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the Socialist

Issue 1297

7-13 November 2024

formerly **Militant**

FIGHT LABOUR UNI FEES HIKE

Fight for free education Make the super-rich pay

ADAM POWELL-DAVIES
SOCIALIST STUDENTS NATIONAL ORGANISER

Keir Starmer's Labour government has announced its plans to increase university tuition fees to £9,535 in September.

Labour wants students to pay even more for education, instead of big business and

the super-rich. By lifting the cap on fees, they will now rise annually in line with RPI inflation. By 2029, that could mean fees as high as £10,500.

Education secretary Bridget Phillipson has indicated that an inflation-linked fee rise would only be the first step towards a wider overhaul of the university funding system, signalling the potential for even bigger attacks to come on students under this government.

In the space of five years, the Labour Party has gone from pledging to abolish tuition fees, to now increasing them. The announcement

only confirms that when Starmer talks about his Labour Party governing as 'changed Labour', he means a complete abandonment of the anti-austerity policies of Labour under Jeremy Corbyn.

Students have to organise now to stop any rise in tuition fees. We refuse to pay an even higher price for the crisis in higher education, which Tony Blair's Labour government set in motion by introducing tuition fees in the first place.

Socialist Students has initiated the Funding Not Fees campaign this term as a step to

building a united student and workers' movement for fully funded, free education with living grants for all, paid for by taking the wealth and resources off the super-rich.

We will be reaching out to other student organisations and trade union branches in the coming weeks to build for 'Funding Not Fees' lobbies of MPs up and down the country, to demand they call for the full public funding students and university workers need - not more cuts, sky-high rents, maintenance loans we can't live on, and fees.

• See page 13 for more

Socialist Students says

- **No fee increases** - get organised on campus to **fight for free education!** Cancel student debt, replace student loans with living grants tied to the rate of inflation. Make the super-rich pay!
- **No cuts and no closures!** Build democratic student organisations to link up with campus trade unions and the wider working class to fight for the funding our universities need
- **Kick big business off campus!** End marketisation

of our education. Open up university finances to democratic oversight and control, including by elected students' representatives and campus trade unions, with the power to terminate all contracts and research tied to war, occupation, profiteering and exploitation, while guaranteeing jobs and funding

- **Students need a political voice.** Build a new mass workers' party that will stand up for students and workers and fight for socialist policies
- **Fight for socialist change.** For democratic public ownership of the banks, monopolies and major industry to provide us with a future



60 YEARS OF MILITANT AND THE SOCIALIST >>> p8 & 9

LABOUR'S BUDGET: DIFFERENT WORDS BUT SAME BLEAK TUNE FOR WORKING CLASS >>> p4 & 5

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY >>> p3

the Socialist

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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."
Karl Marx

Badenoch wins race to lead losers

Badenoch wins! If that's what you can call becoming the leader of a party that just received its worst ever performance at a general election. And winning the internal Conservative Party leadership election with the lowest ever vote share, on the lowest ever percentage turnout. Only 34.7% of her fellow Tory MPs backed her in the final MPs ballot.

How does the public view her? Pollster YouGov gave her a net favourability score of -33, days before the result. Only 19% of those polled said they even cared who wins.

She tried to bring all her competitors into the shadow cabinet. A tactic a whole host of Tory prime ministers used to try to hold together a party tearing itself apart. It won't work. Two of them said no!

Don't expect a change of the Tory tune. Through the leadership campaign Badenoch has opposed the minimum wage, called statutory maternity pay "excessive", and made the outrageous claim that autistic people have "economic privileges and protections".

The Tories were smashed in the general election - hated for their attacks on the working class and our services. But that doesn't mean they are about to disappear completely. All the more urgent to build the socialist opposition to Starmer's war and austerity agenda, and for the trade unions to take steps towards building a new mass workers' party.



US elections

As the Socialist goes to press, who will be next US president is unknown.

To find out what the Socialist Party and the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) have to say about the election, and what it means for the US and world capitalism, come to Socialism 2024 on 9-10 November 2024.

CWI secretary Tony Saunio is a speaker at the Saturday evening rally, and will introduce a discussion on Sunday morning: USA after the elections. To hear Tony speak about the US presidential elections prior to the result, tune in to the latest episode of 'Socialism', the Socialist Party's podcast.

Scan to find on your podcast app



BUILD THE SOCIALIST OPPOSITION

Why you should join the Socialist Party

BERKAY KARTAV
SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

After 14 years of Tory austerity, what has Starmer's Labour offered to the working class, the overwhelming majority in society? More cuts, higher tuition fees, more Tory policies.

Our universities are on the verge of bankruptcy and students are expected to pay for it.

While the super-rich are getting richer and raking in huge profits, our councils cannot even provide the basic necessities.

Our schools are literally crumbling and yet it is teachers and parents that are expected to pick up the slack.

The profit-driven capitalist system offers no future for the working-class majority and young people today. It is a system in decay.

This is most graphically illustrated by the war on Gaza and Lebanon. Cities are being turned into rubble while capitalist governments seek to defend their own interests at the expense of the lives of ordinary people.

If capitalism cannot provide even the most basic necessities - decent jobs with decent pay, affordable and

secure housing, fully funded health services, free education and more - then we need to build a united mass working-class movement to take wealth and power out of the hands of the super-rich.

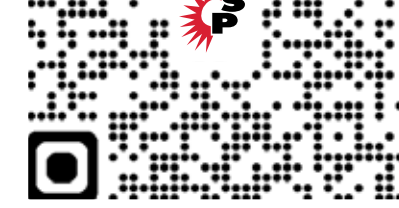
And if you agree we need to fight for socialist change, then join the Socialist Party.

Wherever we organise, the Socialist Party fights for every possible gain for working-class people, in defence of living standards, and for a socialist alternative to crisis-ridden capitalism, in Britain and internationally.

We call for the big banks, major industries and monopolies to be nationalised under democratic workers' control and management, so they can be run to meet the needs of the working-class majority, not the billionaires.

If you agree and want to find out more about how we can build the forces of socialism, then come to Socialism 2024 in London on 9 and 10 November, and come along to one of the 'Why you should join the Socialist Party' sessions during the weekend:

- Saturday 1-2pm (C3.14 on the 3rd floor)
- Sunday 12-1pm (784/790 on the 7th floor)



Join the fightback
JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

- Visit socialistparty.org.uk/join or call **020 8988 8777**
- or text your name and postcode to **07761 818 206**

to find out more about joining us today!

Middle East war in the new era

"There seems no end to the Israeli government's intensification of its bloody warmongering. For [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu, escalating the war is a means to try and remain in power as long as possible, and to attempt to reshape the region in Israel's interests, by brutally further repressing the Palestinians, and weakening Israel's strongest opponent in the region: Iran. The claimed justification, however, is the drive to destroy Hamas, supposedly in order to bring peace to the Israeli Jewish population.

"The horror has lasted over a year, but this has not been achieved. Nor will it be. On the contrary, IDF brutality will inevitably have the opposite effect. Nowhere in the world has military action succeeded in eradicating national aspirations. Israel's actions are fuelling a profound rage, which at a certain stage will erupt in volcanic lava flows throughout the region, shaking Israel, the neighbouring Arab states, and the imperialist powers across the world."

War in the Middle East takes place today in a new era of "turmoil and increasing barbarism, but the working class internationally has begun to re-enter the scene of history". Read more in the editorial of Socialism Today, November 2024.

- Read in full at www.socialistparty.org.uk/ST282ed

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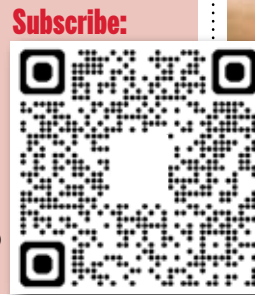
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Fighting cuts in the 2025 'election battleground' councils

32 local authorities will form the 'election battleground' for the first scheduled ballot box test of the Starmer government in May 2025.

With the Tories controlling the majority of these councils, against the backdrop of Labour's new austerity agenda it will be even more necessary for anti-austerity campaigners - between now and the May elections - not just to say 'no cuts' but to explain how councillors could defy the government and defend local public services if they wanted to.

Combined, the 2025 battleground councils have £7.538 billion in general fund and capital receipts reserves that they could use to resource a fightback.

The TUSC report - entitled 'How Much Reserves Have They Got?' - provides the detail for the battleground councils to supplement previously published TUSC material on how it is possible to prepare a no cuts People's Budget if the will is there. Read more: tusc.org.uk/resources

TRADE UNIONIST AND SOCIALIST COALITION



TUSC, the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, is the electoral coalition under which the Socialist Party stands in elections. It was set up in 2010, co-founded by the late Bob Crow - then general secretary of the RMT transport workers' union - with the primary goal of enabling trade unionists, community campaigners and socialists to stand candidates against pro-austerity establishment politicians.

- Find out more visit: tusc.org.uk

WILL THE TRADE UNIONS BUILD A NEW WORKERS' PARTY?

Come and discuss at
SOCIALISM 2024
London, 9-10 November
tickets and info at socialism.org.uk

Save Rugby hospital ward

COVENTRY SOCIALIST PARTY

500 people marched in Rugby on Saturday 26 October against the closure of almost a quarter of the beds at the Hospital of St Cross. The announcement was made by University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust on 16 October, with the closure planned for 4 December, just seven weeks' notice.

The Socialist Party calls for the decision to close Hoskyn Ward to be halted and for a proper public consultation.

Among the invited speakers at the rally were Socialist Party members Steve Score (former chair of Save Glenfield Children's Heart Centre in Leicester) and Dave Nellist (Secretary, Coventry Keep Our NHS Public campaign). Rugby's newly elected Labour MP, John Slinger, was also invited but said he was "unable to attend".

Dave Nellist, the former Coventry MP, pointed to a "hoovering up" of health services from Rugby - the loss of local maternity services, the downgrading of the Accident and

Emergency department, the closure of the ambulance station and now the closure of Hoskyn Ward at St Cross. He argued that these cuts directly resulted from "a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) model that prioritises centralised care at the Coventry super-hospital over the needs of local communities."

Steve explained how the successful campaign that saved Glenfield had been built with a succession of local public meetings and with the involvement of families, campaigners, staff and, importantly, the trade union movement. His message was: "If you fight, you can win!"

The Socialist Party will help spread support for the residents of Rugby in their campaign to retain and restore a publicly funded NHS that is democratically controlled and ensures a full range of services are readily available within local communities.

- Campaigners have organised a further march on Saturday 16 November, assembling at Whitehall Recreation Ground, Rugby, at 11 am



Save Rugby hospital protest COVSP

Labour's Budget: different words but... same bleak tune for the working class

Socialist Party

WHAT WE THINK

In an unusual move, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) publicly praised Rachel Reeves's first Budget speech as 'sustainable'. Meanwhile, the editorial of the main newspaper of British capitalism, the Financial Times, welcomed it as having "begun to fix the foundations of Britain's economy from a difficult starting point". When sources like this praise a Budget, working-class people can be certain it is not looking after them, but rather the capitalist elite.

For many, the experience of Labour's first four months in office will already have been enough to tell them that this government does not represent the interests of the working-class majority. As the first woman Chancellor of the Exchequer, Reeves started her speech emphasising there should be "no ceiling" on the 'ambition', 'hopes' and 'dreams' of girls and young women. Tell that to the million girls living in dire poverty because of Reeves's maintenance of the two-child benefit cap. Pensioners will have fumed at the endless repetition of the need for 'tough decisions', when it is them who will have to make the 'tough decisions' about whether to eat or heat their homes this winter. Such decisions are a million miles from the experience of government ministers. Reeves herself gets a wage of £163,000, while her husband - a top civil servant - is on £200,000, putting them both in the top 1% of Britain's earners.

Nonetheless, others will have seen the Budget headlines and hoped that, maybe, things are going to get a tiny bit better than they were under the Tories. State pensions are going up slightly, yet will remain among the lowest of any economically developed country. For workers on the minimum wage there will also be an increase - from £11.44 now to £12.21 an hour from April 2025. But that still falls far short of the TUC's demand for the immediate introduction of a £15 an hour minimum wage as the very least required for the basic necessities of life. It certainly doesn't justify the claim of the TUC general secretary, Paul Nowak, that Reeves "acted decisively to deliver an economy that works for working people", especially when it was combined with a pledge to continue and extend the Tories' planned attacks on benefit claimants, many of whom are also low-paid workers. Disgracefully, disabled people and those too ill to work, which make up some of the poorest sections of the working class, are particularly in the government's firing line. Those measures plus others, including increasing the bus fare cap to £3 a journey and increasing train fares by 4.6%, have resulted in the Joseph Rowntree Foundation calculating that the average family is going to be £770 a year worse off



under this government, with 100,000 more children pushed into poverty. In other words - even after fourteen years of brutal Tory austerity - things will continue to get worse under Labour's plans.

Smoke and mirrors

Nor is the reality of the public spending announcements the positive news that is being spun. Reeves claimed the £22.6 billion extra pledged for the NHS would make a significant difference. In reality, however, as even The Economist pointed out, that works out as a 3.4% rise over this year and the next, which only returns NHS spending to "the historical norm". NHS funding has increased by an average of 3.6% a year in real terms since 1955. Under New Labour Mark One it increased by an average of 5.5% a year, compared to 2.8% under the last two Tory governments. With waiting lists now at a record 7.5 million, nudging expenditure up by 0.6% for two years before - according to Reeves's Budget - falling again, is not even going to make a small dent in the crisis in the NHS.

The same can be said of schools, the other area highlighted for supposedly more generous treatment. The Budget claims to promise a 19% increase in capital investment in

schools, to £6.7 billion. Daniel Kebede, general secretary of the National Education Union, was right when he said that this is just "a small dent in the £40 billion cumulative cut to school capital expenditure since 2010". And the 19% claim is, at best, sleight of hand, based on the increase from the exceptionally low level this year. Even according to their own figures, it is only an increase of 2.2% a year from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

The whole Budget - as is always the case with capitalist politicians - is full of this kind of smoke and mirrors. The £300 million extra for Further Education, for example, is £100 million less than what the sector needs to stand still, so in reality will mean further cuts. This is true on an even bigger scale for local authorities. According to the public sector union Unison, councils face a £4.3 billion shortfall next year. The £1.3 billion extra trumpeted by Reeves is not going to stop the big majority of devastating closures of council services coming down the track. Meanwhile, the target for 'affordable' housing, most of which is completely unaffordable, was to build "up to 5,000 additional affordable homes". To call this peanuts is to exaggerate its significance. The only pledge on council housing was to reduce discounts

on Right to Buy and allow councils to keep the receipts. That might help stock shrink further but will contribute nothing towards the mass council housebuilding programme that is needed.

Just as important are the things Reeves didn't mention. This Budget claimed to 'set the envelope', meaning the overall spending levels for different parts of the public sector before a comprehensive spending review in the spring of 2025 goes into more detail. Not one penny extra was pledged for teaching costs in Higher Education, at a time when growing numbers of universities are facing bankruptcy, and cuts are taking place at most campuses. As a result, those cuts will continue. At the same time, not mentioned in the Budget but tucked away in a separate paper, the government announced that they will be legislating for reform of the student fee system next year, raising the prospect of an increase in what students are forced to pay.

When this Budget is looked back on, it will be seen as the start of New Labour's version of austerity, rather than of a new era of improving public services. Reeves, like Thatcher before her, will not go down as a woman that helped girls and young women meet their aspirations, but rather as one

who attacked the living conditions of the whole working class. Unfortunately, many trade union leaders are currently praising the Budget to the skies. Instead, what is needed is to face up to reality and prepare for the battles that are going to be needed, under this government as under the last, to defend workers' jobs and living standards.

On public sector pay, in order to try and prevent further strikes, the government offered pay deals slightly above current inflation this year, although that was calculated on the capitalists' preferred CPI measure, which underestimates real cost-of-living increases. That didn't make up for the huge cuts in real public sector wages over the last decade, but most workers saw it as a tiny step in the right direction. The Budget makes clear, however, that any future positive steps will have to be fought for by the trade union movement. It says that "in the medium term above-inflation pay rises are only affordable if they can be funded from improved productivity". The whole Budget is crammed with references to improving public sector productivity and efficiency savings. That would be welcome if it meant providing new equipment and technology that aided work, and putting

PHOTO: LABOUR PARTY/CC

the running of public services under democratic workers' control, rather than highly paid managers who often know little or nothing about the services they are paid fat salaries to oversee. Unfortunately, however, this government has already made it clear that it means more of the same old Tory policies - demanding more intensification of work from public sector workers already stretched past breaking point and privatising public services. Health secretary Wes Streeting immediately showed his intentions when he signed Wiltshire's Community Health Services over to a subsidiary of Virgin for £1.3 billion. After fourteen years of the Tories, this government sees privatisation, not nationalisation, as the way forward.

Governing for the capitalists

Keir Starmer has said clearly that his Labour Party will govern as 'changed Labour', meaning a complete abandonment of the anti-austerity policies of Labour under Jeremy Corbyn. This Budget totally confirms that. Its character was inevitable, given that Starmer's Labour is a loyal and reliable representative of British capitalism, a system which is incapable of taking society forward. According to the IMF, in 2024 UK Gross Domestic Product per head will be 29% below

where it would have been without the 2007-08 Great Recession. No capitalist country is healthy, but that is the worst position of any G7 economy. Ultimately, that is what makes Britain particularly vulnerable to the 'bond vigilantes' of the financial markets.

Reeves and Starmer consider themselves more competent capitalist managers than the Tories. Given this assessment, it is not credible that they 'discovered' a black hole, as it was completely obvious before the election, given the state of the British economy - and the traps set by the outgoing Tory government - that cuts, tax rises and increased borrowing would all be necessary for any incoming capitalist government. Nor will this Budget fix any of the problems. On the contrary, they will become more acute. The (so far) small jitters on the markets, which have further nudged up the cost of UK government debt, mainly reflect a realisation that further increases in cuts, borrowing and tax lie ahead.

This government is utterly unwilling to make the super-rich pay. It has brushed aside the proposal of Corbyn and other MPs to raise £24 billion by a 2% tax on wealth above £10 million. The City cheered the extremely minimal increases in costs the fund managers faced in the Budget. Meanwhile, Reeves has pledged Corporation Tax is to stay at only 25%. In order to 'keep the show on the road' and to limit the scale of borrowing, Reeves had no choice but to increase some taxes on business, so chose to increase employers' national insurance contributions. No doubt the bosses will try and pass on even that to their workforces, which will have to be fought by the trade union movement.

How to fight back

At the TUC Congress in September it was agreed that, if Labour had not introduced legislation in the first 100 days to implement in full the 'New Deal for Working People', a special congress should be called to discuss the next steps. That was passed as a result of an amendment from the PCS civil servants' union, initiated by Socialist Party members. Clearly, the majority of trade union leaders, given their rosy assessment of the Budget, will currently argue that such a congress is unnecessary. But such a congress is needed - to draw a balance sheet of the inadequate Employment Rights Bill, the long and unnecessary delay in the repeal of any anti-union laws - with many anti-union laws remaining - and now this spending straitjacket of a Budget. Above all it could draw up a plan of action. Immediately it could support unions that haven't settled this year's pay claims and draw up a list of demands for what public services really need ahead of next year's pay rounds and the spring comprehensive spending review. It could agree to prepare for co-ordinated strikes if those demands are not met.

It could also draw up trade union amendments to the Budget and Employment Rights Bill, based on TUC policy, including the immediate

repeal of the Minimum Service Legislation and the 2016 Trade Union Act, the immediate introduction of a £15-an-hour minimum wage, reinstatement of the Winter Fuel Allowance, and much more. Every trade union-sponsored MP, including Corbyn and the independent and suspended Labour MPs, should be approached to support such measures, with a meeting called of those that are prepared to do so to plan moving the amendments in parliament. Back in 1906, the Labour Representation Committee, precursor of the Labour Party, only had 29 MPs, but it was still an important factor in putting pressure on the Liberal government to carry out some reforms and remove anti-trade union rulings, including moving the legislation the Liberal government was forced to adopt under pressure from below. Better to establish a group of MPs who are prepared to fight for workers' interests than rely on fictional Labour 'allies' who vote for anti-worker policies.

This points towards what is needed. Many national trade union leaders are trying to act as a shield for Starmer's Labour, disguising its anti-working class character. However, on the basis of experiencing the reality of Austerity Mark II, workers will draw different conclusions and demand action. Socialist Party members across the trade union movement will campaign for every step in that direction. Under the last government the working class in Britain began to re-enter the scene of history in the biggest strike wave since the 1980s. That will need to be built on in the coming period. At the same time, it is also clear that the workers' movement will need a political voice, arguing in the interests of our class in Westminster.

The Socialist Party will argue for such a party to fight for the socialist transformation of society: for the nationalisation, under democratic workers' control, of the major monopolies and banks that dominate the economy, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need. This is a vital step towards breaking the stranglehold of the capitalist class, and laying the basis for the development of a socialist plan of production, where all the science and technique created by capitalism could be harnessed and developed to meet the needs of all. Only on this basis will the endless rounds of austerity be permanently ended.

BUILD THE FIGHTBACK UNDER STARMER

Come and discuss at
SOCIALISM 2024
London, 9-10 November
tickets and info at socialism.org.uk

Academy funding scandal - Fight to reverse academisation now!



James on the picket line (centre) SOCIALIST PARTY

JAMES ELLIS
NEU LEAD REP, PERSONAL CAPACITY

The decimation of local authorities and the general funding crisis in education continues to drive more and more schools into the arms of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), falsely promising a panacea. However, MATs are no solution to the funding crisis - they can make it much worse.

National Education Union (NEU) members who work for schools that are part of the University of Brighton Academy Trust (UBAT) have seen this firsthand. We are currently involved in a dispute over the way UBAT has been managing its finances and the impact that has had on our members' jobs and workload. On average, MATs retain between 5-7% of a school's budget to pay for their central services. UBAT has been withholding an average of 13% of school budgets, with some schools losing over 25% in some years!

This lack of funding has had a devastating impact on frontline services. We've seen workload increasing, cuts to budgets and essential services, and damaging restructures and redundancies. And where has this money gone? It goes towards a bloated central academy budget, with huge amounts spent on a large executive team, corporate marketing and outside consultants. This is public money that should be going towards the education of our students!

We have had a very successful strike campaign so far. We have won strike ballots in eight schools and taken five days of coordinated strike action. We have won workload

charters, halted redundancies, saved essential services, and forced UBAT to agree to completely change their funding model. Our action has contributed to some significant changes in the Trust leadership.

However, ultimately, we will either end up in a reformed version of UBAT or as part of a different MAT. What we really need is to return to local authority control!

Costs

The cost to the taxpayer of highly paid senior managers in schools has rocketed under England's academies scheme, analysis by Warwick Mansell and the Case for State Education reported last year. He compared the performance of the ten largest local authorities and the 50 largest MATs, both of which are responsible for about 850,000 pupils.

In 2021-22, the ten largest local authorities spent £3.7 million on the salaries of employees of more than £130,000. The 50 largest academy trusts spent £27.8 million and had seven times as many people paid at least £130,000 a year. Since 2010, the leaders of the ten largest academy trusts have seen salary increases four times that of experienced classroom teachers.

The 50 largest trusts spent £68.2 million, or £80 per pupil, on six-figure salaries for their employees in 2021-22. This was 2.8 times the comparable sum of £24.4 million, or £28 per pupil, in the local authorities. If these academy trusts were spending at the same level on high salaries as were the local authorities, this would generate savings of £43.9 million overall per year, or £4.4 million per large local authority area.

This cannot be allowed to continue. Rachel Reeves and Keir Starmer have gone to great lengths to tell us there is no money available for public services and that things will get worse before they get better.

We cannot afford things to get any worse. Our schools are literally crumbling. £4.4 billion is needed to repair the school estate. 33,000 extra teachers are needed; over a million pupils are being taught in classes of over 30. £4.6 billion is needed to end the crisis in high-needs funding. To return education funding to the levels of other OECD countries, i.e. 5% of GDP, would require £20 billion.

The NEU should support any local action aimed at halting further privatisation in education, including placing demands on councils to stop and reverse academisation.

Campaign

Socialist Party members are calling on the NEU to launch an immediate national campaign to oppose academisation and fight for a return to democratic local authority control. As a first step, we should demand that the government creates a legal route for academised schools and colleges to return to local authority control - there is no reason that cannot be done immediately.

Privatisation in education must be reversed. The NEU must demand full public funding for education from this Labour government.

- If you agree - join us in the NEU fighting for a fully funded, publicly owned and democratically controlled education system

Fords staff strike against wealthy company's greed

ELEANOR DONNE AND DAVE MURRAY SPOKE TO UNITE MEMBERS ON THE PICKET LINE AT THE FORD DUNTON SITE

Over 1,000 admin staff at Fords were forced to take strike action on 30 October at five sites nationally, over pay and conditions. Ford has not offered its workers a permanent pay increase, instead offering a one-off payment for 2024.

According to Unite, Ford reported a full-year net income of \$4.3 billion on revenues of \$176 billion for 2023 - an increase of 11.4%.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said: "Despite its huge wealth, Ford has launched a direct attack on its office workers' pay and terms and conditions. The only reason for this is corporate greed".

A rep who is on the Unite joint salaried staff national negotiating committee told us: "The company wants to make it all about pay" but the dispute is equally about the strings attached, such as an extension of performance related pay.

We were told that the pay offer is not consolidated, so older workers would lose out in their work's pensions. There is a 'two-tier' workforce as people taken on after 2012 are on less favourable pensions and terms and conditions. The company is also trying to change a longstanding sick pay policy, even though sickness rates are at less than 2%!



Picket at the Dunton site DAVE MURRAY

Sheffield bus workers fight for real living wage

ALISTAIR TICE
SHEFFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

Since the beginning of September, maintenance workers at Sheffield First bus garage have taken 19 days of strike action in pursuit of a pay rise to the Real Living Wage. The 18 shunters, fuellers and cleaners are employed by contractors Bidvest Noonan; they are currently on only the national minimum wage.

Bidvest Noonan is part of the Bidvest Group, which reported £278 million in profits in the half-year to December 2023.

In April, First Group announced that it had become an accredited 'real living wage employer', paying all workers at least £12 an hour.

First stated that "includes workers employed through third-party contractors". But Bidvest refuses to even negotiate.

Unite members balloted unanimously for strike action, which has escalated to four days a week in November and will become indefinite in December if need be. The Sheffield strikers are now to be joined by their colleagues at Doncaster First bus garage who have just voted for industrial action as well.

Labour's transport minister Louise Haigh is the MP for the constituency where the bus garage is. Socialist Party members say she should demand that First Group force Bidvest to pay the Real Living Wage or strip them of their accreditation. If they won't pay decent wages they should be taken into public ownership.

Better still, the whole bus industry should be nationalised, including contractors, and placed under democratic workers' control and management.



London bus drivers marched to Transport for London HQ on 5 November over safe working conditions, on a 'Stand up for Bus Workers' demo, organised by drivers, supported by Unite PHOTO: BERKAY KARTAV

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MODEL MOTION ON LABOUR'S EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS BILL

Please move this motion in your union branch or trades council

This [union organisation/conference] notes the Employment Rights Bill moved by the new Labour government.

We welcome any improvements to workers' rights and conditions. This includes the promise to repeal some of the more recent Tory anti-union legislation, the Minimum Service Levels Act 2023 and the undemocratic industrial action ballot thresholds enshrined in the Trade Union Act 2016.

However, this [union organisation/conference] believes that most of the improvements set out by the Employment Rights Bill are to individual rights of workers rather than collective ones. A key part of this is leaving most of the Tory anti-union laws intact, including the right for workers and unions to take solidarity action.

There is also insufficient strengthening of collective bargaining, a key element in improving workers' rights after decades of erosion under successive governments.

This [union organisation/conference] believes that the Bill leaves loopholes that bosses will exploit regarding 'fire and rehire' and 'zero-hour contracts'

We also believe that there is an unacceptable delay in the implementation of the Bill, especially regarding the repeal of anti-union legislation.

This [union organisation/conference] calls on our union NEC to:-

- Demand that the TUC implements TUC 2024 Congress policy to call a special congress to review the Bill and demand its strengthening
- Draw up a list of workers' rights as amendments to the Employment Rights Bill
- Ensure that this includes repeal of all the Tory anti-union legislation. As a minimum, the promised repeal of the Minimum Service Levels Act 2023 and the undemocratic industrial action ballot thresholds in the Trade Union Act 2016 should be separated from the Employment Rights Bill and immediately voted through parliament as fast-tracked legislation
- Ensure that the list of amendments also includes: the total abolition of 'fire and rehire' and 'zero-hour contracts', for a £15-an-hour minimum wage with no age exemptions, and collective bargaining for all workers
- Table this list of amendments to the parliamentary group of our union, and which should involve Jeremy Corbyn, the Independent Alliance MPs and the seven Labour MPs suspended for voting to remove the two-child benefit cap, to be moved in parliament.
- Raise at the TUC and with all other unions that this workers' manifesto, along with opposition to any austerity measures proposed by the Labour government, should be the basis for a national campaign by the union movement, including potential industrial action.

UCU in universities: Vote 'yes' to fight on pay



On strike in 2023 WORKSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

BEA GARDNER
UCU MEMBER

On 12 November, a consultative ballot of University and College Union (UCU) members in higher education (HE) opens, on whether they are prepared to take industrial action to win an improved pay offer. Delivering a resounding 'Yes' vote is possible and necessary.

Members know the offer is not enough. At a recent national meeting of branch delegates, members rejected it.

It falls well short of the joint union claim, which was for whatever was greater: RPI plus 2% or a flat rate of at least £2,500 on all pay points. The employer offer does not even amount to half of the flat rate, and it is being staggered, with institutions able to fully defer until July 2025!

In the two years to August 2023, pay for the majority of HE workers fell in real terms by 11.7%. This has come on top of a pay devaluation of 20% over the thirteen years prior.

We cannot accept a further real-terms pay cut without a fight. But members also need to have confidence that there is a serious strategy that can win better.

Our fight would be strengthened through coordination with the other campus unions, as well as students organising against tuition fee rises. Unison members overwhelmingly voted to reject the offer, and an industrial action ballot will open in the coming weeks. As a starting point,

the union's two higher education committees should have a special meeting to discuss a shared campaign strategy.

University finances are in crisis - it is a crisis of the marketised funding model. Even when universities were generating a 'surplus', the spending on staff was in decline, and HE workers experienced real-terms pay cuts. Now, with many universities in deficit, they are looking for further pay cuts and job losses, while lobbying government for a tuition-fee hike.

Funding not fees

The Labour government failed to increase direct funding to universities in the Budget, and has now announced that tuition fees will rise next year in line with RPI inflation - a "first step towards root-and-branch overhaul of the current system".

UCU should demand to know now what the planned changes are, and launch a serious industrial campaign that links the campaign on pay and jobs with a political strategy that demands fully publicly funded HE, paid for by the super-rich.

UCU's research shows that even a small increase in corporation tax through an 'education levy' could raise enough to scrap tuition fees and increase funding to the equivalent of £13,000 fees - enough to fund the pay rise members need while protecting jobs. This is a small fraction of what could be raised to fund all public services.

But that won't come from simply appealing to Labour's goodwill. It

will be by mobilising behind a serious fighting strategy that we can force more from our employers and funding from the government.

However, a barrier to such a campaign is the current general secretary Jo Grady and her backers, who have presided over delays and inaction, and undermined democratic decisions. It's been six months since members voted at a special HE sector conference to return to a strategy of national industrial action this academic year, and six weeks since the HE Committee agreed to launch a consultative ballot of members. Why the delay?

Members should have full democratic control of our disputes. This is why as well as voting 'yes' in the consultative ballot, in the upcoming National Executive Committee (NEC) elections we need to elect a fighting leadership that offers a serious lead and will back members in action.

There is a real possibility of replacing Jo Grady's supporters on the NEC, but the different left groupings should come together to discuss and agree on a shared challenge. In last year's general secretary elections, had there been a single left candidate they could have stood a serious chance of winning: the combined vote for the two left candidates was higher than Grady's vote.

The upcoming election is an opportunity for all those seeking to challenge Grady to organise on a platform for a fighting, democratic union, laying the groundwork to fight as part of a new, democratic left.

Update on action on London Underground

The threat of a week of strike action has forced London Underground to drop its plans to withhold the full consolidated pay rise from some tube workers. The RMT union has suspended action to allow for further talks on the pay offer. Full report to follow.

As we go to press, train drivers' union Aslef's action on 7 and 12 November is going ahead, with the issue of a shorter working week a sticking point.



PCS members working for G4S and ISS are continuing their strike action at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the Department for Business and Trade, the Department for Science Innovation and Technology, and the Cabinet Office, in a fight over pay, terms and conditions PHOTO: ROB WILLIAMS

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- to find out more today!

60 years of Militant and the Socialist Building the socialist opposition

IAN PATTISON
SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE AND THE
SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN ORGANISER

We are celebrating a special birthday. 60 years of the Socialist Party, and our newspaper, the Socialist. We launched as 'Militant' in 1964. From a small group of socialists, our size and influence in the workers' movement grew. The name Militant would come to represent what our party and paper stood for.

The capitalist system – based on the super-rich ruling capitalist elite ruthlessly extracting as much profit as possible – is incapable of providing a decent standard of living for the vast majority, or solving society's problems. We want to connect socialist ideas to the fightback of the majority of people in society.

Workers and youth

'Militant – for Labour and youth' – the paper's tagline summed up what we were about. We wanted to persuade young people to join the fightback... and still do!

Young people, new to these ideas, can throw themselves into struggle. We want to combine that dynamism, with the huge power of the organised working class.

The working class makes up the vast majority in society. And thrown together in workplaces, it can come together and get organised. Just look at what happened during Covid, and then the strike wave afterwards.

When we formed, Militant supporters were mainly made up of activists in the Labour Party Young Socialists. The right-wing Labour machine later shut down its own youth wing, because of our influence.

At that time, Labour still had a working-class base. Workers saw it as 'their' party. Today, the party has been transformed into a capitalist party.

Through building support for our ideas amongst young people and workers, Militant was able to lead mass struggles of the working class, with our paper as a key tool.

The Socialist isn't just made in an office. Even the staff that work on producing it each week are campaigners and trade unionists in their local areas.

The Socialist is the product of everyone. It draws together the experience of working-class people. In their lives, in victorious struggles, in defeats. The Socialist is a place where the ideas in our movement can be debated and discussed.

The Socialist aims to channel all that into something that's useful for workers to read. The whole paper does that. But so does every individual article.

And different people will get different things out of each article. And hopefully the front page will grab people, and make them think.

Capitalism is obviously an awful system. But it hasn't been replaced by socialism yet. So we have to get organised to do that.

The Socialist is a bridge that takes workers from where they are now, to where we think they could be – organising to change society for the better. A 'transitional programme', as Leon Trotsky called it, one of the leaders of the 1917 Russian revolution.

The first issue of Militant said: "The most important thing is that we wish to tell the truth to the working class, against the lies and exaggerations of the capitalist class, and the half-truths of Labour's officialdom". The same applies today.

Hope

Militant was also hopeful about how things can change for better. And we still are, for good reason.

Trotsky, at the start of the 20th century, described a conversation between a pessimist and an optimist. The pessimist described all the problems in the world, and said to the optimist: "Surrender, you pathetic dreamer. Here I am, your long awaited 20th century, your future."

"No", replies the optimist. "You are only the present". We are the future.

• Read more in the 'Rise of Militant' book

Liverpool – answering the bosses' lies and slander



By the mid-1980s, Militant was able to lead a citywide mass movement, including a citywide general strike, to force Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher to cough up £30 million – £100 million in today's money.

In the 1983 local elections, Labour won a majority on Liverpool City Council. The new councillors included supporters of Militant. And our members had important influence in the District Labour Party.

Jobs and homes

Liverpool council refused to implement Thatcher's cuts. Instead, we mobilised the city by implementing our socialist policies. We built 5,000 council homes, built nurseries, parks, and leisure facilities, and created 8,000 well-paid jobs.

As a key leader of the Liverpool struggle, Tony Mulhearn, put it: "We translated socialism into the language of jobs, housing, and social services". Those homes still stand today.

There were 47 Labour councillors taking on Thatcher's Tories. Militant supporters only made up a minority of the 47.

But we had the political ideas to give others the lead they needed. Our paper was vital in getting these ideas across to the movement we were building.

The capitalist class, using the capitalist press, and assisted by the right-wing of the Labour Party and trade unions, threw slander and lies at our party. Those lies needed to be answered.

An important way we did that was

by taking the truth to working-class activists in the Labour Party and the trade unions, up and down the country, in the pages of our paper.

At the height of the struggle, it was necessary to produce a special supplement, the 'Mersey Militant', such was the need to communicate more frequently with the workers in the city participating in the struggle.

Despite what the bosses and right wing threw at us, Liverpool's socialist council was popular. It increased its votes and support every election.

The Tories, Labour's right wing, and the courts, had to use other dirty means to defeat the council, eventually banning the fighting councillors from office.

Capitalists and Labour

Since then, the capitalists have wrestled control of the Labour Party away from the working class. The capitalists now have Tories and Labour as parties that serve their interests, albeit in slightly different ways. Militant was central to the battle to stop Labour becoming an out-and-out capitalist party.

To achieve their goal, the capitalist class had to get the Labour leadership to expel Militant – Labour's Marxist wing. We were tenacious in our opposition to being expelled. We organised left-wing Labour-supporting workers and youth in a mass campaign to stop it happening.

It took the right-wing Labour leaders a decade to succeed. And they could only succeed after big defeats for the working class.

• Read more in 'Liverpool - A City that Dared to Fight' book

Raising workers' voice in miners' strike

The heroic miners organised a year-long strike in 1984-85 against job losses. Militant helped the Labour Party Young Socialists raise £1 million in the movement for the striking miners.

Solidarity

We published a special strike bulletin, 'Militant Miner', to help promote the demand that many were raising – a 24-hour general strike, in solidarity with the miners against the government. And 500 striking miners joined us.

Militant broadcast the voice of miners. After the police onslaught during the Battle of Orgreave, we published the workers' side.

"The real battle began. It was the most terrifying thing I have been through in my life. What made it worse for me was that this was happening in the village where I'd lived most of my life.

"I saw an elderly miner of about 60 have his head split open by a baton.

The riot police would march straight up to you shouting 'one two, one two', and provoking the miners: 'Come on then, have a go.'

"And one snatch squad policeman went too far and got snatched himself! They had to send police horses in to get him back – he was in a far from healthy state when he emerged from the picket."

• Read more in 'A Civil War Without Guns' book

Read these books and more, about the history of our movement

- From Militant to the Socialist Party
- The Struggle for World Socialism
- Visit leftbooks.co.uk
- or call 020 8988 8789
- PO Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9GT



Poll Tax – organising mass civil disobedience

Militant enacted Thatcher's final defeat. Thatcher's Tories went too far, increasing local taxes beyond what people could afford.

'Can't Pay, Won't Pay', we said. And so did 18 million others.

Militant played a leading role in the movement that defeated the hated Poll Tax. And soon its hated architect, Thatcher, was gone too.

Our paper gave crucial advice to the 18 million-strong movement of 'non-payers' and 'bailiff busters'. We

even popularised the idea of 'McKenzie Friends' – ordinary people that could support you in court.

'Our' party

People's experience of Labour's attitude to the Poll Tax further cemented in workers' minds that Labour was no longer 'their' party. Labour sent Poll Tax non-payers to court to be jailed, including two Militant Labour MPs, Dave Nellist and Terry Fields.



Start of the anti-war movement in Britain in 2023, against the slaughter in Gaza. ADAM POWELL-DAVIES

From Militant to the Socialist

The tasks of our party and paper have remained the same throughout their existence – to win support for our ideas, and build our organisation among workers and young people. But the environment in which we carry out those tasks changes. The outlook and understanding of the working class changes too, based on the experience of struggles, victories and defeats, nationally and internationally.

The working class internationally faced a huge setback in the 1990s.

The collapse of the former Soviet states unleashed a wave of capitalist triumphalism.

Alternative to capitalism

These states were not socialist, but a grotesque caricature – top-down dictatorships, run in the interests of a narrow ruling elite. They were, however, an alternative economic system, run on the basis of nationalised planned economies.

It was an ideological defeat for the working class. Socialist ideas were knocked back.

Through a period of capitalist economic boom, it was necessary to patiently explain that crisis is an inherent feature of the capitalist system. Crisis would throw workers into struggle, and mass support for socialist ideas would begin to develop again.

Our paper now had another important job – repopularising socialist ideas. We renamed ourselves, the Socialist Party, and the paper, the Socialist. And we had a new demand to raise too – for a new mass party of the working class.

Build the socialist opposition

With every passing day, working-class opposition to Keir Starmer's Labour government is growing. The Socialist has a crucial role in building the socialist opposition, offering a socialist programme, strategy, and tactics to the developing struggles of workers and young people.

Following the economic crisis of 2007-08, a wave of protest and struggle swept the world. The Arab Spring swept away dictatorial rulers across the Middle East and North Africa.

Across Europe, new left-wing formations sprung up. In some cases, such as Syriza in Greece, they came into government.

Jeremy Corbyn

In Britain, Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party won the support of hundreds of thousands, particularly young people, for his anti-austerity programme.

The Socialist was alone in putting forward how Corbyn could win out over the right-wing Blairites looking to bring him down. We told the truth about the Blairites' intentions, and put forward demands, such as mandatory reselections of Labour MPs, to force out the right wing.

This, and more, raised the need for Corbyn to mobilise the hundreds of thousands of his supporters to take on the capitalist enemy within.

When Jeremy Corbyn first stood and won the Labour leadership in 2015, one young woman, inspired by his campaign, said: "His ideas might seem old fashioned to others, but they're new to me".

In the recent strike wave too, the biggest for 30 years, a new generation has returned to 'old fashioned' ideas. The Socialist carried reports from the picket lines, giving a voice to workers.

Our paper called for "inflation-proof pay rises and full funding". We explained how the strikes could coordinate together. And, on the biggest strike days, our front page called for a "24-hour general strike" to do that.

More people, striking workers, bought the Socialist on those picket



BT worker reading the Socialist during 2022 strike wave

lines and protests than at any point since before the pandemic.

Our members in the trade unions make the case for how they can be transformed into fighting democratic organisations. This includes working with other socialists, as part of broad fronts, and challenging for the leaderships of unions.

Where's the party for us?

The trade unions must take steps towards establishing a new mass party of the working class. There is no other newspaper that puts forward the next concrete steps forward for the struggles of workers and young people, and links that with the need for the working class to bring about the socialist transformation of society.

A new generation of youth has seen everything from the last few years – Corbyn, Covid, the strike wave. They have been learning from what's happening, from a capitalist

system incapable of providing for them.

They have been marching on the huge protests in Britain, opposing Israeli state terror on the Palestinians. And they're still marching.

Those youth, flooding out of tube stations to voice their anger, have snapped up the Socialist paper on those protests, and asked to join the Socialist Party.

Starmer's Labour

All these fights will be even more vital under Starmer's government. So help us build the socialist opposition.

Help us build the Socialist as an alternative. Your paper that tells the truth.

Read it. Subscribe. Help us sell it. Write for it. And help us promote its ideas.

And join the Socialist Party. These problems are the past, we are the future.



The massive anti-poll tax demonstration. S GARDINER



WHAT WE STAND FOR

Capitalism is an ailing, crisis-ridden system based on the exploitation of the majority of the world's population by a small, super-rich elite who own most of the wealth and the means of producing it. This way of organising society, in which the pursuit of profit comes before everything else, causes poverty, inequality, environmental destruction, wars and oppression across the globe.

The Socialist Party organises working-class people to fight against the attacks from this rotten system on our lives and livelihoods, and for a socialist alternative: a society which takes the wealth out of the hands of the super-rich and is democratically run by working-class people to meet the needs of all not the profits of a few.

Building fighting democratic trade unions in the workplaces and a new mass workers' party is a vital part of the struggle to change society along socialist lines.

Because capitalism is a world system, the struggle for socialism must also be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International which organises across the world. Our demands include:

- **WORK, PENSIONS AND BENEFITS**
- A £15-an-hour minimum wage for all, without exemptions. For the minimum wage to automatically increase linked to average earnings or inflation, whichever is higher.
- Share out the work. A maximum 32-hour working week with no loss of pay or worsening of conditions. The right to flexible working, under the control of workers not employers. An end to insecure working, for the right to full-time work for all who want it; ban zero-hour contracts.
- All workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness, parental and holiday rights from day one of employment. End bosses using bogus 'self-employment' as a means to avoid giving workers rights.
- No to austerity through inflation. For all wage rates to be automatically increased at least in line with price rises.
- Open the books of all companies cutting jobs or claiming they can't afford to pay a real living wage. State subsidies, where genuinely needed, for socially-useful small businesses.
- For trade unions independent of the capitalist state, with members having democratic control over their own policies, constitutions and democratic procedures. For all trade union officials to be regularly elected, subject to recall by their members and paid a worker's wage.
- Reduce the state retirement and pension age to 55. For decent living pensions.
- Replace universal credit and the punitive benefit system with living benefits for all who need them.

PUBLIC SERVICES

- A massive expansion of public services including the NHS and council services. Reverse all the cuts, kick out the privateers. Bring private social care and childcare facilities into public

ownership under democratic control, in order to provide free, high-quality services for all who need them. Expand services for all women suffering violence.

- For local councillors who are committed to opposing austerity and all cuts to local services, jobs, pay and conditions.
- For a socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs, including dental and eye care – free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out the private companies! Nationalise the pharmaceutical industry under democratic workers' control and management.
- Renationalise privatised utilities – including rail, mail, water, telecoms and power – under democratic workers' control and management.
- Free, publicly funded and democratically run, good-quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees and write off student debt, end marketisation, and introduce a living grant. No to academisation. For all schools to be under the genuine democratic control of local education authorities, school staff, parents and student organisations.
- The right to a safe secure home for all. For the mass building of genuinely affordable, high-quality, carbon-neutral council housing. For rent controls that cap the level of rent. Fair rent decisions should be made by elected bodies of tenants, housing workers and representatives of trade unions. For cheap low-interest mortgages for home buyers. Nationalise the privately owned large building companies, land banks and estates.

- **ENVIRONMENT**
- Prioritising major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels and nuclear power with renewable energy, and ending the problems of early obsolescence – where products are designed to 'wear out' and be replaced - and unrecycled waste.
- Nationalisation of the energy companies, under democratic workers' control and management, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need, in order to carry out a major switch to clean, green energy, without any loss of jobs, pay or conditions.
- A democratically planned, massively expanded, free to use, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.
- For a major, publicly funded, insulation and energy transition plan for existing housing stock.
- Agribusiness to be taken into democratic public ownership. For a food processing and retail industry under workers' control to ensure that standards are set by consumers, small farmers, and

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all workers involved in the production, processing, distribution and retail of food.

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

- For united working-class struggle to end discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice and oppression.
- Repeal the anti-trade union laws and all others that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest and to strike! End police harassment. For the police to be accountable to local committees, made up of democratically elected representatives of trade unions, local community organisations and local authorities.
- For the right to choose when and whether to have children – for the right to access abortion, contraception and fertility treatment for all who need it.
- For the right to asylum – with democratic community control and oversight of emergency funding resources. No to racist immigration laws.
- Expand democracy. For the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords. For all MPs to be subject to the right of recall by their constituents at any time, and to only receive a worker's wage.
- For proportional representation and the right to vote at 16.
- For the right of nations to self-determination. For an independent socialist Scotland and for a socialist Wales, both part of a voluntary socialist confederation of Wales, England, Scotland and Ireland.
- Oppose the dictatorship of the billionaire owners of the media. For the nationalisation of newspaper printing facilities, radio, TV and social media platforms. Access to these facilities should be under democratic control, with political parties' coverage being allocated in proportion to the popular vote at elections.
- For a new mass workers' party, based on the trade unions, and drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplaces, and community, environmental, anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, socialist political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

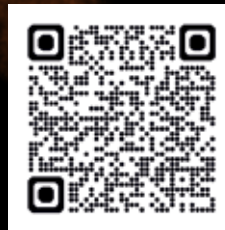
SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- No to imperialist wars and occupations!
- Take the wealth off the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need, not to the fat cats.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the EU bosses' club. Organise a campaign with European socialists and workers' organisations to use the talks on post-Brexit relations to tear up the EU pro-capitalist rules. For a real collaboration of the peoples of Europe on a socialist basis as a step towards a socialist world.

SOCIALISM 2024

HELP FUND THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

www.socialistparty.org.uk/s24



The Socialist Party is asking for donations towards funding the fight for socialist ideas.

Can you give £5, £50 or £500? Or more. Every donation, no matter how small, will make a difference and all of it will go to building support for socialist ideas.



Can you ask other members and supporters to donate? We've set a target of £30,000 to reach by the end of our Socialism 2024 weekend on 9 and 10 November. A quarter of it will be to help build our international work, supporting the Committee for a Workers' International.

Donate now to fund the fight for socialism.



Build the Socialist opposition

Militant 60 YEARS the Socialist

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SOCIALISM 2024 PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOPS

A WEEKEND OF DISCUSSION ON SOCIALIST IDEAS

SATURDAY 11AM-1PM	SATURDAY 2-4PM	SUNDAY 10AM-12 NOON	SUNDAY 1-2:45PM
Origins of the Labour Party: a Marxist approach ZOOM Speaker: Dave Nellist, former Labour MP and Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition national chair Chair: Sheila Caffrey	Could A.I. and a green new deal give capitalism a new lease of life? ZOOM Speaker: Hannah Sell, Socialist Party general secretary Chair: Callum Joyce	Historical materialism: how Marxists understand progress ZOOM Speaker: Dave Murray, Socialist Party Eastern region secretary Chair: Pippa Evans	Do we face an authoritarian world? ZOOM Speaker: Sean Figg, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Corinthia Ward
You can't have capitalism without racism Speaker: Deji Olayinka, Socialist Party black and Asian members group convenor Chair: Jay Coward	After the riots: the case for a trade union community defence stewards organisation Speaker: Hugo Pierre, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Mila Hughes	Preparing the trade unions to fight under Labour Speaker: Rob Williams, Socialist Party national industrial organiser Chair: Katrine Williams	Why socialists fight for nationalisation Speaker: Mark Evans, Swansea Trades Council president Chair: Cas Middlemas
60 years of Militant and the Socialist: a Marxist paper and its role in the fightback Speaker: Paula Mitchell, Socialist Party Executive Committee Chair: Ian Pattison	Marxist economics: understanding capitalism to change the world Speaker: Steve Score, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Bob Severn	The Cass Review and the culture wars Speaker: Michael Johnson, Socialist Party LGBTQ+ members group convenor Chair: Rachel Cox	
How to win workers and young people to socialism Speaker: Berkay Kartav, London Socialist Party youth organiser Chair: Ellen Kenyon Peers	Students v Starmer: the battle on campus Speaker: Adam Powell-Davies, Socialist Party national youth organiser Chair: Adam Gillman	Scotland and Starmer: where next for Scottish independence? Speaker: Matt Dobson, Socialist Party Scotland Executive Committee Chair: Joe Waters	What will life be like for disabled people under Starmer? ZOOM Speaker: David Maples, Socialist Party disabled group convenor Chair: Sam Morden
Post 2007-08: what happened to the 'new-left' parties? Speaker: James Ivens, Socialist Party London organiser Chair: Katie Simpson	Capitalism and Islamophobia Speakers: Isai Marjerla, Socialist Party Executive Committee and Nadia Ditta, Southampton Socialist Party Chair: Farhana Manzoor	A new era for the struggle for socialism Speaker: Nick Chaffey, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Amy Sage	Will the trade unions build a new workers' party? Speaker: Theo Sharieff, Socialist Party Executive Committee Chair: John Williams
		The 1905 revolution Speaker: Martin Powell-Davies, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Mark Kerr	After the Austrian elections: is the rise of the far right inevitable? Speaker: Laura Rafetseder, CWI Austria Chair: James Collett
Is society becoming more misogynist? Speaker: Bea Gardner, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Tessa Warrington	The 1917 Russian Revolution Speaker: Martin Powell-Davies, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Max McGee	Where now for the Iranian revolution? Speaker: Bob Labi, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Dara Fitzgerald	50 years of the Committee for a Workers' International Speaker: Bob Labi, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Alistair Tice
Marxism and the state: the role of the police Speaker: Niall Mulholland, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Adam Harmsworth	Climate catastrophe: what kind of action can end it? Speaker: Mark Best, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Chris Newby	What role could the Green Party play in the fight against Starmer's austerity? Speaker: Josh Asker, editor of the Socialist Chair: Eleanor Donne	Lessons from Liverpool for fighting the winter fuel payment cut and more Speaker: Dave Walsh, President of Liverpool Trades Council Chair: Roger Bannister
Sri Lanka: new president, same struggle for survival Speaker: Senan, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Amanda Severn	PCS: the fight for the future of the union Speaker: Dave Semple, PCS National Vice President (personal capacity) Chair: Zakk Brown		Marxist philosophy: using dialectical materialism Speaker: Robin Clapp, Socialist Party National Committee Chair: Seamus Smyth
How is a Palestinian state realisable? ZOOM Speaker: Helen Pattison, Socialist Party London secretary Chair: Amnon Cohen	Nigeria Solidarity: what way out of the crisis? ZOOM Speaker: Odunayo Eniayekan, Nigeria Solidarity UK Chair: Deji Olayinka	USA after the elections ZOOM Speaker: Tony Saunois, secretary of the Committee for a Workers' International Chair: Oscar Parry	What is the role of the Israeli working class? ZOOM Speaker: Judy Beishon, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat Chair: Linda Thraves

BUILD THE SOCIALIST OPPOSITION TO STARMER

Saturday rally 5.30pm - Logan Hall

Speakers include:

- Hannah Sell**, Socialist Party general secretary
- Tony Saunois**, secretary of the Committee for a Workers' International
- Fiona Brittle**, PCS National Executive Committee (personal capacity)
- Jared Wood**, RMT London Transport regional organiser (personal capacity)
- Odunayo Eniayekan**, Nigeria Solidarity UK
- Nadia Ditta**, anti-war socialist election candidate
- Cas Middlemas**, Funding Not Fees student activist

Chaired by: **Josh Asker**, editor of the Socialist

Protesting against Labour's cuts Budget

Southampton trade unionists march

NICK CHAFFEY
SOCIALIST PARTY SOUTHERN REGIONAL SECRETARY

With over 100 days of the new Labour government passed, Southampton and South West Hampshire Trades Union Council (STUC) hosted a rally and meeting on Saturday 2 November. STUC secretary and Socialist Party member Declan Clune outlined the importance of the discussions: "We have suffered the impact of austerity, witnessed the horrors of war in Gaza and Ukraine, and seen the rising threat of racism and the far right. Our trade unions need to be the fore in uniting our workplaces and communities against a new round of cuts."

NHS cuts

Public sector workers from local councils and the NHS explained how Labour's Budget had not addressed the fundamental problems of underfunding, overwork and low pay. The local rep from the Royal College of Nursing explained how nurses had overwhelmingly rejected the government's pay offer. Another health worker warned that the new funding for the NHS was simply not enough.

Council cuts

Council workers at Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council also raised their concerns that the budget had left councils massively underfunded. Hampshire County Council is preparing to privatise the school meals

service and is attacking the workers' sickness policy - that will become a 'sacking charter' if implemented.

Workers are being pushed beyond their limits. This can be seen with the strike ballot of local hospital porters, who have reacted angrily to bullying management demands that workers report to their managers if they want to take a toilet break. Is that what Labour health secretary Wes Streeting means when he talks about increased productivity?

Outside the public sector, pay disputes are continuing. Unite the Union members at Eaton Aerospace in nearby Fareham are escalating their strikes next week.

Housing crisis

Other campaigners present took up the growing housing crisis, with over 8,000 on the council waiting list, and the problems of rising rents and terrible housing conditions. Students from the university explained how, for some, housing costs take up their entire loans, and that many students work 30-hour-a-week jobs on top of full-time studies. They are launching a housing campaign demanding student rents be capped.

Others who have marched against the war on Gaza highlighted how important it was that those protests continue to call out the hypocrisy of Starmer who says there is no money for funding public services, but finds billions for war and destruction.

Sue Atkins, Unite Community,

STUC chair and Socialist Party member, brought a motion to the meeting, supported unanimously, calling for united action to oppose a new round of cuts, giving support to all workers and communities in struggle, and for councils to use their reserves and borrowing powers to set legal, no-cuts budgets and demand the restoration of the billions cut from local authorities since 2010.

The meeting agreed to lobby future council meetings in Southampton and Hampshire, as well as reaching out to other areas such as the Isle of Wight, where activists fighting school closures on the island sent a message of solidarity to the meeting.

Summing up the discussion, Rob Williams, chair of the National Shop Stewards Network, posed the important task for the trade unions ahead: "After 100 days isn't it clear that the TUC, as agreed, needs to recall Congress and assess what 100 days have delivered? To discuss how the outstanding public sector pay disputes need to be resolved, and to prepare a common pay claim for next year. To demand that the Tory 2016 anti-trade union bill, that continues to prevent public sector workers in local government and the NHS from taking action, needs to be withdrawn immediately."

It is clear that underlying problems facing workers, young people and our communities are not being addressed and new rounds of struggles are inevitable. Offering a way forward and a bold socialist alternative to inequality, capitalist crisis, war and division is the challenge we need to rise to in the coming months.



Southampton PHOTO: SOUTHAMPTON SOCIALIST PARTY



Wakefield PHOTO: YORKSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

Wakefield: 'Make the super-rich pay'

IAIN DALTON
SOCIALIST PARTY YORKSHIRE

People were queuing up to sign petitions in defence of pensioners' Winter Fuel Allowance, against the two-child benefit cap and more. The Socialist Party had a campaign stall throughout a protest organised by the National Shop Stewards Network on Budget Day in Wakefield city centre.

The rally heard from several local campaigners, including activists from Unite Community who had been campaigning against the cuts to the Winter Fuel Allowance, including in chancellor Rachel Reeves's Leeds West and Pudsey constituency.

Susan from Unite Community reminded passers-by that Wakefield MP Simon Lightwood was amongst the vast majority of Labour MPs who voted to cut Winter Fuel Allowance. She also pointed out that, when the £2 cap on bus fares was brought in, companies also made that the

minimum fare. She called on West Yorkshire Labour Mayor Tracy Brabin not to raise the cap to £3.

Adrian O'Malley from Mid Yorks Unison pointed out that health secretary Wes Streeting's 'reforms' are about more private sector involvement in the NHS when what is needed is to drive the profiteering leeches out of the NHS. He encouraged those listening to join a trade union to fight for the NHS we need, a point echoed by Yasar Ahmed from the Wakefield Drivers' Association - representing private-hire taxi drivers.

The protest was an important stand against a budget that, as many speakers said, falls short of the change that people wanted to see after the general election.

Speakers put demands on the Independent Alliance, suspended Labour MPs and others to fight the workers' side in Parliament - demanding that the wealth is taken off the super-rich to fund the services we need.

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FUNDING NOT FEES!

Students protest Budget and tuition fees rise

Liverpool

JOE WOOLFALL
LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Liverpool Socialist Students organised a demo, alongside other Socialist Students groups nationally on over 20 university campuses, against the new Labour government's Budget. We knew it would be a continuation of attacks on workers and students, like those seen under the Tories.

Funding Not Fees was set up in anticipation of a potential tuition fee hike in the budget. In the event, the government waited a few days to try to hide the announcement once the news had moved on.

Our demo was attended by around 25 people - members of the public stopped to hear brilliant speeches from the Socialist Party and Socialist Students members. Among our speakers were current and former election candidates. Those who spoke described an education system in crisis, students skipping meals, and a general outline of the attacks against the working class in the Budget.

We contacted other student societies, inviting them to unite with us to fight for free, fully funded education. In the future, we will again reach out



Liverpool PHOTO: LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST STUDENTS

to other organisations and hope to arrange a united fightback against Labour's cuts and fee rises.

Our demonstration was followed by a public meeting on what the Budget means for students. Liverpool Socialist Students has had a very successful year so far and will be building on our hard work in the coming weeks.

Cardiff PHOTO: CARDIFF SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Queen Mary, London

MIHAELA IVANOVA
QUEEN MARY SOCIALIST STUDENTS

At Queen Mary University (QMUL), we handed out over 500 leaflets throughout the week leading up to Budget Day. We held a protest in the Library Square, where a Socialist Students member spoke. Although many students were not even aware of the possibility of a tuition fee increase, they supported our day of action and our open letter to Jeremy Corbyn and the seven suspended Labour MPs to assist our campaign.

Young people have had to fight tooth and nail to be heard. Last term, courageous students organised peaceful encampments against complicity in Israeli state terror where QMUL spent over £100k taking its own students to court!

No one represents the student voice on campus. We believe that students and staff should have democratic control of our resources, setting up democratic student committees alongside campus trade unions to oversee and organise our education to benefit all. We demand the replacement of maintenance loans for grants instead, the cancellation of student debt and the scrapping of tuition fees.

I am incredibly proud of the campaigning Aberystwyth Socialist Students has done for Funding Not Fees so far. But this is just the beginning as the crisis in higher education has not gone away.

The budget and subsequent fees rise have only kicked the can down the road, and given uni bosses a green light to make even more cuts and closures. Socialist Students will continue to fight for funding, not fees!



Aberystwyth

CAS MIDDLEMAS
ABERYSTWYTH SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Socialist Students organised a Budget Day protest following a week of campaigning, including campaign stalls in the rain, a public meeting and a placard-making social.

We were treated to good weather on the day itself, but unfortunately also treated to complete silence by the Labour government in the Budget, which said nothing on the crisis in higher education. It seems the only thing Rachel Reeves has in common with students is a tendency to procrastinate!

In the end she submitted her assignment late, announcing an increase in fees five days later.

Despite our relatively small

FUNDING NOT FEES!

The Funding Not Fees campaign demands that big business foots the bill for education, not students and workers. We call for fully publicly funded higher education, paid for by taking the wealth off the super-rich, as the means to:

- Scrap tuition fees
- Introduce living grants, not loans
- Stop all cuts and closures on campus

If you agree, get involved in the Funding Not Fees campaign!

Join the student fightback: join...

- Visit socialiststudents.org.uk/join
- or call 020 8988 8761
- or text your name and school, college or uni to 07749 379 010



employment rights.

This year alone, 60 staff members at QMUL have left via a voluntary severance scheme. Despite raking in millions, universities refuse to protect our education. This is why we must fight for free and fully funded education.

Manchester

ROBBIE DAVIDSON
MANCHESTER SOCIALIST STUDENTS

With our newly built societies at the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan we were ready to take the ideas discussed in our meetings so far onto the streets, and to make a statement against the squeeze on our cost of living.

We stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Unite Community and Pensioners' Association members, supporting their day of action against the cuts to Winter Fuel Allowances, projected to kill 3,000 pensioners this Christmas.

Students, workers and retired people united against all forms of austerity, and called for meaningful socialist change to put an end to it. This represented an important moment of solidarity, and we will kick on from here to play our part in ending tuition fees and the marketisation of our universities.

We also took the Funding Not Fees campaign to the Manchester Metropolitan Students' Union (SU). Although they agreed to take our programme into review, they did not outright support our motion.

We will continue to fight for the SU to be a body that fights for students

rather than just a depoliticised friendly face, allowing us to vent our frustrations with the failing system of marketised universities.

Cardiff

ARIS PREVOST
CARDIFF SOCIALIST STUDENTS

We protested outside the front of the Cardiff Students' Union, arguing for funding, not fees. This call holds especially in Cardiff, with warning signs from the university trade unions and the university itself about the 'tough choices', aka cuts, that are coming.

In the time we were protesting, we had students approach us and ask about tuition fees rises. Confusion quickly turned to shock and anger with the information that a tuition fees increase was likely to be announced.

This news will anger students and so the Labour government kept it from us in the Budget, only to break the news five days later.

There was no new money for universities in the Budget. So even with the fees rise, uni bosses will make cuts. Both staff members and students are going to be punished for the lack of action by the government.

With this Budget laid out in front of us, it's clear that now more than ever we need a radical upheaval of the higher education sector, with free tuition fees, free maintenance grants and a real living wage for all university workers. Socialist Students will continue to fight for a more fair and just university system.

Egypt: Power cuts, falling living standards and strikes

DAVID JOHNSON

Months of power cuts and rising prices are undermining Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. His government is under growing pressure from all sides.

In July, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly complained: "No one expected the heatwaves we have been experiencing and the continuously high temperatures that have lasted not just for a day or two but for weeks on end. We are in a constant state of emergency every day."

Alarm bells should be ringing about climate change due to global heating. Instead, the government (that hosted COP27 in 2022) has just cut its renewable energy target for 2040 from 58% to 40%.

The power cuts follow a fall in Egypt's gas output. Total annual production from all its gas fields dropped from 70 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2021 to a forecast 53 bcm this year. Egypt has had to import more oil and gas, costing \$6.3 billion in the year to March 2024. This compares with a peak net export surplus of \$4.4 billion in the year to September 2022.

Some gas fields are now thought

to contain less gas than originally estimated, like Zohr which was originally expected to be 30 trillion cubic feet (tcf) but now, seemingly more like 10-11 tcf.

Extracting the gas needs continual investment, but there was a severe shortage of foreign currency earlier this year. With payments to the oil and gas companies in arrears by an estimated \$6 billion, they reduced their investment in new drilling.

Power shortages have hit industrial production, such as the fertiliser sector, in which Saudi Arabia has bought significant stakes in recent years. Saudi companies had accumulated \$5 billion in profits that were stuck in Egypt. The shortage of foreign currency prevented the withdrawal of large sums from the country until March this year, when devaluation and a \$35 billion bailout by the IMF and Gulf states restored some life to Egypt's banking system.

Egypt could get more gas supplied from Israel. Last year, Israel's export capacity was around 15 bcm, which is projected to rise to 25-30 bcm by the end of the decade. It doesn't have any other easily accessible



President Abdel Fattah El Sisi
PHOTO: UNCLIMATECHANGE/CC

The Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) is the international socialist organisation which the Socialist Party is affiliated to. The CWI is organised in many countries. We work to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against capitalism, and to fight for a socialist world.
socialistworld.net

large market for its gas, but increasing trade with Israel will greatly increase Egyptians' anger against Sisi.

Strikes

The government increased the price of petroleum products by 10-17% on 18 October, following rises in March and July. Inflation officially stood at 26.4% in September, slightly higher than the previous two months but lower than February, when it peaked at 35.7%. Working- and middle-class people have suffered drastic cuts in their standard of living.

There are signs workers are starting to fight back, despite severe repression. In August, 550 Samanoud Weaving and Textile Company workers went on strike, staying out for a month. Around 330 of those taking action were women. They demanded the 6,000 Egyptian pounds minimum wage Sisi had announced earlier this year, which should have been implemented on 1 May. The company is state-owned.

The strike ended a month later under threats of dismissal and arrest. Ten workers were arrested in the early hours of the morning, blindfolded and handcuffed. In some cases, family members were taken when the workers were not found at home. They were suspended from work, including union leader Hesham el-Banna, who was kept in custody for several days.

State repression

Charges included: "Deliberate disruption of production facilities with the intent to harm the national economy, incitement to organise

meetings and demonstrations that threaten public security and order, obstruction of citizens' rights and their ability to work, disruption of public utilities, organising a gathering of five or more people that endangers public safety, refusal to comply with police orders to disperse, and attempting to influence public authorities and disrupt public services."

The workers were also accused of deliberately harming the assets and interests of Samanoud Weaving and Textile Company. As one commented, with their livelihoods dependent on the company, why would they want to damage it? A National Security Agency officer has been stationed at the company since the strike ended.

Workers received less than a quarter of their September wages due to punitive deductions and penalties. When one protested at receiving just 300 Egyptian pounds instead of 3,500, he was also threatened with dismissal.

The company has now brought new charges against Hesham al-Banna, with a court hearing to fire him due on 6 November. These vicious measures against striking workers are a warning from the state to all workers not to fight for better pay and conditions.

The factory is less than five kilometres from the giant Mahalla al-Kubra factory, where 28,000 workers went on strike in 2006, which was a key step towards the mass uprising that ended President Hosni Mubarak's 31-year rule in 2011. They were on strike again in February this year.

About 3,500 workers at the state-owned Egyptian Aluminum Company

in Qena began a partial strike on 22 October. The workers began a sit-in inside the factory, protesting at management's decision to reduce workers' profit shares by about half. The sit-in turned into a strike, with workers partially halting production and adding demands for increases to their meal and the cost-of-living allowances. Basic wages of young workers are only 1,000-1,200 Egyptian pounds a month, increasing to a maximum of about 5,000 with allowances and bonuses. As a result, many rely on the annual profit share.

Sales and profits fell during the pandemic. But profits have doubled since 2022. "We accepted that there were no profits during the covid period. Now, when things are going fine, you say I get nothing?" one worker told news-site Mada Masr.

No amount of state repression can indefinitely hold down workers' determination to restore and improve their living standards. These strikes are signs of a movement that will grow. The Egyptian working class is potentially the most powerful force in society, if organised together and with determined and clear leadership.

A mass working-class movement would gain support from other oppressed layers of society, and could change the situation throughout the Middle East, currently overshadowed by war, growing famine and disease.

Building independent trade unions and a mass workers' party with a socialist programme will be needed to end poverty and win democratic rights. Their foundations need laying down now, despite Sisi's severe repression.

Worst flooding in half a century kills more than 200 people in the Spanish state

ELOI PICRÍN

These are days of unconsolable mourning and righteous anger in Valencia. Accompanied by shouts of "murderer", the king and queen of Spain were pelted with mud when they visited the area and on the same trip, the prime minister ran away when confronted.

This 'autonomous community' (roughly equivalent to a devolved country in the UK) has been victim to a torrential downpour not seen before in this generation. In some places, around 25 litres of water fell in just ten minutes. A whole year's rain fell in hours. The result has been devastating scenes, with cars and debris piled up in flooded streets, locals forced to ransack local ruined supermarkets in search of food, and overstretched emergency responders working overtime to save as many lives as possible. The Spanish state government has declared the affected areas as "catastrophic zones".

While natural catastrophes are up to a certain point unavoidable, there are multiple man-made factors that made this 'cold drop' (a common name used in southern Europe for sporadic strong autumn rains typical of their climate) devastating. On the wider scale, scientists fear that the intensity of this downpour is the result of changes in climate patterns due to global climatic change. In this case, rises in the temperature of the air and the sea is known to produce climates where rainfall is more intense and concentrated.

If climate change remains undressed, we can expect to see more extreme climatic events that will result in the loss of life and the potential inhabitability of certain zones of the planet. This tragedy puts into the spotlight the dire consequences if significant measures are not put in place to counteract pollution and environmental damage. However, given that these measures would prove inconvenient to the optimisation of



PHOTO: PACOPAC/CC

profits by the ruling capitalist class, it is unlikely that, even with the loss of working-class lives to the consequences of climate change, the bosses will allow the necessary measures to be implemented.

In this particular catastrophe, the incompetence and disregard of the regional Popular Party (PP) government has also had a hand in making it worse. Questions are being asked about why the last major comparable 'cold drop' downpours in the region in 1982 and 1987 killed 40 and two people respectively, while currently there have been more than 200 confirmed deaths.

The regional government led by Carlos Mazón has much to answer in how it has managed this catastrophe: it has asked for volunteers

to go back home despite the professional emergency workers being overstretched (while the Spanish government also refused the offered aid of 200 French firefighters), many towns have not yet been visited by support units with food and water, the debris still blocks emergency services, and the regional Secretary of Emergencies and Security was nowhere to be seen on the day either physically or in the media. Worst of all, it was Mazón's government that shut down the Valencian Emergencies Unit in 2023 due to it being a "superfluous expense". Clearly, the PP government does not spare a single thought for the common Valencians, and many are starting to realise that they need to be brought down.

Obituary: Terry Harrison 1939-2024

ROY FARRAR

LIVERPOOL AND MERSEYSIDE SOCIALIST PARTY

Terry Harrison's funeral was held on 29 October and well attended by friends and comrades alongside his wife Marie, children Davy and Rachel and grandchildren Owen and Ian.

Terry had died in his care home after suffering for some years with dementia.

He was a stalwart of socialism in Merseyside - a founding member of the Militant Tendency (forerunner of the Socialist Party), devoting his energies to supporting Marxist ideas and activities in the class struggle.

Reformism was triumphant based

on the world upswing of capitalism in the post-World War Two era with genuine Marxists a 'minority of a minority'. Socialist Fight newspaper - forerunner of Militant and then the Socialist Party - was one of the smallest groups at that time. Terry joined this grouping in 1959. To participate, and to work to build it, required a deep understanding of Marxist ideas, which Terry proceeded to demonstrate.

In 1960, Terry was the secretary of the apprentices' strike committee on Merseyside. The strikes involved 100,000 apprentices nationwide, with Liverpool and Clydeside being to the fore. Marxists played a leading role in this against the bosses and the

trade union bureaucracy.

He began his apprenticeship as a boilermaker and recorded his work experiences in his memoir 'Serving My Time'.

Terry wrote an article, 'Say No To The Call Up', in the first issue of Militant published in October 1964. He opposed working-class youth being drafted in to the armed forces, and advocated for the liberation of the colonial peoples still oppressed by imperialism, backed by military might. In the early 1960s, Terry was in the army in Hong Kong doing his own National Service.

He played a key role in building Militant on Merseyside. At the Cammell Laird shipyard he was able to

sell over 100 copies of each edition of Militant to his workmates. During a demonstration against 'In Place of Strife' - Labour's attack on trade union rights in 1969 - Terry led a small team of members that sold more than 200 copies of Militant.

He became the first full-time party worker for Militant Tendency on Merseyside and had a major role in educating younger members during the growth of Militant branches on Merseyside.

His deep grasp of ideas and his ability to convey them was invaluable in building a principled political grouping.

In 1979 he was Labour's candidate for Liverpool in the first European

Nigeria Solidarity UK

● Solidarity with #EndBadGovernance

● Drop the charges!

On Friday 8 November, at 5.30 pm, Nigeria Solidarity UK will be protesting outside the Nigerian High Commission at 9 Northumberland Avenue in London. We, along with other campaigners, will be demanding that the charges are dropped against all #EndBadGovernance protesters, who have faced violence, detention and prosecution for daring to protest against the anti-poor policies of the Tinubu government. A recent report said that, on present trends, the number of 'food insecure' Nigerians could increase from around 25 million now to over 33 million by the middle of 2025.

The Nigerian government, whose president was elected last year with less than nine million votes in a country of around 230 million, is attempting to intimidate opposition by its widespread use of 'treason' and 'terrorism' charges.

This was brutally symbolised on Friday 1 November, when a number of children collapsed in court. Among many other detainees, 32 minors aged between 14 and 17 were in court after having been held by the police for 93 days awaiting arraignment, had clearly been ill-treated, and were suffering the effects of malnourishment and possibly torture. This scandal has enraged many Nigerians and attracted worldwide attention via reports in the international media.

On the day of our protest the trial of another group of eleven protesters begins, Adaramoye Michael Lenin and ten others. They are charged with 'treason' and 'terrorism' because they participated in a peaceful protest in August against hunger and hardship.

We in Nigeria Solidarity UK demand that charges against Adaramoye Michael Lenin and all protesters standing trial be dropped immediately, and all protesters unconditionally released. We also demand a halt to all attacks on democratic rights. Protest is not treason. The Nigerian people and youth have the right to resist the anti-poor capitalist policies of the Tinubu regime.

STOP PRESS

Because of the public outrage at the police brutality against children, their prosecution appears to have been dropped. However, the trial of Michael Lenin and the other defendants is going ahead, and protests are still needed.

NEED NOT GREED

ALAN HARDMAN 1936-2024

"ALAN'S CARTOONS CAPTURED THE POWER OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT... HIS DEPICTION OF THE MINERS' STRIKE BRILLIANTLY SHOWS HOW OUR MOVEMENT COULD COME TOGETHER AT TIMES OF NEED."

JEREMY CORBYN



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Unions must demand Labour increase minimum wage immediately

DANIEL FOREST
TEESSIDE SOCIALIST PARTY

I've worked many minimum wage jobs, as have many friends. We can all attest to the fact that a low wage does not mean that your work is easy or not valuable. Ask any hospitality worker if their job is easy, or any warehouse or production worker if their job isn't valuable.

Ask any young worker if they work less hard than their older workmates, because with Labour's

new minimum wage a 16-year-old gets 38% less than their 21-year-old colleague.

If we take into account just how much our pay packets have dropped in value due to the rapid rising of our bills over the last few years, then we can see that these scraps from the captain's table are simply inadequate.

Right-wing press

The right-wing elements of the press are recoiling in horror at the news that Labour is raising the minimum

wage for those over the age of 21 to £12.21 an hour. Along with a new rate of £10 for those over the age of 18, and £7.55 for those under 18 and apprentices.

It should be no surprise to anyone to hear the squeals from the bosses and right-wing media against the rise. After all, most of them were against the minimum wage being created in 1998.

Low-paid workers need every extra bit of pay we can get. But compared to the size of the enormous cake, this is just crumbs. The remit

the Labour government gave the Low Pay Commission, which recommends the minimum wage rate, was basically what the last Tory government had pencilled in anyway, according to the Resolution Foundation.

Long way off

It's a long way from the £15 an hour that was in Jeremy Corbyn's 2019 Labour manifesto, and that is the policy of the Trades Union Congress.

The union leaders should be

demanding the Labour government increases the minimum wage to £15 an hour now, with no age exemptions.

It could easily be paid for by redirecting profits that line the pockets of the super-rich bosses into the hands of the workers who create that wealth. If they say they can't pay, we say open the books to trade union inspection. If they can afford sky-high profits and dividends, then they can certainly afford to pay workers a decent wage for our hard work.

WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN DEMANDS >>> see column on p10

