in Truro, the last day of my week. Fine weather, so people are stopping and talking. The main topic is again Brexit.

We agree that under the Tories, no matter what the Brexit deal, the working class will suffer; we will pay the price of capitalism, I sell six papers and collect details from two people.

All in, it’s been a good week - 23 papers and £19.27 for the Socialist Party’s fighting fund. With the stories I’ve heard, no matter what abuse I may get, I will be determined to do my bit to fight to rid us of the evil that is capitalism, and fight for a socialist society everywhere.

Trevor Hall
Cornwall Socialist Party

Leicester NHS film

We sold 19 papers at a screening of ‘Under the Knife’ organised by Save Our NHS Leicestershire on 14 October. There were about 90 people there. Many bought a copy of the Socialist newspaper.

It helped having Steve Score’s article on front page, especially as he is a well-known local working-class fighter. We also were able to speak in the discussion at the end of the film, raising the need for a trade union and community mobilisation to back Corbyn’s anti-austerity policies.

Heather Rawling
Leicester Socialist Party

Hull Kuds demo

We sold 26 copies of the Socialist at the Hull Trade Union Council solidarity rally against Turkey’s military intervention in Syria. Around 250 to 200 local Kuds and trade unionists marched from Spring Bank into the city centre Victoria Square.

Philip Culshaw
Hull Socialist Party

Enfield North socialists lobby candidate stitch-up

Local Socialist Party members joined the lobby of the Enfield North Labour Party meeting to select the constituency’s prospective parliamentary candidate on 26 October. Labour’s national executive committee had undemocratically imposed a list which excluded all local left and socialist candidates.

46 delegates spoiled their ballot papers in protest. Having campaigned to get rid of the previous right-wing MP Joan Ryan, who went on to join Change UK, local members have been denied the right to democratically replace her with a local socialist.

Instead they have been saddled with another right-wing candidate.

Opinion: Labour Party is structured to block left councillors

Peter Redfern
Deptford Labour Party

Blairite councillors are doing everything they can to prevent councils standing up to the Tories and defending their communities like Tony Mulhearn and the ‘Liverpool 47’ councillors did from 1983 to 1987.

Democratic ‘district Labour parties’ were replaced by ‘local government committees’, then by ‘local campaign forums’. Each change has made them less democratic and enhanced the power of right-wingers to block the left from becoming councillors.

According to the otherwise good Labour Party conference, we now have local government committees again. Under the latest rule change, a third of members must be existing councillors - in contrast to the district Labour parties, where overwhelmingly delegates were elected by local trades unions, Labour branches, and affiliated organisations.

My sister had to support the infa-mous ‘private finance initiative’ to become a Labour councillor. In my ward, a local activist won a by-election, but the local campaign forum prevented her from standing as a Labour candidate a few months later without any explanation.

The vast majority of Labour councillors are determined to stop Jeremy Corbyn. They put the profits of property developers before the needs of the people. Council housing is being demolished and tenants forced to pay greater increased rents to stay in the area.

As well as restoring the money cut from local authorities, the following steps should be taken.

People expelled from the Labour Party for opposing cuts should have the right to return, and all Labour Party members should have the right to stand as candidates.

There should be annual local government conferences in each council area with participation by trade unions and local community groups as well as Labour Party members, End the mayor and cabinet system and make all council meetings open to the public.

Out with the Blairites! Housing for all on the basis of need! Reverse all cuts and privatisation!

DONATE TO FUND THE FIGHTBACK AT SOCIALISM 2019

Ken Douglas
Socialist Party national treasurer

We are asking all our members and supporters to donate to the Socialist 2019 financial appeal.

This year we have managed to purchase new premises and to move our national headquarters and print shop. We were only able to do so due to the magnificent response to our Building Fund appeal over the last two years, which has raised over £241,000.

But this Socialism appeal is also vitally important. Smashing our annual fundraising target of £120,000 will enable us to maintain our finances for the next year, particularly with a possible general election looming. The fighting fund underpins all our campaigning work.

It enables us to get our ideas out to as wide an audience as possible. The Socialist Party virtually stands alone in putting a clear left position in the fog of Brexit, calling for a general election now to kick the Tories out and for a Corbyn government with socialist policies.

We have always argued for a determined campaign to kick the Blairites out of the Labour Party and for Labour councils to stop doing the Tories’ dirty work: sacking workers, attacking trade union rights and selling off council assets and land to spiv property developers.

Our members play a key role in the trade unions, supporting workers in struggle such as the postal workers. In the communities we fight austerity and privatisation. And we fight alongside young people on the climate change protests.

In the pages of the Socialist and Socialism Today, in our podcasts and videos, we link our analysis of the current situation to the need to build support for socialist ideas, for a mass working-class party, and for the socialist transformation of society.

A proportion of the money raised at Socialism 2019 will also go to assist the Committee for a Workers’ International, the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated.

Can you give £5, £50 or £500? Can you ask other members and supporters to donate? Every donation, no matter how small, will make a difference, and all of it will go to building support for socialist ideas.

Help fund the fightback

DONATE TODAY

Visit socialismparty.org.uk/donate or call 020 9888 8777

or make cheques payable to Socialist Party, PO Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9GT

Socialist Party Fighting Fund

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<th>£ received</th>
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<td>2,932</td>
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In Defence of Trotskyism

New book! Identity politics, trade unions, national liberation, policy and organisation, and more - how does Marxism apply today?

- Coming November 2019 from Socialist Books
- £10 cover price, £8 pre-order and bulk rate
- Get from socialistbooks.co.uk, or search Amazon to pre-order the e-book

Hear some of the book’s authors at the Rally for Socialism 2019 - details on front page
There's a huge explosion on a building site. Children playing on the poorly guarded site are caught in the blast - dead, injured or trapped in an unsafe building that's collapsing.

In the plush city offices of Kallbridge Developments panic begins. Moments ago the close-knit community was cheering its mayor as he praised the new development. It was his project.

Now they rush to the scene of the accident.

How many times have similar 'accidents' happened? The bosses attempt to deny responsibility. Their greatest advantage is that the victims are unknown to each other. In those circumstances, the most difficult and vital first step is to bring the victims and the local community together.

But here everyone knows each other.

The mayor
Will the affected be brought together in a democratically run campaign around commonly agreed demands? Not if the mayor has anything to do with it! View the scene before the dead are brought out. In the absence of genuine leadership, the town spontaneously holds a silent vigil.

This reflects the Grenfell silent vigils, but this is not the best expression of those caught up in that struggle - it was collective anger and a determination to get answers.

The working-class characters are sympathetically drawn. They stand at the barbed-wire fence of the new development, meant to bring 1,000 new jobs to the town, covered in ashes and tears. Some may find this viewing upsetting.

In the fictional Welsh town of Glyngolau, moving scenes capture what so many working-class families have experienced over centuries - and Welsh mining towns perhaps more than anywhere else - family members killed, trapped and devastated by loss, as a result of cost-cutting, profit-driven big corporations putting lives at risk.

I felt the well-drawn collapse of the building very close to home. I live on the Barking Riverside estate in east London. In June, fire ripped through Samuel Garside House there. (See ‘Fire tears through Barking flats - cladding off now’ at socialistparty.org.uk.)

It’s now fully reoccupied, but many residents fear it might collapse at any time. Cracks have spread across the building, painted by loss, as a result of cost-cutting, profit-driven big corporations putting lives at risk.

Our residents’ association has a fighting leadership, which is doing what it can to aid the residents’ struggle for justice. It will be interesting to see the mayor’s pro-capitalist leadership tested under pressure from the company and the rest of the establishment, during the investigation into the causes of the deaths.

Polly Bevan, a local hairdresser and wife of the mayor, angrily confronts a Kallbridge executive who has rushed to the scene. She accuses the company of using shoddy building materials: ‘And what do you know - that this was done cheap - is that what you know?’ It was true to life. The building manager arriving at the site of our fire had personally assured me that all fire-safety precautions had been put in place.

‘I know you!’ Polly accuses. Spot on. And it’s caught on local TV. Polly’s husband responds by violently attacking her at home.

Their toxic relationship will be one focus of the struggle for justice. Will Polly break free as she exposes her husband’s role in life-threatening cost-cutting at the development?

Well made, worth watching.

The Socialist

Inbox

Do you have something to say?

Send your news, views and criticism in more than 150 words to editors@socialistparty.org.uk or if you’re not online, Socialist Inbox, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD

Youth clubs cuts are a mistake

The Thornhill Youth Centre in Southamp
ton is being bulldozed to make way for unaffordable flats. Council-funded youth services ceased in the city in 2013. Since then, the Thornhill building leasing has struggled to cover rent.

The council, who own the building, have stepped in and sold the land to high-net-worth developers.

My mum, now in her late 50s, grew up in the area. She told me: ‘The youth club has always been a place for young people to hang out. We used to play badminton and table tennis there. It’s sad to see all the facilities, which build community, being literally destroyed.’

Josh, who was part of the ‘save our youth services’ campaign in 2012, told me: ‘When the council first voted to stop all funding for youth services, they said the services would be run by volunteers and stay open.’

‘We warned that volunteers and chari

ties would be unable to maintain the ser

vices and the council would wait for them to be run down and sell the land for profit - which is exactly what has happened!’

A few weeks ago, city leaders initiated controversial Section 60 stop and search powers following a serious knife incident less than a mile from the youth club. It’s no surprise to residents that the lack of youth facilities is making communities less safe, particularly for young people.

Bea Gardner
Southampton

Publicly owned public transport is solution

Claire Wilkins’ article in issue 1061 was spot on and showed graphically how out of touch with reality the leaders of Extinction Rebellion (XR) are. (See ‘Ex
tinction Rebellion action opens up divi
sions on how to stop climate change’ at socialistparty.org.uk.)

Public transport is part of the solution to climate change. But XR take the posi

tion that because buses or trains pro

duce some carbon emissions, then they are as bad as cars.

Homeless problem is an abomination

The private ownership of public transport and the ‘pro-car’ policies of both central and local governments, blunts the effectiveness of public transport.

Huge cuts in subsidies have caused routes to be axed. This means that work

ers in rural areas must own a car or be

come a prisoner in their own community.

Extinction Rebellion should campaign for policies such as massive public in

vestment and public ownership of trans

port. Socialists are correct to campaign for these policies in the environmental

movement.

Clive Walder
Birmingham

Bulldozed Thornhill
photo Bea Gardner

This tent encampment is just across the road from the Stratford Westfield shopping centre, east London, and adjacent to new high rise block flats for the super-rich. An abomination!

We need a mass council house building programme and rent control in Newham and everywhere. Not fake ‘affordable’, but genuinely, for the working class and poor.

And no more of Labour-run councils putting humans in containers or con

verted tiny office space in soulless buildings. Or shipping the homeless out of London, as Newham council did.

There are plenty of empty homes and buildings that can be refurbished in Newham and elsewhere that coun

cils should turn into quality homes.

Niall Mulholland
Newham, east London
The 1929 Wall Street Crash

WHEN THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM WAS ON ITS KNEES

The collapse in share prices and the bursting of the speculative bubble exposed individuals, enterprises and the banking and the system became huge losses. Economic historians and the rich and famous, most of them working in the world banks failed. The capitalist economy was thrown into free-fall while the middle and working class became a reality. The dominant ideology of the day was the “Great Depression” – a period of extreme poverty and destitution for the poor and the unemployed. There was mass destitution and impoverishment of the poor and the unemployed.

Capitalism is a system where profits are the only motive. The profit motive is what drives the capitalist system to make more and more profits. The capitalist system is based on the exploitation of workers. Workers are paid less than the value of the products they produce. This means that the profit motive leads to an unequal distribution of wealth and power. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

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For a revolutionary constituent assembly

Chile in revolt

Piñera out

The demand for a constituent assembly as a means of achieving democratic rights and ending the era of neoliberalism in Chile has been recognised by all sectors of society. It is not a question of putting forward a list of demands, but of building a movement that can lead to a radical change in the political system. The demand for a constituent assembly is not just a matter of caring for our children, but of building a new society where everyone can enjoy the rights that are their birthright.

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The election for the next general secretary of the 180,000-strong trade union runs from 7 November until 12 December.

Socialist Party member Marion Lloyd won 39 PCS branch nominations, the incumbent Mark Serwotka got 62, and Bev Laidlaw 17.

We call upon activists to unite behind Marion’s candidacy for a union democratically controlled through its elected lay structures, and a leadership which will actively coordinate across the union the fight on pay, jobs, pensions and office closures.

Marion has spent many years building the left and fighting the right wing in the union. She has a record of success in winning for members, including a successful fight which stopped the closure of her office.

Recently, low-paid PCS members, employed by private contractors ISS and Aramark at the BEIS government offices in London, won the London Living Wage after taking indefinite strike action.

Marion - currently PCS BEIS Group President and on the national executive committee, and who has been on the BEIS picket lines - said: “I’m immensely proud of my members and the branch reps. Two victories in a few weeks after these low-paid workers took indefinite strike action shows what can be achieved. It confirms that we can attract outsourced workers into PCS and link them with members who are directly employed, with the demand that these workers are brought in-house.”

Marion stands on a programme of union democracy, breaking down barriers to win equality for all and a fresh, winning approach on pay, jobs and office closures.

Speaking to the Socialist, Marion says: “Unlike Mark Serwotka, who pledged to not take the full general secretary salary but does, I will stay on my civil service wage and publish details of the money I give back to PCS.” (Read the interview in full on page 6.)

We call upon activists to unite behind her campaign and elect her as the next PCS general secretary.

“Marion has set out an excellent programme to build PCS’s strength from the shopfloor up, ensuring that PCS’s bargaining agenda can be delivered, winning a significant pay rise for all PCS members”

“Marion Lloyd has set out an excellent programme to build PCS’s strength from the shopfloor up, ensuring that PCS’s bargaining agenda can be delivered, winning a significant pay rise for all PCS members.”

I’m backing Marion Lloyd to become PCS general secretary because I believe a fundamental change has become necessary at the very top of our union. Having lost two national ballots on pay, we need a fresh look at tactics and campaigning. I believe that Marion provides this, as has been evidenced by her leadership in the latest successful BEIS dispute.”

Michael Kavanagh
President PCS Land Registry Group
(personal capacity)

“Marion has done that. Marion has a serious strategy for pay. Action not words”

Dave Semple
NEC and DWP Glasgow branch
Assistant Secretary
(personal capacity)

“If you want to save your office, Marion has a serious strategy for pay. Action not words”

Fiona Brittle
PCS Scottish Government dept and NEC (personal capacity)