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**Socialist Party**  
formerly  
**Militant**

# ORGANISE RESISTANCE AGAINST BLAIRITES AND TORIES



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**W**ho controls the Labour Party: Labour MPs or the party's half a million members? With a majority of the Labour MPs refusing to accept Jeremy Corbyn's leadership and now mobilising behind a leadership challenge, this has become the critical key question.

Less than a year ago Corbyn won the leadership of the party by a landslide. But in the aftermath of the EU referendum - when the detested Tories have been more vulnerable than ever - first came the sabotaging no-confidence vote in Corbyn by 172 Labour MPs and then Angela Eagle declared herself a candidate to replace him.

Then the right had a concerted campaign to try and push Labour's national executive committee (NEC) into refusing to allow Corbyn to stand for his present position without getting nominations from 20% of the Labour MPs and MEPs as his challengers must do. It is a victory, reflecting the enormous pressure from Labour Party members and trade unionists to allow Corbyn on the ballot paper, that this completely undemocratic attempt to remove him has been defeated.

Obtaining those nominations would have been an impossible task for Corbyn in the present Labour parliamentary line-up, so many in Labour's right wing were desperate to remove him from the leadership.

Nonetheless the battle is not over. Labour's right wing, with the backing of the capitalist class, remains determined to defeat him. Corbyn could possibly still face this nominations obstacle being ordered by court action taken by the Blairites. Outrageously the right wing has introduced rules to try and prevent all those who have joined Labour in the last six months from voting, and to severely curtail the number of registered who will get to vote. This must be challenged. The pro-capitalist Blairites have shown that they are prepared to act brutally and decisively to force him out; the worst possible response to

that would be to capitulate. In that event Jeremy Corbyn must refuse to accept such a decision and launch an immediate massive campaign of opposition to it, including convening a special labour movement conference involving all his supporters.

Opinion polls suggest that with Jeremy on the ballot paper he will win the leadership vote again. But this can't be taken for granted because the many Labour councillors, MPs, lords and officials who are desperate to see him removed will pull out every stop they can to defeat him, backed up by the big business owned media.

The MPs who have been baying for Jeremy's resignation accuse him of placing the party in jeopardy of a split by not meekly submitting to their demands. Meanwhile, while they play up their professed concern for party unity, there have been plenty of reports seeping out of behind-the-scenes discussions among them of preparations for a new party based on the Parliamentary Labour Party.

## THE 99% v THE 1%

With justification, most supporters of Jeremy Corbyn in the labour and trade union movement believe that unity in the Labour Party on the basis of democratic decision-making and an opening up of the party's structures would be the best way forward. But the political fault-lines are increasingly irreconcilable - this is fundamentally a battle between those in the party who represent big business interests and those who want to represent the 99%.

The question only has to be asked: unity around what programme? The Corbyn-hostile majority of Labour MPs and councillors want a Tory-lite programme of 'kinder' cuts. Angela Eagle claims to stand on the anti-austerity left but she voted for the Iraq war, and against an inquiry into that war, and for university tuition fees of £3,000 a year; and has no reputation as an anti-austerity champion.

However, this battle - which began the moment Corbyn was elected - is not centrally about character and media skills but is precisely about policy and which class interests the candidates reflect. Far more important than Corbyn's personal attributes is his opposition to privatisation, outsourcing, tuition fees, austerity, war, and all the other policies that made New Labour barely distinguishable from the Tories and led to a massive decline in the Labour vote.

## ORGANISE RESISTANCE

Events have shown that there can be no more bowing down to the Labour right-wing by Corbyn's supporters at the top of the Labour Party and Momentum. Instead the determined organising of the right wing must be met by mobilising the strongest possible defence and a politically offensive response.

To aid this battle, the Socialist Party has been participating in discussions on the way forward with many others in the labour movement, and we have called for the left trade union leaders to organise an urgent conference open to all who support Jeremy Corbyn in the trade unions, including those not affiliated to Labour, Labour Party members and socialists outside the Labour Party.

In the 1980s, we, as the Militant tendency in the Labour Party, led the successful mass struggle of Liverpool council against the Thatcher government's funding cuts. To those who today fear that Corbyn could be 'unelectable' in a general election, we draw attention to the soaring of votes for Liverpool Labour Party during that struggle, illustrating the huge popularity of a serious anti-cuts fight.

That indicates how a Corbyn-led anti-austerity party today could inspire voters to turn out in a general election, providing its leadership stands firm on anti-cuts and socialist policies in the face of a ferocious establishment onslaught against it.