WHERE’S OUR PPE?

WHERE’S OUR TESTING?

WHERE’S OUR MONEY?

SAFETY
- PPE for all frontline workers
- Mass testing for all
- Workers’ control of workplace safety

INCOME
- 100% wages and increased benefits
- 10% pay rises for all NHS and frontline workers + hazard pay
- Minimum wage of £12 an hour

ACTION
- Step up workplace organisation - build fighting trade unions
- Fight for an independent political voice for working-class people

SOCIALISM
- Make the rich pay for the crisis, not workers
- End the profit system
- Socialist planning, not capitalist chaos

Health workers don’t want medals, and care workers don’t want badges.

We want the equipment we need to be safe while we do our jobs. And we want a decent pay rise that means worrying about paying the bills isn’t distracting us from worrying about patients.

That’s why millions of health workers were enraged when Tory health secretary Matt Hancock said: “Now is not the time to discuss a pay rise for nurses.”

Health workers have had a decade of real-terms pay cuts, leaving many of us with pay worth 20% less than it was in 2010. That meant thousands of nurses and other health professionals left the NHS, leaving us too short-staffed to run the NHS properly, even before the coronavirus crisis hit.

Many of my colleagues are saying that they will play their part while the emergency lasts, but that they’re leaving afterwards. That would be a catastrophe for everyone who relies on the service. It must be made clear that the sacrifice of these workers is valued. There should be an immediate 10% pay rise, plus hazard pay, and an agreement to quickly recover all pay lost since 2010.

The last straw for many has been the callous way that politicians have treated our safety. Initially, we were told not to wear any personal protective equipment (PPE). After health worker fatalities and rising anger, the guidelines were changed. But they’re still driven by supply failings, not safety, and in most areas the PPE is inadequate.

This, together with the pitifully small number of people who have been tested in the UK, means many health workers have nothing between them and the developing pandemic. It feels like we’re being sent over the top without any ammo.

Despite what Welsh first minister Mark Drakeford says, PPE failures were a key factor in why there are so many infections around Newport. 50% of accident and emergency workers in the Royal Gwent Hospital have the virus, according to an A&E consultant there.

Nurses and doctors have been hooked up to ventilators in the unit I work in. Some are among the 100 health workers to have died as a result of the disease. We need an urgent trade union-led investigation of the health worker deaths in the UK to see what PPE they were wearing, whether they were trained properly in its use, and what the conditions were like on their wards. Because fatigue really can kill in this situation.

There has been no serious effort to guarantee the supply of the PPE we need by the UK government or the devolved governments. There shouldn’t be a debate in the press at all about whether there’s enough PPE or not: politicians are lying when they say there’s enough to go around. It’s not the fault of nurses. They are having to ransack hardware stores, and appeal on social media for supplies.

At the hospital I work in, we keep running out of things as basic and essential as medium gloves, swabs for Covid-19 tests and facemasks, including in the ICU. There is outrage that instead of finding a solution to the shortages, the response has been to reuse equipment or downgrade the safety guidelines.

The health unions should take control of determining what health workers need to work safely. They should take over the supply and distribution of PPE too. We need a new army of union reps to come forward to coordinate that, and make sure we’re kept as safe as possible.

The government should immediately take over companies capable of producing PPE and re-purpose production to produce the equipment we need.

Workers who know the job need to run things directly too.

So that there are no more mistakes - like the ventilators that have been manufactured and are useless because patients can’t be weaned off their support - and so that all the shortages can be identified.

It’s not just ventilators we need. Dialysis machines, supportive pillows for prone patients, and liquid nutrition, for example, are all in short supply too. The industries should be run under democratic workers’ control, with health workers on the boards involved in designing the kit, and ensuring it is correctly distributed.

Beth Webster
ICU nurse at University Hospital Wales, Cardiff
London bus drivers’ action over safety stops front door boarding

26 transport workers have died from Covid-19 in London, the majority of them bus drivers. Now London bus drivers have forced Transport for London (TfL) and bus companies to implement safety measures to protect them at work. Bus driver and Socialist Party member Moe spoke to the Socialist about what has been won and what needs to happen next.

What has been done?

We have won an important safety measure, forcing bus companies and TfL to close the front doors of every bus and implement free travel, meaning passengers are kept at a safe distance from drivers. This is a victory and now other drivers outside of London are demanding the same.

How did you achieve this victory and why is it so important?

At first TfL resisted because it didn’t want to lose revenue. But we got our argument across and forced TfL and management to concede. As we have done every step of the way. When lockdown was first enforced drivers started sealing doors, sealing holes in cab doors and stopping passengers sitting directly behind drivers. TfL and managers then endorsed these measures. But it should not have taken so long for them to listen to us. 26 people have died, and this could have been avoided. And drivers should not pay the price for the loss revenue further down the line.

What else needs to be done?

What we have achieved is not enough. There are 2,000 London buses that only have one door - the front - and we say these routes should be suspended unless two-door buses can replace them. The other concern we have is that more people are now boarding buses because they are free. Combined with construction sites reopening after Easter, this means there is concern over passenger numbers. We are happy to transport key construction workers, but non-essential construction sites should be shut down with no loss of pay to protect those workers and lower bus passenger numbers.

Another measure that TfL have brought in is special el TIL to close the front doors of buses that are used on hospital routes. But they have been fitted on only 100 buses, while there are 9,000 in London in total! They should be fitted on every bus, and permanently, as they help reduce air pollution.

We are also still calling for more PPE, especially for drivers who have to travel as passengers on buses to get to work or change buses. And we also want lower working hours with no loss of pay. Drivers are mostly working long shifts, 10-12 hours, meaning they are more likely to be exposed to the virus and are fatigued - an issue we were campaigning on before the crisis.

Drivers are still scared to death during their shifts so we will keep fighting.

- Moe

Excellent support for Socialist Party special finance appeal

Chris Newby
The Socialist sales organiser

We have had a fantastic response to our special appeal to help finance the publication of the Socialist and promote the ideas of the Socialist Party in this corona crisis.

Three weeks into the current fighting fund campaign and we have raised a tremendous £14,493 - 58% of the target. Over £12,400 of this is for the special appeal.

Donations small and large have been flooding into our offices. Ranging from the £2 from new member Jonas Dos Santos Junior in South East London who writes, “Thanks for allowing me to be part of the Socialist Party”, the £5 donated by new member and college student Sofia Panthoja in Waltham Forest, to the £500 from Heather Rawling in Leicester.

No matter the size of the donation, these are all crucial to making sure we can continue to get our socialist message out to as many people as possible.

- Karl Marx

Socialist Party Fighting Fund

Dave and Judy Griffiths from Coventry both donated £50. £100 was also donated by the Coventry Communication Workers Union youth committee.

The following quote from Becky Shah in Liverpool, a new Socialist Party member, shows the level of sacrifice that our members and supporters are prepared to make. Donating £10 Becky says: “Sorry it’s such a small amount. Wish it was more. Am on a limited income, survive on benefits.”

Here are some other quotes from members and supporters who have donated to this appeal:

“Keep up the good work guys. We need a voice to question decisions that are being made,” Mr J G Jones Port Talbot donated £20

Miss S K Sethi donating £3: “Long live the NHS”

Tom Driver Lancashire donating £10: “Wish it could be more.”

It is clear that our online meetings are also having a good effect in helping to raise money for the appeal. M Oldziejewska from Chingford who donated £10 writes: “Thank you for organising a brilliant meeting tonight!”

Another supporter donated £30 after attending our meeting in North London.

While the vast majority of the fighting fund has come in from donations to our special appeal, our members and supporters have also looked for every opportunity to help raise fighting fund.

Alex Brown in Sheffield raised £30.06 selling t-shirts. Leeds members raised £190 selling badges, and in London we raised £90 from an online bric-a-brac sale.

This is a fantastic start, but it’s vital that we all continue our efforts to smash through the fighting fund target. Make sure you get in your donation and ask people that you know to donate.
PPE shortages: “I feel so bloody angry”

The guidelines we follow on use of PPE have changed dramatically during this pandemic. At first we were told we must wear full PPE for every patient suspected of having Covid 19. Since then the guidelines have changed repeatedly. Clearly, this has not been because they are ‘listening to the science’. It is being driven by budgets and the lack of stock.

When the Tories realised how many people would be hospitalised the ‘science’ changed. So it’s now OK to wear flimsy aprons when treating patients with the most infectious virus we have ever experienced!

We have pulled out everything we have to get through the weekend.

I can’t relieve staff attending long theatre cases because they need full PPE, and there’s not enough guards for more than one radiographer. So one of my colleagues worked right through, without food or water, only getting out at nearly 8pm. Also, intensive care had to borrow our only specialist mask because they had run out.

Local people don’t just bring clinical, but also personal clothes. They make us visors, hats and masks. But the news that the gowns are not coming after all is devastating. It’s not safe for staff or our patients, and clinicians are making some very tough decisions on treatment.

The lack of gowns at Southampton has become critical. It means that the theatre cases are taken at a rate that is nowhere near robust. We are now being asked to work in vulnerable environments, without protective clothes, and with a reduced number of staff.

Years of austerity cuts mean NHS labs rely on a few non-domestic suppliers, such as giant corporation Roche. ‘Efficient’ in normal times, but these are not normal times! Most universities can make the chemicals required. Julian Peto, a respected epidemiologist, estimates there are enough machines in the UK for ten million daily tests – everybody with care home workers, Covid carriers without symptoms isolate, contact trace to exit lockdown until vacines are widely available!

Jon Dale, owner of the Sunday Times. The ‘all change’ on: “Humanity needs some government investment. There are tens of thousands of people (compared to Germany’s 750,000) going without food, housing, safety, etc, and swelling the bank accounts of big business.

The government’s early complacency left Capitalist press attacks Tory incompetence us condemned. The government’s early complacency left us condemned. The government’s early complacency left us condemned. The government’s early complacency left us condemned. The government’s early complacency left us condemned.

The Tory government’s failure to test at the scale needed causes many severe ill-nesses and deaths.

Testing everybody in a northern Italian village of 3,000 people saw those with Covid 19. Since then the guidelines have changed repeatedly. Clearly, this has not been because they are ‘listening to the science’. It is being driven by budgets and the lack of stock.

When China’s first cases were identifi-ed in late December, pandemic con-tainment plans were. They should have rolled into action. They did not.

Not until the end of March did the government announce it would recruit laboratories from universi-ties and independent companies to test indi-viduals.

A 5,000-word article in the Sunday Times reveals Boris Johnson’s Government’s plans for testing needed to save lives.

An NHS health professional says: “I feel so bloody angry that my colleagues are being thrown under the bus! Many of us will never get over the cruelty of this disease, the cruelty of a system that puts getting business up and running ahead of saving lives.”

The Institute of Biomedical Science, representing 17,000 NHS laboratory workers, says the problem is not insufficient lab staff, but swabs, plastic tubes and chemicals. There is a logistical shortage. The government’s early complacency left them at the back of the queue.

In other words, a plan to take the major-ity of people off the NHS and to have trade union rates of pay, zero-hour contracts.

Sarah Sachs-Eldridge Socialist Party national organiser

National plan for testing needed

As capitalism dominates the globe, the potential power to stop the cuts and the profits of a few. We also oppose the trade union rates of pay, zero-hour contracts.

We demand full pay and conditions for NHS and care workers urgently need weekly testing. Those with mild symptoms and deaths.

The government announce it would recruit laboratories from universi-ties and independent companies to test indi-viduals directly from manufacturers rather than clinical test companies.

A national plan is needed, drawn up by NHS, unions and local and national trade unions to fight for a workers’ party that is indepen-dent from all other parties.

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60 boroughs have all attached conditions to the building of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.

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Covid-19 patient speaks out: fantastic support from under-resourced health workers

Steve Nally, a supporter on ward 40, said: "It’s been difficult - they’ve been on strike before but it’s been at a critical time in the pandemic. They’re under-resourced and they’re had to deal with everything. They don’t have the resources to look after everyone."

And Boris Johnson was on the same hospital as us, you know. He’s been in and out of the hospital for the last two weeks. He was transferred down for treatment and now he’s back in the hospital again.

What’s the care been like afterwards? OK, yes, there are gaps. Until you’re discharged. And it really depends on the ward. There are some wards that are doing a fantastic job. I’ve been in one that’s giving you gloves and masks and that’s what you need to do next.

And that’s your discharge letter and a discharge letter, and you receive a day or two that they’re not giving. What’s going on? I’ve been in two that are doing a fantastic job. The care’s been excellent.

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But it’s been a mixture of care. Some people have been great. Some people haven’t been as great. Some people have been in a much better condition.

但这是一对夫妇的名字，因为Boris Johnson生病了之后，他们没有被允许在医院中探视。他们很痛苦。国家卫生服务部门仍然不太可靠。他们也没有得到必要的支持。

Care homes - coronavirus scandal: blood on their hands

There is growing anger at the government’s handling of the coronavirus crisis in care homes. A new report by the Care Unions shows that care homes have been abandoned - support for people living in care homes and elderly and frail who are under Covid-19 has left them to be hospitalised. The government’s handling of the crisis is not in the public interest.

What is possible is PPE for the staff, testing for everyone, and possibly low-cost facilities for staff to prevent them from being separated from their families. Possible - but they have to pay for it. The government doesn’t have the funds to do this. The government doesn’t have the funds to do this. They are in desperate need.

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Trade union activists from across the south of England discuss the battle for safety on the frontline!

**RMT transport union: Lift the suspension of Steve Hedley**

The following statement of Red Line: the labour committee of Socialist Party members in the RMT transport union: 

"at the AGM on 5 April of the RMT National Executive Committee, members spoke in a personal capacity.

RMT national executive committee member Maggie, an NHS radiographer, spoke about the cuts and privatisation carried out by successive governments directly to the years of austerity, and the misery it has caused to millions of working-class families.

RMT transport union: National Executive Committee member Declan, a bus driver in the RMT, told the meeting and spoke about the employer, Greenwich Leisure Limited. Back off! There is no place for private companies to make cuts and privatisations. DWP: Action on workers’ safety, and protection of pay and conditions needed

"We are the RMT transport union. We have supported the work of the RMT on Facebook, AGV Steve Hedley has been suspended for a Socialist Party meeting on 18 April. As a member of the RMT National Executive Committee, members spoke in a personal capacity.

He also spoke of the dozens of transport workers who have died already during the Covid crisis. Every capitulation to this, and any Warsaw school now would be a major risk to public health. Yes, fire children should be protected at home, such as those with caring responsibilities, should get paid sick leave, and staff to process cases. If staff feel unsafe after re-opening, they must stand the health risks better than unvaccinated students. The suspension of Steve isn’t personal to the Tories. It is a fundamental right of our union at a senior level, in the public’s interest, that we need to hold our union leaders accountable.

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The coronavirus pandemic is a once in a generation crisis with widespread consequences - including a global economic impact. How badly will the economy be affected? The forecast gloom has cast a shadow over economic activity, and was not helped by the economic shockwaves resulting from the outbreak of the disease.

In the following interview, Judy Beishon of the Socialist Party executive committee explains how the coronavirus pandemic is impacting on the capitalist global economy, the ruling classes' responses, and the prospects for working class struggle in a post-pandemic world. (The original interview can be heard on the Socialist podcast of 10 April 2020.)

The economic consequences of the virus will be deep and long-lasting because the growth shock was brought about by the coronavirus pandemic itself and, moreover, a recession was on its way in any case.

The economic consequences are part of a generalised slump because the growth shock was brought about by the coronavirus pandemic itself and, moreover, a recession was on its way in any case.

In Britain, new claims for Universal Credit have risen to around 20%.

Along with that, there’s a crash in productivity growth - why it’s generally low.

Workers’ conditions and well-being are worsening. Companies are using the pandemic as an excuse to do what they always do - break workers’ rights and strike deals with the government to have their wage cuts and share dividends.

But governments will at some point turn back to trying to balance the books at the expense of ordinary people. In this they will meet fierce resistance.

The payments being made directly to workers are one of the big differences this time around. The Socialists believe the payments to workers are important, but they warn other banks not to pay share dividends and bonuses, reflecting in its concern above the pretence of 'asset purchases using_quantitative easing'.
I'm so bloody angry. So the Tories have closed off Easter weekend because of lack of de-
hadn't been enough testing over the years. Labour's woeful response - now is not the time for ruptured journeys.

The lack of PPE is akin to sending soldiers to war. Privatised US water companies can shut off your water if you can't pay your bills. The way in which class conflict reigns - coal mining.

The role of the Socialist during the coronavirus crisis

Coronavirus: Students’ charter

Glasgow

Worthing

The UK government has had a track record of supporting private companies - a political aspect of this which has been very well rehearsed. The modern day.

The lesson is clear. Even if the UK government's economic strategy fails, the Socialist Party will continue to fight for the working class.

Why I joined the Socialist Party

Brasil Socialist Party

I joined the Socialist Party two months ago. I've been interested in socialism and political party for a number of years.

I was a killer, but kept silent because it was dealt with by the police. The modern day.

The lesson is clear. Even if the UK government's economic strategy fails, the Socialist Party will continue to fight for the working class.

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International Workers’ Memorial Day - 28 April

THE HISTORY OF STRUGGLE TO MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFE

Bill Mullins
South East London Socialist Party

Every year more people are killed at work than in wars. Every year these workers are commemorated on 28 April, International Workers’ Memorial Day. The latest example is at the Passport Office, where the employer has demanded that workers come into work despite the ongoing threat of the virus.

The scandal of this crisis has been revealed time and time again by the criminal indifference shown by the employers to the safety of their workers in the place of work. Everybody is now aware that the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), has directly led to the deaths of frontline workers in the health service and social care, and on public transport, such as bus drivers and tube workers.

Those workers who might have come in contact with the people they serve - such as their patients, residents and customers who could be suffering from the disease - are themselves now contracting it, and in some cases dying as a result.

Tory health secretary Matt Hancock blundered into another calamity when he blurted out the accusation that it is the fault of the health workers for wasting PPE.

The exploiters want to eliminate obstacles to their ability to get that return. That not only means attempts to drive down wages, therefore keeping more of the value of the workers’ labour, but also removing any ‘unnecessary’ expense in the physical environment of the workplace, or anything that slows down the work processes.

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The historical struggle to ensure that the workplace is a safe environment is in general hidden from the history books.

This is especially true of things that obstruct that process such as decent sanitary conditions, extra guards on machines that stop workers injuring themselves, and so on.

The history of working-class struggle is littered with examples of the attempts by organised workers to make their place of work safe and secure. From their point of view, they are forced to enter them fundamentally to earn a living.

But from the bosses’ point of view, however, the role of the worker, once inside the workplace, is, as Marx expresses it, “to put their labour power at the disposal of the employer. Nothing, from the point of view of the capitalist owners, must get in the way of their ability to exploit the labour power which they have purchased to maximise their profits.

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The same century was littered with examples of workers’ leaders springing up. The issue of health and safety in the workplace is not something that only a few are interested in, it is now the concern of many thousands and tens of thousands who are demanding not to go back to work unless it’s safe. We demand the right to full protection from the effects of this crisis now and in the future.

See the Socialist Party’s Workers’ Charter for our full programme on how to protect workers during the pandemic. 

Get all the latest union news... with the NSSN bulletin: shopstewards.net

Workers fighting for safety during Covid-19 public meeting via Zoom - Sunday 26 April, 3-5pm

The NSSN is hosting a public Zoom meeting to share experiences of how workers are fighting for PPE in the NHS and care system, posties are walking out to make Royal Mail management adhere to agreed safety practices, and how London bus drivers have sealed the front doors in response to the tragic deaths of their workmates. 

Zoom details - Meeting ID: 834 6072 7169 Password: 50884

The NSSN and other workers’ organisations are building for what is becoming a global day of protest and action on International Workers Memorial Day, on Tuesday 28 April. Never have the words ‘Remember the dead, fight for the living’ been so important.
Domestic abuse killings have more than doubled during the coronavirus lockdown, according to Counting Dead Women (CDW), the organisation that monitors the killing of women by men. It identified 16 killings from 23 March to 12 April. In normal times, over a similar period, there would be an average of five deaths - still an horrific figure.

Unfortunately, the CDW figure corresponds with the huge increase in calls to domestic abuse and online services since the lockdown began. The founder of CDW said: “I don’t believe coronavirus creates violent men. What we’re seeing is a window into the levels of abuse that women live with all the time.”

Coronavirus may exacerbate triggers, though I might prefer to call them excuses. Lockdown may restrict some women’s access to support or escape and it may even curtail measures some men take to keep their violence under control. The government’s response has been pitiful, coming on top of years of underfunding for refuges (see ‘Tory money a drop in the ocean’ at socialist.org.uk).

We have to fight for full funding for helplines, refuges and other safe emergency accommodation for victims of abuse during this crisis (see p16). But we also have to fight all cuts, and for the resources necessary for long-term financing of the services so desperately needed (see Unite the union opposes all cuts to domestic violence services at socialistparty.org.uk).

Coronavirus news in brief
Trump weaponises pandemic...
As the number of unemployed workers applying for benefits rises to 22 million due to the coronavirus crisis, reactionary US president Donald Trump is determined to end the country’s health lockdown measures, which he sees as undermining his chances of a second term in office.

But having failed to override state governors and lift the lockdown, Trump reverted to mobilising his anti-socialist supporters to pressure Democrat governors in Michigan, Minnesota, and Virginia.

Motive crews of gun-toting, confederate flag-waving far-right activists congregated in a number of cities following Trumps tweets to “liberate” these states. Incendiary tweets 24/7 continue to support the cancerous and deluded organisation representing pensioners’ interests. Pension funds are going bankrupt. A crisis of confidence has been triggered by the failed state pension reforms. Pension funds are going bankrupt. And politicians are exploiting it for their own ends. A new attack on the state pension is on the horizon. }

US co-thinkers of the Socialist Party in a #healthworkers solidarity protest photo ISG
Like in the UK, the coronavirus pandemic in the USA has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of non-urgent surgery in hospitals. But because the US healthcare system is run on a for-profit basis, these cancellations have resulted in a sharp drop in hospitals’ income and hence profits.

As a result, in the middle of a pandemic, thousands of healthworkers have been laid-off, furloughed or suffered a reduction in hours.

In February and March, 25% of US hospitals could go bankrupt, it’s estimated due to the government bailout, that will see their pay cut and benefits reduced. “It’s a brutal reality,” said one a day for each worker over an eight-hour shift. Workers said the pace of work was relentless.

Masks had only arrived at the factory one week previously, and there was only one copper to service seven self-checkouts there was a copper to service each one a day. Workers were asked the copper if they were busy.

Four workers had tested positive for Covid-19 but bosses refused to give them a week off and not working.

The state pension should rise by the earnings or 2.5% each year. It has been pitiful, coming on top of years of underfunding for refuges (see ‘Tory money a drop in the ocean’ at socialist.org.uk).

We have to fight for full funding for helplines, refuges and other safe emergency accommodation for victims of abuse during this crisis (see p16). But we also have to fight all cuts, and for the resources necessary for long-term financing of the services so desperately needed (see Unite the union opposes all cuts to domestic violence services at socialistparty.org.uk).

Tory think tank proposes attack on pensions
It was inevitable that the Tory government would try to offload the costs of dealing with the coronavirus crisis on the workforce, by abolishing the ‘triple lock’.

The triple lock has been in existence since 2011, and provides that state pension should rise by the greatest of price inflation, average earnings or 2.5% each year.

At the time of its introduction, it was seen as a mechanism to gradually raise the value of the state pension, but it has long been an aim of the Tories to get rid of it. However, whenever they have proposed it, public protest has forced them to back off. The proposed double lock would remove the 2.5% element from the mechanism.

The state pension is not high - currently set at £175.20 a week for everybody else, (currently the majority of pensioners).

Of the 36 countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the UK has the lowest pension, and replacing it with a double lock was a consensus proposal and prepare their members to accept this. The National Pensioners Convention, the main organisation representing pensioners in Britain, has long campaigned to retain the triple lock.

Now, the trade union leaders need to speak out against this proposal and prepare their members to take action should the Tories press ahead with this.

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The SMF proposal should therefore be rejected. The National Pensioners Convention, the main organisation representing pensioners in Britain, has long campaigned to retain the triple lock.

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While Lenin's ideas were firmly based on Marxist ideas, the ideas of scientific socialism

1905 the revolutionary energy of the Industrial Duma had passed its peak, and there was support for an Industrial Revolutionary faction formed.

This effort, however, was more than a failure and a political defeat. It was also a mass movement, and it was the expression of the struggles of the workers and the peasants. The Industrial Duma was the expression of the demands of the workers and the peasants for a better life.

Soviets established

The Soviets were formed in the working-class areas in the course of their upsurge, bringing together at the same time the different organizations of the working class. The Soviets were the expression of the demands of the workers for a better life.

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Income, jobs and workplace safety
- Full pay for all workers. Workers, especially those on low pay, can’t afford to lose 20% of their income. Any worker who has to self-isolate or cannot go to work should receive full pay from day one and not be forced to take annual leave. Pay should be paid directly to the worker not via the employer
- Increase benefits to the level of the national minimum wage. No delay in the payment of benefits
- Increase the minimum wage immediately to at least £12 an hour, £15 in London
- Workers asked to work from home must be supplied with adequate equipment, and performance monitoring should be scrapped
- Workers who follow health advice to be absent from work to avoid potential spread should be excluded from any attendance-management procedures
- Trade unions to establish an all-union health and safety committee in every workplace to agree joint actions required to guarantee safety
- No return to work unless adequate safety measures are agreed with trade unions and the workforce
- Open the books of any company threatening redundancies or closure to the inspection by the workforce and trade unions
- To defend workers’ jobs and incomes, industries should be nationalised under democratic workers’ control and management with compensation only on the basis of proven need

NHS and social care
- Emergency increase in funding for the NHS and for social care
- Adequate personal protection for all frontline workers
- NHS to take over all private healthcare facilities and staff.

Government should take over other industries and convert production where necessary, under the democratic control of workers in those industries and in the wider workforce, to guarantee the supply of PPE, medical equipment and testing. Not a penny to the profiteers
- Emergency training of NHS staff to deal with the coronavirus crisis
- Immediate 10% wage rise for all NHS staff and social care workers
- Resources to be mobilised from government and big-business sources so that free, accessible testing with rapid results is available for all frontline staff, workers interacting with the public, patients transferred into social care and anyone with flu or cold-like symptoms. Requisition of all private testing and analysis facilities. Massively increase the number of contact tracers
- Reverse privatisation in the NHS, remove the privatisers and cancel all the billions of pounds in annual PFI payments. End profit in social care and bring it into the public sector under democratic working-class oversight
- Nationalise the big pharmaceutical companies to guarantee research, production and supply of medicines, vaccines and treatments
- Suspend fees for overseas NHS patients - treat all patients for free without the need to register to control the spread. Scrap prescription charges

Public services and housing
- Emergency funding to take on more workers in essential services. Resources to protect workers, patients, and service users
- Councils to coordinate local distribution of food, medicines and other supplies to the needy and vulnerable with the democratic oversight of trade union and community organisations. Scrap existing cuts budgets. Demand that the government nationally finance all additional spending necessary to deal with the coronavirus crisis, as well as releasing the resources to reverse a decade of austerity
- 24-hour, adequately staffed, local authority helplines for landlords in genuine need
- Councils to use their powers to take over empty homes to house the homeless, those in inadequate housing and those fleeing domestic violence. Hotels to be used to provide emergency accommodation
- Funding for 24 hour helplines and increased spending on refuges and safe emergency accommodation for victims of domestic violence
- No action to be taken for non-payment of utilities. Free broadband for all

Trade union and workers’ action
- For the Trade Union Congress and the unions, the biggest voluntary national organisation with over six million members across the country, to prepare to lead national coordinated strike action to protect people should necessary health and safety measures not be taken
- Democratic trade union oversight over any government or private sector emergency measures taken to contain the virus
- No erosion of workers’ right to organise, including the democratic functioning of trade unions and parties
- No profiteering. Prices to be controlled by democratically elected committees of workers and consumers
- No trust in the Tories and other pro-capitalist politicians who are responsible for the crisis in the NHS and other public services to deal with the coronavirus crisis. For a mass workers’ party, drawing together workers, young people, socialists and activists from workplaces and communities, environmental, anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting political alternative to the pro-big business parties
- The resources are there to deal with the crisis. Introduce an immediate 50% levy on the hoarded £750 billion lying idle in the bank accounts of big business
- The capitalist market system that prioritises profit and is based on competition cannot keep society safe. We need a democratic socialist plan of production and distribution to meet the needs of the majority in society. Take into public ownership the banks, financial institutions and the top 150 companies that dominate the British economy and run them under the democratic control and management of working-class people so that we can make the decisions about what is needed. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- For international socialist cooperation

This charter is for discussion and debate in workplaces and communities so that we can organise to defend our health, safety and rights during the crisis. Get in touch if you would like to join a Socialist Party online meeting.

■ PPE for all NHS and frontline staff ■ Tests and full pay for all ■ Take over private health and other necessary facilities and industries. Not a penny to the profiteers ■ Socialist planning not capitalist chaos

Socialist Party

For international socialist cooperation

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