Two storms in a week brought some of the worst floods in living memory to Wales and parts of England and Scotland, killing at least five people and damaging thousands of homes.

Big business didn’t send the rain. But the distorted priorities of the profit-obsessed capitalist system are to blame for the misery that ordinary people must endure because of it.

It is also inaccurate to describe Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis simply as natural disasters. The increased frequency of extreme weather phenomena is the result of climate change, driven by a system that sacrifices everything for profit.

No bill should be laid at the door of the residents of houses that have been damaged. If private insurance companies try to wriggle out of paying again, the government should step in. They must not be allowed to pass on the costs with higher premiums either. Similarly, workers whose workplaces were flooded out must have their wages guaranteed.

The Fire Brigades Union reports that its members have had to suffer funding cuts totalling £140 million in England alone, with equivalent sums cut in other parts of Britain.

Workers’ efforts. Workers in the emergency services are stretched past their limit. The efforts they and community members have made to help those hit by the floods have disgraced Boris Johnson. By contrast, Johnson has refused even to visit areas hit by the storms after being heckled last year.

Infrastructure weakened by years of under-investment has literally swept away. Rail beds in the South Wales valleys have been washed into rivers, leaving rails suspended in mid-air. Defences erected hastily after the last floods have proved too little, too late.

But it’s not that the resources don’t exist in society: it’s that they’re monopolised by a tiny handful. Bosses at the Environment Agency, which is responsible for flood defences, have pocketed £1.5 million in bonuses over the last five years - while only paying many workers just over the minimum wage. The private companies which own the water industry act in similar fashion.

Working-class communities will never receive full protection until austerity is reversed and the water sector is nationalised, and run under democratic workers’ control and management.

Energy and transport too, to ensure meaningful action on climate change, along with the banks and big firms responsible for impoverishing workers and public services. Then a democratic, socialist plan for homes, jobs and the environment could be drawn up democratically by working-class people as a whole.
CORONAVIRUS CRISIS SHAKES CHINESE REGIME

Fight for independent workers organisation and democratic socialism

Worldwide, the number of deaths due to the new coronavirus appears to have reached a peak. But fear persist, and for good reason: numbers could still be the cause of its possibility of emerging before the deadly disease die.

In Britain, rate cases have been diagnosed, unlike in an event attended by 250 people in March 2019, the first coronavirus case was confirmed in China. But as no deaths have been confirmed in the country, the death toll has been at least one death. The lockdown has been imposed in the country. As far as we know, there are no deaths of the people at the time of writing.

This virus has been the number of deaths, some new cases have been reported. The total number of deaths was reported to be 18 people. The total number of deaths was attributed to the Chinese regime is not to the initial stages of the disease. In the country, the number of cases reported in March 2020, has been 800 deaths and 4,800 cases were known to be infected.

Economic damage

It is still a good question as to how the country is dealing with the economy after the lockdown. The Chinese economy is already shrinking as the country is taking steps to contain the virus. The Chinese economy is already shrinking as the country is taking steps to contain the virus. A significant growth in the sector is seen as the country is taking steps to contain the virus. A significant growth in the sector is seen as the country is taking steps to contain the virus. A significant growth in the sector is seen as the country is taking steps to contain the virus.

China’s Covid-19

Coronavirus have been made with the initial backup and cleanup at the heart of the coronavirus at the Chinese state’s nuclear power plant in Wuhan, in December 2019. The virus was part of the so-called Wuhan virus, having rapidly become an internationally linked virus, and has become moremissible in less than a decade ago. The Chinese economy is second only to the US in size and influence, but even before the present downturn in economic activity and trade, it was growing at about 6% per annum. China is the world’s second largest economy, with a number of large factories that have been shut down due to the virus. The government owns a major part of the economy, and Control has been made with the political elite owning the state-run companies and the financial system.

Regime pressures crisis

When, at the end of last year, one medical professional attempted to warn the authorities that a coronavirus outbreak was threatening the city, his findings were suppressed, and the authorities refused to respond. But there was a growing awareness that the Chinese regime is already shirking its responsibility. The country’s leadership has been criticized for its failure to take adequate measures to contain the virus. The regime’s response has been criticized for being overly cautious and for not taking adequate measures to contain the virus. The regime’s response has been criticized for being overly cautious and for not taking adequate measures to contain the virus.

The chief of a Workers’ International

"We believe that a close-up of the country affected by the newly named Covid-19 at the end of the second week was due to a component of what a being is to see in the near future. But threats are still there and we cannot rule out the possibility of the Chinese regime is already shirking its responsibility. The country’s leadership has been criticized for its failure to take adequate measures to contain the virus. The regime’s response has been criticized for being overly cautious and for not taking adequate measures to contain the virus. The regime’s response has been criticized for being overly cautious and for not taking adequate measures to contain the virus."

Economic damage

As with many countries, China has taken a major toll on the economy, with its growth rate slowing. But even before the present clampdown, the country was experiencing economic growth at about 6% per annum. China is the world’s second largest economy, with a number of large factories that have been shut down due to the virus. The government owns a major part of the economy, and Control has been made with the political elite owning the state-run companies and the financial system.

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This South Korean film is a brilliant watch, very different from run-of-the-mill Hollywood. It exposes the huge inequality in Korean society, without being clunky. It’s funny, with some impressive performances. You mostly have no idea how it’s going to turn out, although the feeling of impending doom builds up as the film progresses. It won’t be giving too much away to say that it ends badly for some.

The story begins with the Kim family living in a basement flat, with no money and little food. They have to endure people urinating outside their window and the city fumigators touring the streets. (Dad points out how they can get their flat fumigated for free by leaving the window open.) They live on the edge of the gig economy. Dad has a record of small business failures. The latest family business is to fold pizza boxes (badly) for a young pizza entrepreneur, but again her business is not far from the edge.

The streets are narrow and chaotic. Everyone is struggling to survive. By contrast, the Parks are living the high life in a house designed by a famous architect - all breeze blocks and glass, without a comfy chair in the place. Their housekeeper does everything including looking after the children, and they have a driver for the Merc - to take Mr Park to work in his high-tech firm.

Excess and hunger

During the first part of the film the Kims gradually infiltrate the Parks’ life - all getting jobs in various capacities. As they get paid more money they are able to eat proper meals - first in an all-you-can-eat workers’ café, where the Kims run through the long catalogue of failed business ventures which have consigned them to a smelly basement.

There the son Ki-woo exclaims “it’s a metaphor” at a large plate of food - just in case you hadn’t realised the whole thing is about rich and poor, excess and hunger.

As the story unfolds, more and more of Korean society is exposed. The housekeeper reveals the house has an underground bunker where you can shelter from “North Korean missiles, or creditors.” Turns out the housekeeper’s husband has lived there down there for four years, hiding from loan sharks.

Ki-woo has taken the university entrance exams four times and has done military service. Presumably he’s too poor to go to university, he is living in the damp basement with his parents and sister.

As the black clouds gather, the Parks start noticing that the Kims smell the same - like a “damp rag” - and this becomes a symbol of the class difference between them.

Eventually the Parks go on a camping trip, with an outdoor projector, leaving the Kims to raid the cocktail cabinet and muse about them. Mr Kim thinks the Parks are nice, but points out later that “money is like an iron, it smooths out the wrinkles.”

Later that night the Kims’ basement gets flooded in a storm and their neighbourhood is streaming with raw sewage. As the camera pans along the dark, flooded streets, you see a family paddling along in the rain on a door, with a baby and their possessions - a small, outdated, cathode-ray tube TV, in one of the centres of consumer electronics manufacture.

The Kims end up sleeping in a gym with hundreds of other flood-ed out people, while the Parks organise a lavish birthday party for their young son. As the guests turn up in a fleet of posh cars and mill about in the garden, you know it’s going to end badly, and you’re not disappointed.

There are still a few jokes to come. But you’re left thinking about the Kim family, who really care about each other, while the Parks live a fairly vacuous life, occasionally livened up with drink and drugs.

The only solution to inequality which the film identifies is to get a better job. But this is entertainment, not a manifesto. Parasite doesn’t pull any punches, and it’s definitely worth a watch.
JAVID’S DEPARTURE FORESHADOWS DEEPER TORY DIVISIONS

WHAT WE THINK

Boris Johnson’s “peoples’ government” lasted as long as his first cabinet reshuffle, as he packed it with ministers who want to see paying schools - 65% compared to 7% in the general population. This was also twice as high as Theresa May’s cabinet and more even than David Cameron’s government of Eton-educated Tory toffs.

Chief among them is the meteoric Rishi Sunak, Winchester College and Oxford, who benefited from Johnson’s denunciation of Sajid Javid to rise rapidly through the ranks to become the new chancellor of the exchequer.

The sudden departure of Javid is an indication of the fault-lines and vulnerability underlying the superficial unity and strength of Johnson’s government; divisions that will only worsen as the economy stagnates and Brexit creates new economic and political headaches.

Johnson had demanded that Javid sack all his special advisors in a move to assert his own control over the Treasury. This proved too much even for the mainly compliant chancellor; Johnson’s own special advisor Dominic Cummings had already had one of Javid’s advisors marched out of Downing Street under police escort. Javid was contemptuously known in Number 10 as “Chino” - chancellor in name only - and Cummings was being reported on Tory social media to be “writing the budget” himself.

So Sajid Javid has become the first chancellor in 50 years not to deliver a budget - ultimately ditched because he attempted to maintain some semblance of independence of the Treasury from Number 10. His insistence on a ‘fiscally prudent’ approach of not borrowing for day-to-day spending may have been thought to be curbing Johnson’s ability to spend money in the north in order to back up his populist rhetoric and need to be seen to be giving something to former Labour supporting areas.

The prime minister’s spokesperson confirmed that the new chancellor had repeated Javid’s call for all departments to make 5% cuts “so money could be reprioritised”. Otherwise the depth of the continuing capitalist crisis and the effects of austerity on productivity and the performance of the economy does not leave much room for manoeuvre, the Tories having already pledged not to raise income tax, VAT or national insurance.

Any major decisions may now have to be pushed back to a second budget in the autumn, using the excuse that the Johnson loyalist Sunak - a former Goldman Sachs banker and manager of various hedge funds - may need some time to establish himself. What are still certain, however, are the continuing massive cuts being forced on local councils.

The character of the Boris Johnson government is becoming clearer as he cements his control, even apparently orchestrating an obedient choral response from his new cabinet. The man who himself refused to be bound by collective responsibility now demands a Trump-style subservience and, as the departure of Sajid Javid indicates, may presage a similar unstable regime as formerly loyal ministers fall out of favour if they fail to fall unconditionally into line.

The A&E should be kept open using locum consultants until sufficient permanent consultants are in place. The health board should make it clear that the unit is permanently safe, to help guarantee the job of any new consultants. And the Welsh government must rip up the South Wales Programme that promised to close the A&E.

The Assembly decision was an amendment from a Labour assembly member to a Tory motion. The fact that the Tories can pose as defenders of the NHS, shows just how vulnerable underlying the superficial unity and strength of Johnson’s government; divisions that will only worsen as the economy stagnates and Brexit creates new economic and political headaches.

The assembly vote on 12 February. The Assembly motion is only advisory and has no binding effect on the health board. But it heaps even greater pressure on the health board executives, who have claimed that there is no option but to close the unit because the sole permanent consultant is retiring in March. A new ad for the post has suddenly appeared.

Welsh Assembly opposes closure
Keep pressure on to save Royal Glam A&E

Dave Reid
Socialist Party Wales

The huge pressure on Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board to reverse its decision to close the A&E at Royal Glamorgan Hospital has intensified. The Welsh Assembly voted to keep the unit open.

Ten Labour assembly members rebelled and voted for the motion against the instructions of Welsh Labour first minister Mark Drakeford - a humiliating defeat. This was solely down to the pressure of the mass campaign.

Thousands of people have mobilised to defend their A&E. Over 300 people massed outside the Senedd building in a midweek lobby on 12 February.

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**East London anti-academy strikes escalate**

Workers at St Michael’s and St Bede’s have escalated their strike action. Unless academisation is halted, both schools will have been closed every day of the strike.

It’s the first picket line since 20-26 February 2020 the same diocese, which is forcing a Coventry NSSN meeting.

Ian Pattison
East London Socialist Party

**Peterborough food workers picket and protest against pay changes**

Support Clive Walder

Like what you’ve read?
Visit the socialist.org.uk/subs

Hackney parking warden’s strike for £15 an hour

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London bus rep dismissal update

In the last issue of the Socialist we reported that London Unite Union bus rep Max Walker was dismissed on 13 February which could result indefinitely.

Max wants to thank the huge support that he has received from his teammates in Ablee to rep and activists across the transport and trade union movement. He is waiting for confirmation of his hearing but he’s hopeful of positive news.

PCooc, a Unite rep on a high treason trial at Exeter Crown Court. The positive outcome was taken to remind the mayor of the votes and protest against pay changes.

NHS workers.

Clive, a Unite rep at Clive speaking at a Coventry NSSN meeting.

Socialist Party

Hackney parking wardens strike for £15 an hour

Picketing in front of the National Express depot in Birmingham and the Internationale and so on.

Money commercial vehicles pass -

Stoke。“Tino” speaking at Vegan’s ’21, Ilkeston.

30.000 was awaiting a disciplinary hearing.

Speedo.

She said plans for academy privatisation.

Education workers in Newham have escalated their strike action. Workers at St Michael’s and St Bede’s Catholic schools want to halt plans for academy privatisation.

National Education Union members from both schools went to picket Stoke.“Tino” speaking at Vegan’s ’21, Ilkeston.

Bob and Jerry who said: “We look forward to paying a different rate each month”

Some with international carp. Oth-

er workers on their breaks nearby
driving shift patterns. This could result
in the council’s unfair action and
 unreachable for any couples both working for
marketisation

Our union has shown its poten-
tiallysuspend until the end of the current
in larger class sizes and cuts to

UCU: Striking to fight education cuts and marketisation

Union bus rep Moe Muhsin Manir was reported that London Unite the

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Wednesday 26 February 2020

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The battle to defeat the poll tax

The battle to defeat the poll tax

30 years ago the historic struggle against the hated poll tax was reaching its peak. Below is an edited extract of a 2017 interview with Dave Nellist, to the report Could I Pay, Wouldn’t I Pay, Didn’t I Pay? compiled by Eric Segal, secretary of the South East Kent Trade Union Council. Dave, a member of the Socialist Party and its forerunner Militant, was the Labour MP for Coventry South East from 1983-1992 and became the main parliamentary spokesperson for the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation. Here he outlines the most important stages in the battle to defeat the poll tax and its lessons for struggle today.

The battle against the poll tax was the biggest civil disobedience campaign of the 20th century. In a normal year, up to 108,000 people refused to pay. In 1990 and 1991, that number had grown to a million or more, at least 25 million. The movement in the early 1990s was massive. In May 1990, an estimated 1.3 million trade unionists and their families in Scotland, and later in England and Wales, took part in the movement of non-payment. This movement was led by the anti-poll tax federations in Scotland and later in England and Wales, the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation (ABPTF). At the Labour Party conference in October 1989, a dramatic incident occurred. The poll tax payment deadline was on 4 April and attracted 1,287 delegates. The ABPTF, an organisation representing 470,000 workers.

The battle moves to the courts

In April 1990, the campaign against the poll tax continued to grow. An All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation legal group was founded in 1989 and attracted 1,287 delegates. The ABPTF, an organisation representing 470,000 workers.

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>continued from page 9

were hearing a few dozen cases a day. But liability orders were obtained, and more punitive enforcement began.

**Bailiffs**

After obtaining a liability order, legislation allowed councils to invoke deductions from earnings or certain state benefits. If non-payment persisted, the bailiffs were sent in to seize property for sale (known in Scotland as warrant sales or ‘poindings’). The final sanction was imprisonment for up to three months.

The use of sheriff’s officers (bailiffs in Scotland) began as early as July 1989. One of the first cases was against Jeanette McGin, a widow from Rutherglen in Glasgow, who had refused to register for the poll tax and not paid the £50 fine. When the sheriff’s officers gave notice they were coming to her home to seize her property, she telephoned the Stirlingshire Anti-Poll Tax Federation office, which organised buses and minibuses from all over the city and region to take hundreds of protesters to her home.

The council backed down. Similar tactics were later used in England and Wales, as local anti-poll tax unions developed ‘bailiff busters’.

**Imprisonment**

The first to be threatened with jail in England was 74-year-old Cyril Mundin, in Northampton, in October 1990. Cyril had been a paratrooper on D-Day, so a certain amount of press interest was inevitable.

Hundreds marched to the court in his support. A Sunday newspaper, the News of the World, sent its ‘Captain Cash’ to pay the fine, so that Cyril wasn’t sent to prison! But Rupert Murdoch’s paper couldn’t (and wouldn’t) pay all the outstanding poll tax bills! And so the jailings began. Pensioners were sent to three-month maximum security prisons such as the high-security prison of RMT. Indeed, Cyril wasn’t sent to prison! But Rupert Murdoch’s paper couldn’t (and wouldn’t) pay all the outstanding poll tax bills! And so the jailings began. Pensioners were sent to three-month maximum security prisons such as the high-security prison of RMT. Despite this, Cyril’s decision was arrived at. The court ordered 366 days.

A number of the lessons learned? Well perhaps the most important was, struggle works! As the late, lamented Bob Crow, leader of the transport union RMT, famously said: “If you fight you won’t always win. But if you don’t fight you will always lose!” And in the case of the poll tax the struggle of those unable to pay unified with those unwilling to pay, welded with a confident strategy and tactics, led to an historic victory.

It was an organised mass struggle, not individuals left to fight or suffer alone, that made the battle against the poll tax a working-class one. When the trade union leaders and the state’s treasury had offered a deal whereby a senior judge was asked to determine the poll tax liability, impartial institution. The role of the state in Britain is not some benevolent, impartial institution. The role of the courts played in legitimising and then enforcing the poll tax legislation cut through the illusion that fairness and reasonableness upheld the rule of law.

What more evidence do you need when you look at the part the police played in backing up the bailiffs who were sent by the courts to force their way into homes to take the possessions of working-class people? Or the way they policed the anti-poll tax demonstrations or jailed those who, in the words of MP Terry Fields, would rather break the law than break the poor?

The battle against the poll tax showed that the state is used as a vehicle to maintain and defend the dominant interests of the capitalist class - contrary to the view held by academics and the reformist right wing of the labour and trade union movement.

Prison is a part of the state machinery. Imprisonment for political activity is not new, and has long been known to be the university of revolutionaries. We understood that it was likely that, alongside those who simply could not pay all the poll tax, those who were ‘Militant supporters. At its height, 18 million people were defying the law and refusing to pay. It was the organisation of that movement and clear ongoing tactics and strategy that succeeded.

Those of us in the leadership of the anti-poll tax unions who were prepared to go to jail did so in the knowledge that we were supported by our class. We were not individuals looking for martyrdom, but we were prepared to take the fight into the belly of the institutions of the state.

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**Eric Segal** is a member of the Socialist Party and secretary of the South East Kent Trade Union Council. He was a leading activist in the Kent Anti-Poll Tax Federation, and was jailed for 30 days in 1991 for non payment of the poll tax.

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**Better to break the law than break the poor**

Imprisoned poll tax fighters meant business

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Labour Party and trans rights

United working-class fight needed for rights and resources for all

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge
Socialist Party executive committee.

The Labour Campaign for Trans Rights (LCTR) has intervened in the party’s leadership contest, calling on candidates to back its 12-point pledge. Rebecca Long-Bailey and Lisa Nandy have done so.

The oppression trans people suffer must be fought. 81% of trans people fear and avoid certain social or public situations, such as gyms, public toilets and shops. The struggle by trans workers and young people has been significant in raising the need for solidarity. The LCTR pledges show discussion is needed on what form that should take.

While LCTR raises some positive demands, it also unfortunately calls on Labour to “organise and fight” against organisations it considers “transphobic” such as Woman’s Place UK (WPUK) and LGB Alliance, and for expulsions. However, defeating divisive ideas requires offering a way to unite and fight all discrimination.

It is labour to be transformed into a party that can defend trans rights specifically, and fight all discrimination. It must have an understanding of the origins of oppression that lie within unequal class society - and flowing from that the central role of the working class in ending it.

Gender Recognition Act

In 2016 the Tories launched a review into the Gender Recognition Act 2004 which included the right of trans people to self-identify. Nearly four years on, the Tories have produced no reform and the 'debate' on the GRA has been falsely framed as a question of irreconcilable, competing rights between women and trans people. Unfortunately this has been the approach of the leadership of WPUK and others.

The Socialist Party opposes all forms of discrimination and defends trans people’s rights, including to self-identify and to public services. We also recognise that women’s services are under enormous threat - from Tory cuts and the Labour councils who implement them.

A recent study found that 64% of those who seek shelter in a domestic violence refuge are turned away due to lack of funding. The Women’s Lives Matter campaign calls on the Labour candidates to demand that Labour councils take a stand, refuse to make cuts and fight for the money the Tories have stolen from our councils to defend services for all.

Unfortunately, this is not the approach of the Labour Campaign for Trans Rights or the groups which have emerged to oppose GRA reform. WPUK is led by some senior figures in the trade union movement. But in its five founding demands does not point to a way to, or even the need to, fight austerity - of which the overwhelming burden falls on women. WPUK instead sows illusions in the government’s ability to protect women’s spaces.

In August 2017, the National Union of Teachers vice-president who became a leading member of WPUK wrote that granting self-identity was “likely to impact on society’s ability to plan for and accommodate the needs of its population and the way it attempts to even out inequality”.

But this society’s ability to meet the needs of the different sections of the population comes down to who has the power to make such decisions - which class. Capitalist society is composed of classes and based on the exploitation of the working-class majority by the capitalist minority, the boss class.

Capitalism and inequality

The capitalist class is unable to ‘even out inequality’ because the system it defends is an unequal system that prioritises profits over our needs. It also has an interest in dividing the working class on race, religious, sexual orientation and gender lines to make it easier to maintain its rule.

The working class is not homogenous but made up of different layers and sections who suffer different forms of oppression alongside class exploitation. But what makes the working class so important is its role in production - workers make everything and without them the bosses can’t make their profits.

The working class has the potential power therefore to replace capitalism with a socialist alternative based on democratic planning of the economy to meet the needs of all.

In its effort to weaken working-class collective struggle, and to undermine our demands and aspirations, the capitalist class has always sought to divide workers. It is a huge mistake of trade union and labour movement activists to assist them in this. Instead, it is necessary to draw out and build a united movement based on resisting all cuts, and for services and rights for all.

With regard to domestic violence services and refuges this starts with fighting for no cuts, no closures, but also adequate funding and an expansion of services for all who need them with decisions being made by democratic and accountable bodies of service users, service workers and the wider working class through the trade unions. This would lay the basis for meeting the needs of all groups of service users, and democratically negotiating and resolving any potential conflicts.

In a survey of domestic violence service providers by Stonewall, participants emphasised how thorough risk assessment processes are key to safeguarding against an incident of a violent man attempting to access services, while ensuring that all women receive the support they need.

The six-million strong trade unions, as the main mass organisations of the working class, can and have played a key role in fighting for the rights and public services of those who suffer oppression and discrimination under capitalism - from equal pay, abortion rights, legal rights for LGBT+ people, challenging racism, and more.

The trade unions and mass workers’ parties have the potential to bring together all sections of the working class in struggle - if they develop a programme of fighting for rights and services for all.

It is democratic debate and testing ideas in the fight against cuts and for rights that are needed - not denunciations and proscriptions.

WPUK is attempting to appeal to women who want to save their services - with a programme that is seen by many as anti-trans rights, rather than fighting the attacks of the Tories and the bosses.

But exposing this approach for the dead end it is requires offering a socialist struggle alternative, not bans and ‘no-platforming’ of groups and individuals which will be used by the pro-capitalist right in the party against the fighting pro-working-class members.

The rate of LGBT+ hate crime per capita rose by 144% between 2013-14 and 2017-18. It is urgent that the labour and trade union movement takes the lead in building a movement against all forms of discrimination and for a socialist society in which we can be truly liberated from the backward ideas on which class society rests.
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Only unified, revolutionary movement
of working class and poor can end the turmoil.

This article on Yemen by Socialist Party national committee member Elaine Branum is the fifth and final article of the series in the Socialist on countries experiencing wars and uprisings in the Middle East. Reader can view the other contributions to the series on socialistparty.org.uk

Yemen’s desperate civil war fuelled by imperialism and regional powers

A former MP, Hussein Badr al-Din Amin, has been killed by Houthi rebels, leading the successful strike at rail and transport unions. If the TUC does not act, Unite must appeal to the court to take action. The TUC does not act, Unite must appeal to the court to take action.

Yemen’s desperate civil war fuelled by imperialism and regional powers

There has been huge destruction as a result of the war, which has pushed millions of people into poverty and made the country dependent on international aid. The Houthi rebels have imposed strict control over the country, leading to shortages of food, fuel and medicine.

In 2019, the UN reported that over 10 million people in Yemen were facing acute food insecurity, with 2 million people at risk of famine. The war has also led to a significant drop in production of key commodities, such as oil and gas.

The Houthi rebels have been supported by a range of regional powers, including Iran and the British government. This has led to increased tensions in the region and a crisis in Yemen’s international relations.

The situation in Yemen is complex and volatile. The war has been exacerbated by the presence of international actors, such as the United Nations, which has been unable to bring about a resolution.

The Yemeni government and the Houthi rebels have both been accused of human rights abuses, including violations of international law.

The war has had significant economic and social consequences for Yemen, including a major increase in poverty and food insecurity. The situation is likely to continue to deteriorate in the coming years, with the risk of famine remaining high.

In conclusion, the Yemeni war is a result of regional and international politics, with both the Yemeni government and the Houthi rebels receiving support from a range of regional powers. The situation is likely to continue to deteriorate in the coming years, with the risk of famine remaining high.
Socialist Party members in UCU

The first wave of strike action in November 2019, involving 48,000 University and College Union (UCU) members in higher education saw some of our strongest ever picket lines. Combining the two disputes - pay/conditions and pensions - maximised the impact of the action and brought members affected by different aspects of marketisation together under one banner.

The strength of this action is reflected by the 14 institutions that met the anti-union 50% voting turnout threshold in reballots, meaning that they can also now join in this round of action.

The bold and fighting strategy displayed in last term’s eight-days of action (as well as the 2018 pensions strike) has attracted new members to the union, particularly those most exploited by management.

The action, which highlights different aspects of exploitation at universities, has also received wide support from students - many also affected by poor pay and working conditions - with many student unions voting to endorse and support the strikes.

As a result of the action, bosses’ organisation UCEA was forced to the negotiating table and has now accepted that pay inequality, workload and casualisation are national as well as local issues. This sets a new precedent and means that we can negotiate on these issues nationally. But we still have a long way to go. The recent offer made by UCEA fell woefully short of any meaningful change from the point of the employer.

Management claim it is unaffordable to increase pay, but university income, surpluses and reserves have all increased. The increased workload, reliance on casualised staff and below-inflation pay rises are all part of the bosses’ deliberate strategy to slash staffing costs while increasing ‘productivity’.

A victory on pay is the most concrete way of ensuring the university management conceded to improving staff conditions and our share of income. This is the most concrete of the ‘four fights’ demand and is the one where the least progress has been made.

Winning on pay would provide a lead to workers in other sectors wanting to fight low and stagnant pay. As part of this we call upon the UCU to work with other education unions to call a national education demo. This should be in defence of education, linking our campaign with students, education unions, parents and school students. Just last week, thousands of National Education Union members were on strike in sixth-form colleges in relation to pay and working conditions.

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