

Socialism 2011: A weekend of discussion and debate

Capitalism in crisis: fight for socialism

Cédric Gérôme

In August 2009, Christine Lagarde, ex-French finance minister, and now head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), predicted “a definitive exit from the crisis in the middle of 2010.” Now the IMF, which has been instrumental in conducting the austerity war against the poor, is forced to reluctantly concede what socialists have said from the very beginning: this savage austerity policy doesn’t work.

For the last few decades we have been told that revolutions were not on the agenda any more. Now the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt have changed the face of the entire region.

Despite attempts by imperialist forces to cut across those struggles through military intervention and deals with elements of the old ruling élites as in Libya, these revolutions have drawn the outlines of a new era of struggle. They are inspiring the oppressed and the poor across the planet. They show that it is only through the mass intervention of the working class that society can be changed.

Worldwide, social tensions are being pushed to breaking point. Chile and Israel, both among the most unequal countries in the world, have been rocked by powerful social movements in the past months.

Mass occupations of Greek universities, starting even before the summer break is finished, have already given a glimpse of what the autumn will look like. Italian workers staged a general strike on 6 September against a government on the edge, while the “precarious generation” movement in Portugal is preparing for a mass mobilisation in mid-October.

30 November

Here in Britain, the public sector strike on 30 November provides an historic opportunity for ‘our side’ to take the initiative.

A wave of panic is hitting the ruling classes. They don’t know how to get out of the mess they have created. And there is the threatening spectre of a new, deeper phase of the crisis. A default in Greece would trigger an explosive chain reaction with incalculable economic, political and social repercussions.

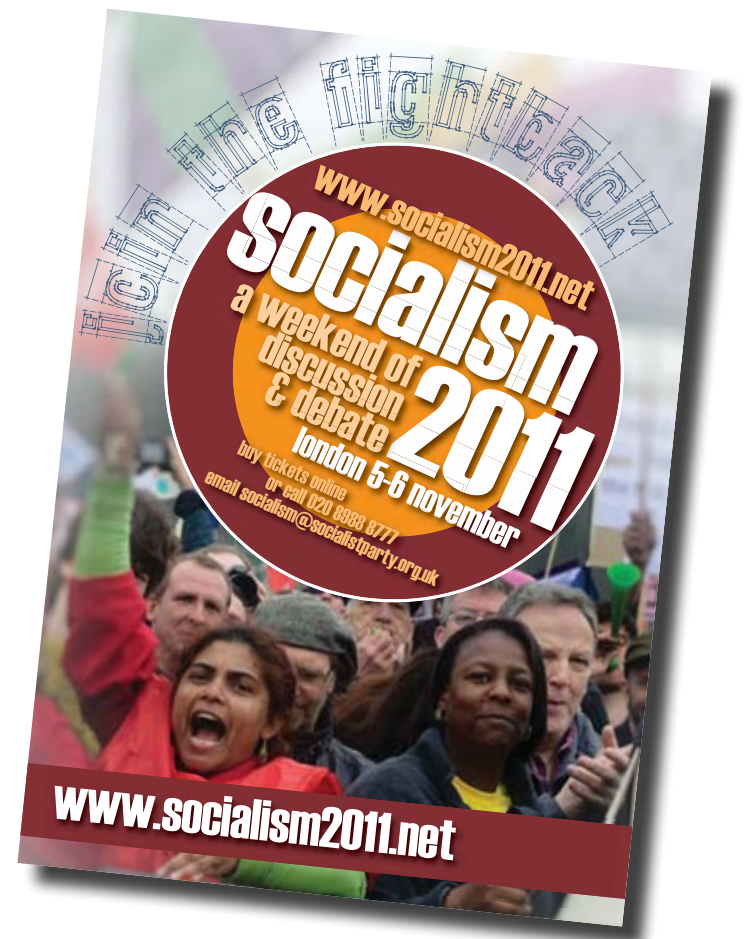
“Tax us”, some of the fat cats are demanding, conscious that if they will have to at least give the illusion that “we are all in this together”.

Yet the number of people sleeping in the streets of London has increased by 8% in one year. The poverty rate has hit a record high in the US, with 46 million people living below the poverty line.

Everywhere, women are among the first victims of cuts in services, wages and allowances. The crisis is used as a pretext to attack their rights further, as shown by the recent discussions in the Polish and Russian parliaments about anti-abortion legislation.

The triumphalist epoch of capitalism is over. All the remedies that the big business rulers have attempted in order to heal their system have made things worse, except maybe for themselves. More and more people will come to the conclusion that this crisis is a systemic one.

Come to Socialism 2011, to debate about how to best prepare for the coming struggles, and ultimately, to replace this sick system with one that is planned to benefit the billions, not the billionaires.



Rallies: Friends Meeting House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

World in crisis - fight for socialism

Saturday 5 November, 6.30pm - 8.30pm

Speakers include: Peter Taaffe, Socialist Party general secretary, Clare Daly, Socialist Party MP in Irish parliament, Egyptian and Tunisian trade union activists

Build a movement to bring down the Con-Dems



Sunday 6 November, 3pm - 4.30pm

Sessions:

University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY

Tickets: Weekend £30 (£15 concession), one day £15 (£8 concession), Rally for Socialism £5.

Saturday accommodation and full crèche available. www.socialism2011.net 020 8988 8777

Theme	Saturday 3-5pm	Sunday 10am-12pm	Sunday 1-3pm
Introducing socialism	What would a socialist democracy look like?	Why the struggle is more than fighting the cuts. The role of the Socialist Party.	Socialism vs. capitalism
Introducing Marxism	Marxist philosophy: thought and reality	The Marxist theory of history	Introducing Marxist economics: why is capitalism crisis-ridden?
Defending the welfare state	The hardest hit fight back: resisting attacks on disability benefits	NHS: the latest big business brand?	“Free” schools at a high price: defeating the attack on comprehensive education
Debates in the anti-cuts movement	How can councillors fight the cuts?	Strategy and tactics for the 21st century: a debate with UKUncut (invited)	How can the anti-cuts movement win?
World economic crisis	The future of the world economy: will capitalism collapse?		Explaining the eurozone crisis: origins and consequences
Internationalism	Southern Europe in revolt	Building a successful electoral alternative: lessons from Ireland	Eyewitness to Sri Lankan war crimes. How can the Tamil diaspora win justice?
Anniversaries of struggle	Lessons of the Minority Movement and the role of the National Shop Stewards Network today	75 years since the Spanish Civil War	Lessons of Poplar and Liverpool. Councils that fought
The Arab Spring	How can the masses of the Middle East win?	Libya, Imperialism and the masses	Mass movements in Israel
Society	Riot, reaction and resistance: what future for young people?	Socialists and the 2012 Olympics	Capitalism and crime: police repression and the prison system
Turning points in history	Ten years since 9/11: is US Imperialism going to be eclipsed?	20 years since the collapse of the USSR: proof that socialism doesn’t work?	
Other sessions	How can we build fighting trade unions?	Should socialists support nuclear energy?	Who are the EDL? How do we stop them?
Other sessions	Cuba: is the revolution being unwound from within?	Are the Tories making Britain more sexist?	Murdochgate and the struggle for a free press

Party for Socialism

Saturday 6 November, doors open 9pm. Camden Centre, Judd Street, WC1H 9JE
Live music • Licensed bar • Hot Food • Great venue! £2 on door / £1 concession