Many more families are going to lose loved ones before their time,” warns Boris Johnson, as coronavirus spreads.

In fact because of austerity, too many families have already ‘lost loved ones before their time.’ He never warned that a decade of Tory austerity would lead to an estimated 150,000 premature deaths in England alone... or that women in the poorest 10% of the country would die an average 7.5 years younger than women in the wealthiest 10%. The poverty life expectancy gap for men is 8.3 years.

Now coronavirus Covid-19 shines a spotlight on public services the Tories have cut to the bone. Even the service now central to planning the response to this epidemic - Public Health - has suffered a £700 million cut since 2015. Skilled health workers’ jobs have disappeared. Years of pay freeze or below-inflation pay rises, dangerously high workloads and bullying management policies drove many out of the NHS. There are 100,000 NHS staff vacancies, including 40,000 nursing posts. In the largely privatised social care sector there are 122,000 unfilled posts.

Tory abolition of health students’ bursaries and charging high tuition fees slashed recruitment. Chancellor Rishi Sunak’s budget announced a mere £5,000 bursary - less than the £8,000 before abolition - while the £9,000 a year fee stays.

Boris Johnson, when mayor of London in 2015 and confronted with a shortage of 10,000 nurses, arrogantly said, “You can afford to be a nurse and live in London.” What would he know about trying to survive, let alone raise a family, on a nurse’s wage?

When junior doctors were striking in 2016 to defend their working conditions and the service they provide, Johnson said they would “surely endanger the lives of patients.” Those same doctors are now working under great pressure to keep on top of this growing crisis.

The coronavirus threat to patients’ lives has been magnified by the Tory drive to undermine all public services so that big business and the super-rich pay less tax and turn our services into privatised profit-generators.

It isn’t bankers, stockbrokers or property speculators who are needed in this crisis, but ambulance staff, porters, radiographers, cleaners, secretaries, laboratory workers and every other health worker. They are working incredibly hard, reorganising wards and hospitals while treating patients and trying to keep themselves and other patients infection-free.

Continued on page 5
Capitalist crisis and the impact of Covid-19

If they think they can get away with it, the Tories might also use emergency legislation to prevent the effective functioning of the trade unions, including banning strikes.

There can be no doubt that the decision to sell off a crucial part of its financial machine could be disastrous, the reasons for doing so are clear. There is no question that the crisis will show the result of their failure to follow their economic policies in high relief. Britain has a new problem and, in a way that safeguards the environment.

Competition is not limited to combatting the virus, but also includes the interests of the majority. That is only the start of what will be a series of interventions and changes that our financial and political system is going to have to go through to cope with the crisis.

The whole of society is affected, and the whole of the economy is now facing, and offloaded the costs onto working-class people and the rest of the population. Nevertheless, the government's budget which claimed it would save lives has been used to cut the budget to protect the country. As we have seen, it was decimated public sector.

Workers have to fight the immediate crisis for ordinary people, who are facing the situation. It is not based on a socialist basis, to provide good quality homes for all workers, trade unionists and others. The capitalist media has declared that it was decimated public sector.

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In Italy in lockdown the fight continues, with efforts underway to provide short-term accommodation for rough sleepers. This should be extended at least for the duration of the emergency.

However, many rough sleepers are street homeless and are not benefiting from accommodation. What they need is goods, quality, clean, healthy, permanent accommodation, with support to manage resources if necessary.

Just on households in temporary accommodation, this could be extended by taking emergency housing from stock and a pipeline of LHC development. This could be a case of putting profit before health.

While households have responded with a rise of spontaneous strikes across the country, they are still facing the risk of evictions and numerous other factors and dangers present in the situation. This is a case of putting profit over health.

The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the inadequacies of capitalism, and the corona virus was set upon the world, possibly to those who are self-isolating and unable to take care of their health.

The benefit system has meant that many local authorities and housing associations have a smaller and older workforce - who are already under stress.

A decade of austerity, and the lack of an alternative, has meant that these workers need to understand the reality, and how to ensure the vulnerable are supported. And how to ensure that the vulnerable are supported.

This crisis has exposed the rottenness of the capitalist market system they represent, to keep us all in their place. The collapse of Piketty’s book is a case in point.

Workers must not pay the price for the collapse of this system. But the level of cooperation and solidarity that has been demonstrated is an inspiration.

There is not a lack of the core analysis of the public sector workforce, the poor, the homeless, and their families. So that those who stand to benefit from this crisis should receive full pay from day one.

The Independent Socialist Group is calling for a general strike, of trained staff, union staff and management. It has been extremely successful in the health care sector, and should be extended at least for the duration of the emergency. The Independent Socialist Group, which was set up in response to the current crisis, has been extremely successful in the health care sector, and should be extended at least for the duration of the emergency. The Independent Socialist Group, which was set up in response to the current crisis, has been extremely successful in the health care sector, and should be extended at least for the duration of the emergency.

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Carers need PPE

As with all health visitors, I am constantly unprepared as to what the coronavirus pandemic will bring. I’ve been working for 13 years, all in the community at various locations, not used in the process. It’s a bit like Paul Hollywood’s Bake Off. Each week the theme changes, the rules and the task, and you never know what you’re in for. I am the ‘eh’ before the task. We have 200 residents each week and we have to make sure we have the right equipment and we have to make sure we don’t bring anything home with us. I have been working with the elderly every week, but I have also been working with the young, and the young have been able to get the help they need. The elderly have been able to get the help they need.

Remote services

Remote services were a big part of the coronavirus pandemic. We had to do it all remotely, and it was a big challenge. It was a big task that we had to do, but we did it. It was a big task that we had to do, but we did it.

Neighbours, organisational demands

I was meeting with my neighbours and they were all concerned about the situation. We were all in the same boat and we were all worried about the same thing. They were all worried about the same thing. We were all worried about the same thing. We were all worried about the same thing. We were all worried about the same thing. We were all worried about the same thing.

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A SOCIALIST RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Feature

Socialist

8

9

19-25 March 2020

A WORKERS’ CHARTER

National Health Service

Pay and benefits

No action to be taken for non-payment of utilities and broadband.

No school to be expected to remain open unless they have staffing levels and sufficient cleaning, testing and hand-washing provision to isolate or is unable to work, should receive full pay and not be forced to take annual leave.

Scraps the sanctions regime. Suspend the requirement for claimants to attend mandatory interviews and carry on job search. Claimants should not be penalised for not being able to leave their homes and not being able to undertake labour-market activities because of access to internet, transport, retail, and so on.

Trade union to establish an ethics and safety committee in every workplace to join agreed actions required to guarantee safety.

For the Trade Union Congress and the unions, the biggest voluntary national organisation with over one million members across the country, to prepare a localised central coordinated action plan to ensure a national health and safety measures not be taken.

No worker to pay the price for controlling the spread of the virus. Any worker who has self-

Emergency increase in funding for the NHS and social care

Emergency to fund money to protect workers, patients, and staff and other public facilities necessary for care, quarantine, and supplies. No compensation to the private fat cats for profits.

Council to coordinate a local response. Scraps existing cuts, budgets, and freezes. No need to cut healthcare, welfare, and all staff: patients, clients, residents

Emergency to fund money to protect workers, patients, and staff and other public facilities necessary for care, quarantine, and supplies. No compensation to the private fat cats for profits.

Trade union to establish an ethics and safety committee in every workplace to join agreed actions required to guarantee safety.

No worker to pay the price for controlling the spread of the virus. Any worker who has self-organised and made the workplace safe will receive full pay and not be forced to take annual leave.

Health and safety at work to be ensured in all workplaces, including restaurants, bars, clubs, and hotel rooms.

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Action needed to protect shop workers and access to essential goods

Workers at Lewisham coronavirus ‘hospital’ walk out after not being paid

Clearing, portering and catering staff at Lewisham Hospital, south London - where coronavirus patients have been treated - have walked out after being promised pay after they were voluntarily asked to take part. The cleaners said they have been told they are not being paid because they haven’t had their shifts ‘handled correctly’.

There are reports that ‘infected patients are now being evacuated’ from the hospital to other sites across London, but the cleaners have dosed tools because they haven't been paid. Furious workers stormed off the job during the evening shift, the cleaners said. They plan to take the cleaning contract back.

The cleaners, who speak to Socialist, explained: ‘There are no redundancies, lay-offs with loss of pay or imposed changes in working conditions due to supply issues or any lack of personal protective equipment. Staff must not put the pay for the cleaners related to the coronavirus crisis above the effective delivery and sale of essential goods.

Unpaid and other small workers’ unions should immediately convene democratic meetings of union reps from stores and distribution centres, alongside representatives of local trade unions. The unions should demand a say in how the sale and distribution of goods is managed, and how people are involved to make the situation worse.

Support the working-class press in 2020

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JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

The socialist press with a 2020

STOP PRESS

Postal workers deliver massive strike vote and offer to become additional ‘emergency service’

Communication Workers Union (CWU) members in Royal Mail beat the anti-union line by the third time in less than three years, delivering a massive 94.5% yes vote for strike action, announced on 17 March. In light of the coronavirus crisis however the CWU said: ‘We will not be called to strike action at this point. Subject to Royal Mail’s statement that 70% of our members, we want postal workers to become an additional emergency service in the UK. Those services are embedded in every community in the UK. It’s time to utilise the company’s unrivalled infrastructure and daily reach. With this in mind we have called for Royal Mail Group to step back from their attacks in the workplace, imposing unarguable change and destroying the very morale now needed, and work with the union to enact our proposals.

Postal workers stand ready but Royal Mail Group must play their part by agreeing our proposal and ensuring any new standards of safety and support to its employees.’

See socialistparty.org.uk for updates

The dispute is currently being brought back to a local level in a few areas where workers have voted. Where we do not get the result that we want, we can call for a ballot for strike action.

London tube workers ballot for strike action

Transport workers’ union RMT is currently balloting 10,000 tube workers across London Underground and London Overground for strike action if they are not offered a pay rise. Workers fear a short strike. This is after no strike action was agreed last year. RMT says it will announce a ballot for a pay rise on 2 March. See socialistparty.org.uk for updates

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Local government workers take strike action

Bin workers in Bexley, south London - where coronavirus cases are forcing people to stay at home - have voted for strike action over low wages.

The Local Government Workers’ Association (LGW) strike ballot, taken last week, was announced today. LGW members employed at Bexley Waste Services Ltd are working for just £8.50 an hour, with no economic incentive for staff to ensure the money goes to the contract. The pay gap between staff and the owner is ¿5.50.

The workers are already balloting to strike over low wages and a lack of hand sanitiser.

If the council decides to close the sites, will we be paid?

Bin workers in Bexley, south London have had enough, they say. With hand sanitiser, yet having to collect gardening waste, medical waste, food waste as well as the public’s normal bin waste, bin workers should immediately consider striking.

Unpaid leave or dismissed? I sent a number of questions to them. I’m still waiting for a response.

In March 2019, trade union activists of homestead Bexley waste services Ltd had a meeting with the council. The union told the council that workers could not work for the low pay they are currently receiving. The union said the cleaners had no economic incentive for them to work as they are not even being paid.

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from the University and College Union of Commons. Our meeting after - how budget was being read out in the House

London Socialist Party protested outside on pages 2-3. wellbeing of the people. at least 60-70% of the population to be-

sation guidelines on tracing, testing and decided to break World Health Organi-

ded to put vacci-

for all affected workers and nationalisa-

tory.-shift the balance away commitment to do anything. Issues

each table solemnly writing down campaign both presenting their

Socialist Students speaking tour - students and workers unite to fightback

SWANSEA

Waltham Forest Socialist Party campaigning for real control and council budget.

Tory student plot defeated at Cardiff uni

Stop gentrification of Lea Bridge Labour council try to stop meeting in our own area

Mansfield: It's always us

Mansfield Socialist Party

The Socialist Party is fighting for a place in the interest of the working class in Waltham Forest - run by the professional, housebuilders and landlords.

We attended a meeting of over 100 people organised by community campaigns and residents in one of the most deprived parts of the borough.

Some communities recognise even the smallest gestures for the future of the council, namely Councillor Simon Miller. There was security on the door.

Instead of the council and the campaign both presenting their positions, and the meeting being al-

What a difference a few days make. Last week, students and workers from your university and - and other university staff are fighting to
depend end prevention working conditions for workers. The CUSU have been working with the uni-

Students have been supporting the picket lines and challenging other students to support the strikers. On the far day, student demos were not huge for each of the pictures. A worker strike had been called for food, coffee and other support dur-

The meetings have featured wide-

Socialist Students speaking tour - students and workers unite to fightback

You can subscribe to get workers fighting back, including in"Width and internationally. Those taking strike action to demand a better future are

Swansea socialist students, and full pay for workers off sick and full payment for workers off sick

Help us fund the Socialist

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The current strike ballot has expired. This strike was initiated, hugging what to do in

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Socialist Students supporting the UCU strike

The Socialist reaches as many work-

Socialist Party national representative

The first week of the Socialist Students national strike saw students and workers from your uni-

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The campaign is challenging a seri-

Students and workers have worked through govern-

The meetings have featured wide-

Swansea Trade Union Council students. We discussed building stu-

Swansea Trade Union Council sponsored Socialist Students’ meet-

Pensions: Students and workers in your university are challenging the university to do more to support students and workers who have been left behind by this pandemic. This is a moment to stand together, shift the balance of power and increase the Yueqian to others. Socialists have been standing by students and workers for the last few weeks, arguing that this is a moment to come together and fight back.

We have had one of the most difficult campaigns for a long time. We have been running campaigns for many years, but never have we had to deal with the kind of issues we are now facing. This is a very difficult time for us all, but we will continue to fight for a better future for all workers.

The Socialist Party is fighting for a place in the interest of the working class in Waltham Forest - run by the professional, housebuilders and landlords. We attended a meeting of over 100 people organised by community campaigns and residents in one of the most deprived parts of the borough.

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Socialist Party national representative

The first week of the Socialist Students national strike saw students and workers from your uni-

Socialists ever received from the Socialist Party | £ received | £ target |

The campaign is challenging a seri-

Students and workers have worked through govern-

The meetings have featured wide-

Swansea Trade Union Council students. We discussed building stu-

Swansea Trade Union Council sponsored Socialist Students’ meet-

Pensions: Students and workers in your university are challenging the university to do more to support students and workers who have been left behind by this pandemic. This is a moment to stand together, shift the balance of power and increase the Yueqian to others. Socialists have been standing by students and workers for the last few weeks, arguing that this is a moment to come together and fight back.

We have had one of the most difficult campaigns for a long time. We have been running campaigns for many years, but never have we had to deal with the kind of issues we are now facing. This is a very difficult time for us all, but we will continue to fight for a better future for all workers.

The Socialist Party is fighting for a place in the interest of the working class in Waltham Forest - run by the professional, housebuilders and landlords. We attended a meeting of over 100 people organised by community campaigns and residents in one of the most deprived parts of the borough.

Some communities recognise even the smallest gestures for the future of the council, namely Councillor Simon Miller. There was security on the door.

Instead of the council and the campaign both presenting their positions, and the meeting being al-

What a difference a few days make. Last week, students and workers from your university and - and other university staff are fighting to
depend end prevention working conditions for workers. The CUSU have been working with the uni-

Students have been supporting the picket lines and challenging other students to support the strikers. On the far day, student demos were not huge for each of the pictures. A worker strike had been called for food, coffee and other support dur-

Swansea socialist students, and full pay for workers off sick and full payment for workers off sick

Help us fund the Socialist

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<tr>
<th>Socialists ever received</th>
<th>£ target</th>
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South Africa: 60 years marking the Sharpeville Massacre

The beginnings of revolutionary working-class struggle against a brutal capitalist regime

Andy Bentley
Socialist Party national committee

On 21 March 1960, a peaceful protest took place in the black township of Sharpeville, South Africa, against hated ‘pass laws’. In response, police shot dead 69 protesters and wounded 188 others. 60 years later the Sharpeville Massacre is remembered across the world.

The Sharpeville Massacre took place in South Africa’s last system that denied even basic democratic rights and freedoms to those considered as “non-white” under an apartheid (racial segregation and discrimination) system.

White people, who made up just 15% of South Africa’s population, stood at the top of society with their power and wealth, and owned 92% of the land.

An exclusively white electorate was represented by the National Party (NP) which was re-elected in 1948 and stayed in power until 1994. The NP passed laws to further entrench long-standing practices of segregation and racial oppression.

Black South Africans (86% of the population) were relegated to the very bottom. Apartheid laws restricted almost every aspect of their lives. The hated pass laws meant that the black population had to have their identity pass at all times. This gave the government strict control over the movement of black South Africans, restricting where they could work and live.

Fighting back

Many peaceful protests took place against the apartheid laws, including the pass laws. In March 1960, the Pan African Congress (PAC), a black-nationalist rival organisation that had split from the non-racial African National Congress (ANC) organised a peaceful protest in the black township of Sharpeville.

The aim was to march to the police station without their passes and ask to be arrested. As they chanted freedom songs and shouted “down with the passes” the police opened fire on the unarmed protesters without warning.

It was estimated that 700 bullets were fired with most protesters shot in the back. This slaughter was not accidental. Extra police had already been brought in, along with armoured vehicles and military jets flying overhead.

The use of brutal force demonstrated the potential military power of the apartheid capitalist regime. But at the same time it revealed the regime’s fear of a revolutionary uprising of the black South African working class.

Just days later, on 30 March, approximately 30,000 protesters marched in Cape Town to protest the shootings. South Africa’s government became increasingly isolated internationally, but refused to abandon its policies of apartheid and racial discrimination.

A state of emergency was declared with around 2,000 people detained. On 8 April, both the ANC and PAC were banned and it became illegal to be a member of these organisations.

ANC leader Nelson Mandela, and others, concluded that an armed struggle (both the PAC and ANC formed military wings) was necessary to defeat apartheid.

Forerunners of the Committee for Workers’ International (CWI - the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated) warned that an underground military struggle, although heroic, would not bring down a brutal capitalist apartheid government armed to the teeth.

In fact, it was the mass revolutionary uprising of black youth in the 1980s (preceded by the bloody Soweto school student uprising in 1976), and widespread industrial strike struggles - with the demand for socialism on their banners - that ultimately caused the fall of apartheid in the early 1990s, and the release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison.

In reality, the white-dominated apartheid state was forced to carry out “reforms from above” to prevent “revolution from below”.

But the lack of an organised mass revolutionary socialist party based in the working class, allowed capitalism to continue, despite the fall of apartheid and the ANC taking power.

Instead, a Tripartite Alliance was formed in 1990 by the leaders of the ANC, South African Communist Party and the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). The Alliance effectively held back the revolution and allowed capitalism to survive, post-apartheid.

The ANC had adopted the Freedom Charter in the 1950s, under pressure from the working class for a revolutionary change in society. The charter included nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy.

In the 1980s, the two million-strong Cosatu adopted the Freedom Charter under the banner of “Socialism means Freedom” and led a series of general strikes, which were a key factor in the collapse of apartheid.

However, when in power the ANC leaders, lacking a socialist alternative, became enthusiastically pro-capitalist. This was revealed through an aggressive programme of mass privatisations of public services such as electricity and water.

In the ANC’s first five years of power, 500,000 jobs disappeared in construction, engineering, textiles, mining and the public sector.

The radical features of the Freedom Charter, like nationalisation, were forgotten. Inevitably this led to a drastic fall in membership and rank-and-file activity, and an influx of careerists.

Many former ANC militants simply enriched themselves, like Cyril Ramaphosa, the current president of South Africa. This former miners’ union leader became a multimillionaire and owned the Marikana mine site (see below).

Sharpeville to Marikana

Under apartheid the police and armed forces were used to intimidate and gun down workers and youth taking protest action, as seen in Sharpeville and Soweto. Unfortunately for the black working class, the same methods were adopted by the ANC government, with its black capitalist elite in control.

In 2012, between 10 August and 29 September, 47 striking platinum miners were gunned down in Marikana, with another 78 injured. Like Sharpeville, most were shot in the back as they were running away.

Those black workers slaughtered at Sharpeville, Marikana, and many others in between, will always be remembered. The same brutal methods used under apartheid and the ANC regime to slaughter, if necessary, workers fighting for a decent future demonstrate in action the complete capitulation of the ANC leadership to capitalism.

Where next?

Capitalist ‘experts’ across the globe differ on how to solve the current world economic crisis but are in total agreement that capitalism is the god of profit and must remain at any cost.

Capitalism exists to make the privileged few even wealthier at the expense of the blood, sweat and tears of working-class people.

The task of abolishing capitalism and building a democratic socialist future can only be carried out by the mass of the working class, organised for struggle and armed with a socialist programme.

This is what the Marxist Worker’s Party - CWI in South Africa - is committed to building. Only this could guarantee no more Sharpevilles or Marikanas.

Further reading:
See also: ‘South Africa: Marikana massacre ignites the mass movement’ Issue 162 (2012)
Both articles by Weizmann
Available online at socialismtoday.org
French local elections

CWI candidate elected

On 15 March, Leïla Messaoudi of Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR, the Socialist Party's sister organisation in France) was elected to the local council of Petit-Quevilly in the city of Rouen, where she has lived for 14 years and worked for 23 years. Leïla was elected with 338 votes (8.4% of the votes cast, on a low 32% turnout).

Controversially, the first round of local elections was held on the Sunday immediately following president Macron and the French government’s decree severely restricting the movements of the public, and closures of shops, businesses and public amenities. Unsurprisingly, the overall turnout was historically low but this did not stop Macron’s party being hammered in the polls. The second round scheduled for 22 March has been postponed until 21 June.

The electoral list ‘Décidons (Let’s decide) Petit-Quevilly’ supported by France Insoumise (“France unbowed” - the party led by former left presidential candidate and current deputy in the National Assembly Jean-Luc Mélenchon) gathered 35 people and was created thanks to a militant collective has been helping build for three years, and has been pushing similar policies for 30 years.

Closure of public services like some public hospital services, abandoned and substandard social housing, destruction of green space for the profits of capitalist multinationals in the building industry... all these have had a great impact on the daily lives of the workers.

The health scandal - and the scandalous policies of the government and local elected officials after the fire at the Lubrizol chemical plant in Rouen last September - was one of the topics of the campaign.

Nationalisation under the control of the population and workers in dangerous factories was one of the demands of the list.

The list carried out a dynamic door-to-door campaign, participat ed in the latest day of strikes against the government’s pensions attacks, and did a whole weekend of protests and actions on 7 and 8 March.

In the run-up to local elections in 2020, the workers and the population had no other choice than a PS vote against the far-right National Front (FN). This time, thanks to our presence, the FN remained second but did not campaign and lost 10%, going from six to four seats.

This allowed the PS-Communist Party-Green list to be elected with a majority in the first round.

But now, a militant collective has been born in the city, ready to organise local struggles for the right to decent housing, for the cleaning-up of polluted areas, and for the reinstatement of public services that have been closed down or privatised in recent years.

Around ‘Décidons Petit-Quevilly’, local resistance and solidarity are being organised in the face of all austerity policies, whether they come from Macron, or the PS major ity. It also gives impetus to all those who understand the need for a mass political force against the capitalists, against the parties that serve them and against Macron.

Shrunken state from Gauche Révolutionnaire (CWI, France)

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TV and book: Noughts and Crosses

Ian Pattison gives the BBC TV series the thumbs down but recommends the original book

Noughts and Crosses is a world turned upside down. Hundreds of years ago Aprica (Africa) invaded Albion (Britain and Ireland).

Today in Albion, a black minority elite rules over the majority white population. They employ segregation, discrimination, police brutality and poverty. The ‘noughts’ are white people and the ‘crosses’ black.

Reviews in the Daily Mail and Sun said the show’s anti-racist mes sage is out of date and exaggerated. They’re wrong. It’s no surprise these right-wing establishment mouth-pieces don’t understand how to use larger-than-life alternative history to make a political point.

In reality, black people in Britain are twice as likely to be in poverty than white people. And 40 times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police.

In the TV series, one white character has been stopped by the police 300 times.

In the real world, the ruling class and the working class are made up of different races. The former uses racism and other tools to keep the latter divided. Some of those nuances exist in Noughts and Crosses.

For example, a white dock worker asks for time off for a colleague from his white boss. He appeals for solidarity based on the colour of their skin, “you’re one of us.” “One of us?”, the boss says, “which one of us has two cars, which one of us has a conservatory, I’m a busi nessman.” So there are rich whites in Albion.

But no poor black people. Reversed, that’s not how society is set up.

Comparison

Noughts and Crosses was originally a book. I read it when I was younger.

There are a few ways the plot benefits from a TV adaptation. It is interesting to see London dominated by African architecture and clothes. The white characters that are deferential to the ruling class wear more African clothes.

But on TV, the magic and politics of the novel is lost.

In the book, initially you don’t know what the characters look like. Only after a rant from a racist character, does the premise become clear. That device is missing in the adaptation.

The teenage protagonists are replaced with young adults. They’re losers from different races, their relationship is banned.

The consequence? A naïve couple who grow up to despise the racism in society are replaced by stupid adults, willfully ignorant of the prejudices around them.

The book plays a positive role. It makes you think society can change, that’s there’s a political solution to ending racism. But the TV incarnation replaces that with a random hope for love. The political conclusion is dropped.

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CORONAVIRUS
A WORKERS’ CHARTER

• Fight for full funding for our NHS and public services
• No loss of pay or income for affected workers
• Make the fat cat bosses pay
• See full charter pages 8-9