

STOP STARMER'S CRUEL DISABILITY CUTS

BEN GOLIGHTLY

SWANSEA AND WEST WALES SOCIALIST PARTY AND SWANSEA DISABLED PEOPLE AGAINST CUTS

This Labour government's cruel proposals to impoverish hundreds of thousands of disabled people and carers, including disabled workers, are now on the table in parliament for 1 July.

There was never any pretence of democracy about this. Half of the proposals - the most important half - were off the table from day one of the so-called consultation process. The process itself was flawed and blatantly discriminatory towards the disabled people hoping to participate.

By introducing the Bill in parliament before the sham consultation had even concluded, before there had even been a single consultation event in Wales, with the first vote in parliament taking place merely the day after the consultation concludes - while the ink is still dry on responses the government has had no chance to consider - Keir Starmer's government has shown its absolute contempt for disabled people and carers.

From the moment the cuts were announced three months ago, thousands of disabled people and carers have hurled ourselves into the battle of our lives. We also knew, from day one, that this is an attack on the entire working class, and the government wouldn't stop here.

This is a government of divide and rule, stumbling from one crisis to another, stirring up division in an attempt to deflect from its failings, making working-class people pay for the bosses' crisis.

The problems ordinary people face - NHS waiting lists, low pay, lack of services, and extortionate rents - are not the fault of disabled people, or migrants, or trans people, or any other section of the working class. They are a result of failures of Tory and Labour governments over decades as managers in a capitalist system that makes the rich richer at our expense.

And Labour MPs know that their government of the bosses is deeply hated. Eyeing their slim majorities and anger in their constituencies, over 100 have pledged support to an amendment that would halt the passage of the welfare bill in Parliament. If efforts so far have caused that many to reconsider their positions, imagine what further U-turns could be won if we step up the fight.

It is urgent that trade unions, as mass democratic organisations which in total represent 1.4 million disabled workers, show decisive leadership in opposing these attacks. Trade union leaders must not put loyalty to the Labour Party above defending their members and communities.

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) in September, which represents 5.5 million workers, will hear a motion, initiated by members of the Socialist Party, calling on it to organise a weekend demonstration against Labour austerity as a launchpad for sustained action.

We need a new party of the working class, and the trade unions should take the lead in fighting for one. We need a party with socialist policies to take the wealth off the super-rich, that can cut across division, stand up for communities and bring together disabled people and the working class as a whole to fight for a decent life for all.

● Read more about the impact of disability cuts see page 3

NO TO THE US BOMBING OF IRAN

FOR MASS ACTION FROM BELOW TO END OPPRESSION AND THE CYCLE OF WARS ►►► p4-5

the**Socialist**
formerly **Militant**

Issue 1327
26 June - 2 July 2025

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The Socialist goes to press on a Tuesday night. We publish online on Wednesday and in print on Thursday.

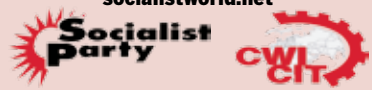
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socialistparty.org.uk
socialistworld.net


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Editor of the Socialist Josh Asker socialistparty.org.uk Mark Best Circulation manager Ali Mansfield	Editorial staff Scott Jones Ian Pattison Paula Mitchell Mark Best
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ISSN 1366-9621
Published by Socialist Publications,
PO Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9GT
Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office
Printed by trade union labour at Reach Printing Services

Militant issue 1: October 1964
The Socialist issue 1: 7 February 1997

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

Air pollution: an invisible killer, caused by capitalism

DAVID ELLIS
BIRMINGHAM SOCIALIST PARTY

Air pollution in the UK kills more than 500 people a week, a report by the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) has estimated. The UK loses £500 million a week to ill health, NHS care and loss of productivity, the report found.

The impact of air pollution is not felt equally across the population. Previous studies have shown that people living in the most deprived areas also suffer the worst levels of air pollution despite owning fewer cars and driving less than those in more affluent areas.

The RCP report comes a month before a cross-party group of MPs is due to reintroduce a bill that aims to make clean air a human right and requires local authorities to meet the minimum standards for air pollution set by the World Health Organisation. The law is named ‘Ella’s law’, after nine-year-old Ella Adoo Kissi Debrah, who in May 2022 became the first person in England to have air pollution listed as a cause of death when she died from an asthma attack.

However, as the report outlines, there is no safe level of air pollution. The capitalist system is unable to bring about the radical change in heating, transport, and manufacturing needed to keep us safe. Less so is it able to do so in a fair and just way. Motor vehicles are one of the biggest sources of three types of air pollution: carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter.

Many cities have introduced clean air zones to try to combat inner-city

air pollution levels, banning older diesel and heavier polluting cars. These plans have been successful in reducing nitrogen oxide levels, and studies in Bradford suggest that fewer people are going to hospital as a result. However, these policies often place the burden of improving air quality on working people who can’t afford to buy new cars while the rich can afford to simply pay the fines. Additionally, since most of the particulate matter comes from the tyres and brake pads, switching to lower-emission cars or even electric vehicles doesn’t reduce this type of pollution.

To meaningfully reduce air pollution from transport, we need free and convenient public transport for all. This would require fully nationalising rail and buses under democratic workers’ control, with the resources needed to expand and improve services.

Investment into active travel such as walking and cycling not only improves air quality but also boosts physical activity. However, cash-strapped councils under the control of all major parties are not prepared to fight for the funding to make it possible.

A democratically planned economy would enable the distribution of goods and products to be produced more efficiently to reduce, for example, the number of lorries needed on the road. Democratic workers’ control of manufacturing industry would also help to ensure that pollutants are monitored and controlled in a transparent way that is acceptable to the communities where factories are based.



MIKE MALONE/CC

Commissioners threaten return to Croydon council No cuts, no council tax hikes!

BEN GOLDSTONE
CROYDON AND SUTTON SOCIALIST PARTY

A recent report found that Croydon Council’s finances were “deteriorating rapidly”, which has led the minister for local government, Jim McMahon, to prepare sending in unelected commissioners to run the council until July 2027. This would be

the third time that Croydon Council has effectively declared bankruptcy since 2020. The council’s debts currently stand at £1.4 billion, with McMahon saying this is expected to rise to more than £1.9 billion by 2029.

Since 2021, the council has received about £553 million of exceptional financial support from the government. In 2022, the council

blamed the financial situation on “unprecedented financial mismanagement, toxic bad debt, and a lack of governance and transparency”. The council was given special permission to undemocratically raise council tax by 15%. With the most recent council tax hikes, residents are paying 27% more than when Tory mayor Jason Perry came into office in 2022.

Labour councillors aren’t innocent either - they abstained on that budget vote, allowing the 15% council tax rise through.

Perry reports the council has ‘saved’ £167 million over the past four years and has sold £130 million worth of assets, with plans to see a further £68 million this year. Croydon residents have been paying more and receiving less! Just look – recently, four libraries have closed and the council has cut its Youth Engagement Team.

Now, it will be a Labour government sending in commissioners, which will most likely lead to more services lost or privatised, and job losses. Croydon will also have to pay for the ‘privilege’ of having the commissioners in; last time this was to the tune of £900-£1,000 a day.

Instead of allowing this, councillors should refuse to make cuts and continue to provide much-needed services, taking a stand against the cuts commissioners. They should demand that the shortfall in the budget is provided by central government. This would motivate the local community, bring the unions on board, and pressure the government to find the funds for the services people in Croydon need. The government should also write off the debt. For inspiration, they just need to look to the Poplar councillors of 1921, and the Militant Liverpool councillors in the 1980s who fought back against Thatcher, showing that councils can resist cuts. And if councillors are unwilling to do this, then they should make way for those who are!



Protest against Croydon council cuts in 2023 BERKAN KARIAN

Disability benefit cuts’ impact

Flawed PIP process

Labour’s proposed welfare cuts threaten many people. Some people on PIP (Personal Independence Payment) are able to work but others aren’t. The full-time job of looking for a job is made more difficult due to disabilities and ill health. Yet again the capitalist class is punishing us because they think we are expendable and won’t fight back.

People don’t choose to have any form of disability, hidden or visible. It’s not a lifestyle choice. I certainly didn’t choose any of the health issues and hidden disabilities I have. Yet we are being demonised.

The PIP application process is daunting and many assessors don’t seem to have much knowledge of the health conditions people they are assessing actually live with. Often, the assessor report bears little or no resemblance of the discussion which actually took place. I have experienced this myself.

Many Labour MPs have expressed an intent to vote against these cuts, for which they will be punished for doing the right thing. Many people will be further impoverished if the cuts do go ahead. For many with any kind of disability or chronic health condition, it’s terrifying and I include myself in that statement.

But we are prepared to fight back. As previous RMT leader Bob Crow said: “If you fight you won’t always win, but if you don’t fight you will always lose”.

MELANIE, READING



PIP enables us to live

I am in receipt of PIP and the disability top-up to Universal Credit (UC), which enables my husband to work knowing that I’m safe and my needs are catered for. If we lost PIP we would not be able to afford the additional help, and therefore my husband may not be able to work full-time.

PIP enables me to live with dignity knowing I can afford extra heating, which helps me stay well, helps with things like travel and help with tasks in and around the house. My condition is greatly affected by stress, and the worry surrounding these proposed cuts to benefits has caused me to be quite unwell, as I’m sure it has done for many people in my situation.

I know of a disabled woman who is living with an abusive husband and has been for a long time. She is in receipt of PIP and UC with no requirement to work. As she has got older, her condition has deteriorated and she has become increasingly worried about her physical safety. She has been having counselling and support to leave her situation. Now, with the cuts announcement, she is afraid she will lose PIP and the UC top-up. She is not able to work. I’m sure you can imagine her, to be quite frank, in despair.

JANE, DEVON

Fight back JOIN THE SOCIALISTS
socialistparty.org.uk/join



State surveillance

In late 2019 I applied for PIP. I got refused, and went to Citizens Advice, who then helped me apply for reconsideration. We won and I got standard daily and enhanced mobility help.

I filled out the review in December 2023 and my mobility was downgraded to standard rate, so I lost my mobility car, which had a huge effect on my mental and physical health. I cannot walk far and have a fear of public transport on my own, so was stuck. I eventually managed to get a loan for a car, causing me serious financial hardship.

This time, I applied for reconsideration and lost. So, with the help of Citizens Advice, I went to appeal. This took almost a year!

At the appeal (which is for the year 2023) I was asked about a holiday that I had gone on in February 2024 and my daughter’s wedding in August 2024, which has no relevance to my 2023 review.

I did not volunteer this information, so the only way they would have known was to go onto my social media, which I did not give permission for. I feel violated and extremely upset and angry!

I have sent off for a statement of reasons because my appeal came back with no change.

The effect this has had on my health is unbelievable. I feel like I can’t go out or post normal everyday things on my social media for fear of being watched and penalised for trying to live my life with two debilitating conditions, fibromyalgia and osteoarthritis.



Pushed into poverty

My wife has a number of mental health issues, which she struggles with on a daily basis. On good days, with occasional prompting and assistance, she is able to do things. On bad days however, she is incapable of doing anything, even things like washing is a great challenge and requires a lot of support from myself.

At the start of this year I quit my full-time job, the main factor being my duty of care for my wife. I would often be unable to work due to my caring responsibilities, resulting in a loss of income and an increasingly strained relationship with my manager.

I have since started a part-time job to bring home a little extra money. However, this is a balancing act as I’m also claiming Carer’s Allowance and so I can’t go over the extremely low income threshold. My partner, on the other hand, is claiming Universal Credit and PIP, which makes up the bulk of our household income.

Our current total income isn’t much, it’s enough to pay our bills and have a little left over to treat ourselves, such as the occasional takeaway or donation to the Socialist Party Fighting Fund. We currently have our heads just above the water, however with the looming cuts to benefits such as PIP, we’re at risk of drowning.

These vicious cuts would at best mean we’re no longer able to enjoy life, never treat ourselves, at worst they mean we’re also no longer able to pay the bills. All this is supposedly to encourage my partner to get a job. The irony is she would love to work, she talks often about how she wants a job but her mental health prevents her from doing so.

It now also puts me in a tough situation: do I go back to full-time work, not provide her with the support and care she needs or do I stay part-time but risk falling into poverty due to these cuts?

These cuts aren’t a carrot, they’re a stick, used to beat those the capitalist class can’t get their pound of flesh from; they are cruel, cold-hearted and highlight the morality (or lack thereof) of Starmer’s Labour government.

ARCHIE, WORCESTER

Palestine Action proscribed

Defend the right to protest



MARK BEST
SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Hundreds of thousands of people marched through the streets of London on 21 June, showing their opposition to the British government's support for the Israeli state's war on Gaza, and escalating war in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the Labour government was preparing to proscribe Palestine Action, meaning anyone that is a member of or expresses support for the direct action group faces up to 14 years in prison.

This followed Palestine Action activists spraying paint onto military planes on RAF Brize Norton, embarrassing the prestige of the British military. A few activists on e-scooters armed with spray paint could penetrate an airfield and escape unharmed.

The tactics of Palestine Action, which include occupying and sabotaging arms manufacturers in Britain linked to the Israeli state, have not ended capitalist wars and the British government's support for the likes of the Israeli state and its murderous occupation of Gaza (Read what we think: 'What can end horror in Gaza?' at socialistparty.org.uk).

Labour Home Secretary Yvette Cooper's attempts are not solely aimed at the actions of one group. This draconian measure to ban a protest group, placing them alongside Boko Haram, nazi National Action and the Russian paramilitary Wagner Group, is aimed at

the thousands of people who have reacted with revulsion to the daily horrors in Gaza.

The Labour government feels the anger that exists towards it from the general public. People are angry at their support of the Israeli military in Gaza, they are angry that Keir Starmer sits on the lap of Donald Trump as he unleashes death and destruction across the Middle East by bombing Iran. And they are angry as the government cuts disabled people's benefits, hikes up tuition fees and continues Tory austerity across the board.

Working-class struggle against this government of the bosses is posed, and that terrifies the likes of Starmer and Cooper. They know how unpopular they are and will use any tools at their disposal - including attacking the democratic right to protest - to try and head off the bubbling rage under the surface, as they try and make us pay for the bosses' crisis with lower wages, worse services and endless wars.

We need to fight back against any attempts to curb our right to protest, and demand the undemocratic protest laws introduced by the Tories, alongside the anti-union laws, are all scrapped. Mass working-class action can fight back against the government's support for war, and by fighting to build working-class solidarity across the world we can fight for a system in which the bosses' wars for profit are put in the dustbin of history where they belong.

PHOTO: PAUL MATTSSON

NO TO THE US BOMBING OF IRAN

As the Socialist goes to press a fragile ceasefire holds between Iran, Israel and the US. In retaliation to US bombing of Iranian nuclear facilities in the days previous, Iran struck a US air base in Qatar on 23 June.

We carry an article by **Robert Bechert, Committee for a Workers' International**, published before Iran's retaliation and the subsequent ceasefire.

Trump's decision to join in the Israeli state's bombing war on Iran clearly marks a new turning point in the already bloodthirsty warfare that has gripped increasing areas of the Middle East. It is widely seen as a gamble both internationally and also for the Trump administration in the US. Its effects can be widespread, not just in the Middle East. It is likely that the Iranian regime is debating what to do, whether to retaliate and, if so, how and when. In a sign of what could develop, a Houthi leader in Yemen has said that a response from this force to the US attack on Iran was "only a matter of time", despite the ceasefire agreed with the US at the beginning of May.

Exploiting the understandable Israeli shock and anger after the 7 October Hamas attack, the Israeli state began its systematic destruction of Gaza and imposed brutal siege conditions on its population. Simultaneously, state and settler oppression of Palestinians living in east Jerusalem and the West Bank dramatically increased. Soon fighting spread to Lebanon and then the Israeli state seized the opportunity given by dictator Assad's overthrow in Damascus to seize significant areas of Syria. The Israeli leadership has drawn the conclusion that, at the very least, significant numbers of Palestinians need to be removed from Gaza in order, they hope, to kill off the idea of building a Palestinian state. Now the open entry of the US onto the battlefield and its extension to Iran has created a new situation.

Despite Trump's bombastic claims, it is by no means certain that the 21-22 June bombing has "completely and totally obliterated" Iran's nuclear facilities. Within hours, the US military leadership was talking of "severe damage", as reports emerged of a flow of trucks in and out of these facilities in the days before the US attack. This poses the question of how the Iranian leadership will respond to the attacks, especially if the damage has been limited or repaired.

The propaganda machines have gone into top gear. The sheer size of the weapons the US used is an



PHOTO: AVASH MEDIA

illustration of the 'weapons of mass destruction' that the imperialists possess, and which they continue to develop, but this is not commented upon in the official and pro-capitalist media.

The Western countries continually say that Iran cannot have nuclear weapons, but are continually silent both about Israel's nuclear weapons and the Israeli state's brutal record of oppression and land seizures. On 22 June, the British prime minister, Keir Starmer, effectively justified Trump's bombing campaign by ignoring commenting on it, while describing Iran's nuclear programme as "a grave threat to international security". Starmer's refusal to call on the Israeli government to stop its own bombing campaign mirrors his attitude to the IDF's assault on Gaza - indeed right at the beginning in October 2023, Starmer argued that "Israel has the right" to withhold electricity and water from Palestinian civilians.

Since then, the numbers killed, overwhelmingly by Israeli forces in Gaza, are, in reality, unknown but 60,000 is certainly a minimum. That is 2.6% of Gaza's population before the IDF onslaught, a horrendous

For mass action from below to end oppression and the cycle of wars

a worker-based opposition to both Democrats and Republicans, to build support amongst some of those who supported Trump.

In Israel, the US joining in the bombing of Iran may give a temporary further boost to the Netanyahu government's support, given how Iran has been presented to Israelis as the major threat behind Hamas, Hezbollah, and Assad in Syria etc.

Rise in anger

In the rest of the Middle East and in countries with significant Muslim populations, there will be a further rise both in anger and frustration that nothing is being significantly done to aid the Palestinians.

Of course there will be angry official statements. On 22 June, a Saudi foreign ministry statement "affirmed its condemnation and denunciation of violating the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran", but then tamely went on to express "the need to exert all efforts to exercise restraint, de-escalate, and avoid escalation."

Turkish president Erdogan had been denouncing the post-13 June Israeli bombing campaign as "banditry". Yet a Turkish foreign ministry statement on 22 June had a different tone: "Turkey is deeply concerned about the possible consequences of the US attack on the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear facilities... Ongoing developments could escalate the regional conflict to a global level. We do not want this catastrophic scenario to become reality."

It is clear that no capitalist government will act unless it is forced by pressure and movements from below. And even then, such governments will aim to act in a way to benefit their own ruling class.

Significantly Trump, who earned \$1.3 million from the sales of Bibles in 2024, evoked the Christian god when he made his announcement of the US bombing raid. He said that he wanted to "thank... in particular, God, I want to just say we love you, God, and we love our great military, protect them". Describing the US bombing raid against Iran, US Defense Secretary Hegseth offered a religious proclamation: "We give glory to God."

Religion will continue to be used in this conflict. Nearly all Zionists claim that the Jewish god gave this particular piece of land to "his people". This can fuel not simply the bitterness of the conflict in the Middle East but also religious conflict, particularly against Jews elsewhere.

This makes it even more important that socialists argue for, and strive to

build, a genuine class-based alternative to this cycle of oppression and wars.

The day before the US started bombing, a key Iranian trade union issued an important statement. The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company is a semi-legal trade union which has resisted state repression over the years. It has led important struggles in the Iranian capital. The union's statement showed an attempt to give a direction to "the widespread public anxiety, and the deep fear of destruction and the killing of innocent people".

The statement went on: "The justice-seeking struggles of us workers in Iran have always faced systematic hostility and repression from the exploitative, authoritarian, and anti-worker state and ruling establishment. This confrontation - now spanning more than four decades - has come at great cost to workers and their families: imprisonment, dismissal, flogging, threats, assaults, and severe economic hardship. This class struggle, which will undoubtedly continue, has never been and will never be waged so that we become cannon fodder for Israel, the United States, or their allies. The backbone of this struggle is the independent, collective, and organised power of workers, justice-seeking people, and the global working class. It not only rejects all imperial powers, but has also suffered serious harm from their interventions, which have undermined and damaged our social foundations and class solidarity."

"Once again, we call on all peace-seeking forces across Iran and the world - especially labour organisations, political organisations and parties, environmental movements, women's organisations, student and civil groups, human rights defenders, and anti-war movements - to resolutely demand an immediate ceasefire and an end to the war, and to work toward a just and lasting peace. A peace that saves lives from the impending catastrophe, and enables us - workers and the oppressed - to shape our own destiny through our independent organisations."

While it is possible that popular anger against the Israeli and US attacks will give the Iranian regime breathing space, this will not last forever. Events, whether a movement from below or a crisis within the regime, or maybe a combination of the two, will pose the questions of removing the old regime and what should replace it.

At such a time, the question of how to meet the challenge of building a force - a revolutionary party and wider workers' organisations - that can achieve the aims of the Tehran bus workers' statement, will become key. Socialists would argue that to achieve these objectives means replacing the existing government with one based on a movement of working people; a government of representatives of workers and the poor, with policies for the needs of the working masses and their families.

Such a government could break with oppression, capitalism and imperialism, and begin to offer a new future to all the peoples in the Middle East, in a voluntary and equal socialist confederation, and give an example for the world to follow.



Change of mood at Unison conference as workers' anger at Starmer's government grows

EVE MILLER

DELEGATE TO UNISON CONFERENCE, PERSONAL CAPACITY

Socialist Party members in public sector union Unison, including several young members, participated in the National Delegate Conference from 17-20 June, posing our political programme in times of bluffs, lies and let-downs to the working class since the Labour Party's election to government a year ago.

The right might have re-won control of the National Executive Council (NEC) this time, but conference showed this is not an indication that members are happy with Keir Starmer's Labour, which it is clear from conference that the Unison leadership defends. The split between those who are prepared to stand up to the Labour government and those who support it was clear from the start.

The conference kicked off with the sour realisation that emergency motions on defending trans rights had been ruled off the agenda by the right-wing Standing Orders Committee, due to the threat of 'legal jeopardy'. A number of delegates challenged this; however, the right won the vote to accept the agenda.

Support for new workers' party

During the first day of the conference, Socialist Party members made a big impact in the debate on a motion on the far right, outlining that the reason for Reform UK's gains in local elections, and the risk of an increase in support for far-right ideas, is the political vacuum opened up by the Labour Party continuing austerity. Delegates called for Unison to implement the "Jobs and homes - not racism" campaign agreed at the Trades Union Congress in 2018; and to use the money currently given to cutting Labour candidates for a new trade union-backed workers' party. This was met with great enthusiasm from the conference floor - showing a clear mood against Starmer's Labour from the outset.

On the evening of the first day, the Time for Real Change (TFRC) group, which until the recent elections was the biggest group on Unison's NEC, held a rally. April Ashley, a Socialist Party member re-elected to the NEC, asked to address the rally. While explaining that we would support the TFRC candidate in the upcoming general secretary election, she put our programme to the 300 in the room, for a fighting strategy against cuts including the need for a new party. Their answer to us was that they had "not thought of" a new mass workers' party, claiming they adopted a different approach of 'Unison members first, Labour Party second'.

Julia Mwaluke

The speakers included two members of the previous presidential team that were recently removed from their positions by the right-wing bureaucracy. The room was filled with anger at how left activists have been treated,

and this culminated in a protest outside the conference on Wednesday morning to reinstate the most recently removed NEC member, former vice-president Julia Mwaluke. Julia re-won her NEC seat, beating her opponent by 5,000 votes, but disgracefully has been barred due to one wage slip which, as a zero-hour agency care worker, they say took her over the low-pay threshold for her seat. She has been given no right of appeal!

Excuses for Starmer

On Wednesday, the conference heard a speech from general secretary Christina McAnea, where she was forced by pressure of members to admit to the conference that Labour was wrong on the two-child benefit cap, the winter fuel allowance and disability benefit cuts - but continued to try and placate delegates, saying that Labour's U-turn on the winter fuel allowance was "not a sign of weakness, but a sign of maturing". But actually it's a sign they're under pressure - we should be fighting to increase that pressure!

McAnea continues to make excuses for Starmer, but as the evidence of Labour's crimes against the working class racks up, an increasing number of activists are questioning this.

Our members made our position very clear on a number of debates: condemning Labour for not repealing the Trade Union Act 2016 from day one, on top of other anti-trade union laws; calling for full renationalisation of essential industries, democratic ownership and planning, in discussions on insourcing and a public services 'bailout'; supporting Palestinians and Israeli workers' solidarity movements and mobilisation against war; and outlining that the only answer to climate change caused by profiteer giants is a socialist society. In all debates, the call for a new workers' party was clearly raised, with the conference responding eagerly.

Socialist Party fringe

Our fringe meeting was attended by around 50 activists, where the main speaker was Socialist Party general

secretary Hannah Sell, who set out the industrial and political programme needed to take on Starmer and the bosses. We also heard from Socialist Party member Ellie Waple - a trans woman subject to right-wing press victimisation for standing for a women's seat for the NEC. Broxtowe councillor Greg Marshall spoke; Greg left Labour due to Starmer's policies and with others formed the new Broxtowe Alliance, which now leads the borough council and has passed a no-cuts budget.

Kye Gbangbola also addressed our fringe meeting about the Truth About Zane campaign, developed after the tragic loss of his seven-year-old son in 2014 due to hydrogen cyanide poisoning and the cover-up by authorities. Kye and his wife Nicole were presented with honorary lifetime membership of Unison. Socialist Party members in Surrey over many years helped win this union support.

Liverpool example

Anger mounted on the final day of conference in the debate on public services, living standards and the economy since Labour's election. Six Socialist Party members spoke, raising the need for mass cross-union industrial action against Labour's cuts to public services and disability benefits, outlining that the money is clearly there in society when war expenditure is increasing.

We raised the 50,000-strong mobilisation of workers in support of the socialist council led by supporters of Militant, now the Socialist Party, 40 years previously in Liverpool, where the conference was held, as a perfect example of industrial pressure to raise funding for services.

This year's conference had a huge change in mood. Workers' anger makes it ever harder for the leadership to push back with the excuse of waiting for Labour to improve. The newly elected NEC will come under big pressure from members as Labour's cuts and privatisation deepen. Delegates purchased over 200 copies of the Socialist over the course of the week.



Many of the Socialist Party members at Unison conference
SOCIALIST PARTY



Workers' anger makes it ever harder for the leadership to push back with the excuse of waiting for Labour to improve

Right wing forces through NEC changes

Straight after Unison conference the newly elected NEC met to choose the presidential team for the next year. It elected a completely new team, despite protests over the decision of the right-wing union machine to allow the loser in the election for the NEC reserved seat for Black members to take the place of Julia Mwaluke, the previous vice-president, who won the seat.

TFRC submitted a candidate for president, Lyn Marie O'Hara, and vice-president, Andrea Egan. They supported April Ashley, Socialist Party member, for the other vice-president seat.

Hypocritically, Members Together, the right-wing slate, submitted a candidate to stand for all the seats, despite having objected furiously when the TFRC did this after it won a majority in 2021. The right's presidential candidate, Catherine McKenna, won by 37 to 27. This will now allow the right wing to fix the membership of all the standing committees with an inbuilt majority, to win the crucial chair and vice chair positions.

However, the balance of forces on the NEC is not yet

settled. The newly elected 'Organised Left' grouping from the North West backed the Members Together slate. James Robinson, who the Socialist Party had supported in the NEC election, voted for April Ashley, but abstained in the vice-president election and wrongly voted for the Members Together candidate for president.

To a degree, this new grouping can exercise a balance of power on the NEC. Julia Mwaluke is appealing the decision about her seat, and there will be a by-election for another NEC seat following a tie in the election. These means decision-making on the NEC and its standing committees could be very tight.

The Organised Left grouping will come under enormous pressure from a vicious right wing to do their bidding. But the pressure from the members could force them to break with that approach, either individually or as a group. Socialist Party members will continue to put maximum pressure on the NEC to adopt fighting socialist policies for our union to reflect the real interests of Unison members.



Eve on the podium, one of many Socialist Party members making an impact at Unison conference
SOCIALIST PARTY

Come to NSSN conference

The National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) says

Labour's Spending Review has confirmed that there will be no relief from grinding cuts. The NSSN conference on Saturday 5 July is a forum to discuss what we're facing and organise the fightback. As usual, we will be giving a platform to workers taking action, such as the Unite Birmingham bin workers, and building solidarity and support. And it's a chance for all trade unionists and anti-cuts campaigners to speak and share their experiences and be part of the discussion on the way forward.

Why I'm going to NSSN conference

BALAKA FELL-HOLDEN

HACKNEY UNISON (PERSONAL CAPACITY) AND WEST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

I'm going to the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) conference on 5 July because we need to get organised to fight back. As a worker in the public sector, I see the damage being done daily to our services, our pay, and our rights.

Years of cuts have pushed people with the least, and with the most to lose, to the brink. And while the Tories accelerated the crisis, Starmer's Labour is offering no real alternative.

I work in libraries, and see council services drained dry. Starmer has abandoned WASPI women fighting

for justice. He's backtracked on funding the NHS, leaving it to crumble while patients suffer and staff are driven out. He's silent on rising poverty - while pensioners are expected to gather their own winter fuel just to survive. He refuses to challenge racism, sexism, or the rise of the far right. His failure to oppose the Israeli government in Gaza exposed whose side he's really on. Workers from marginalised communities are hit hardest - and can't afford to wait.

The Birmingham bin strikers show that workers are willing to fight, but they shouldn't have to do it alone. The NSSN conference is a chance to come together across unions, to coordinate action and build real solidarity.



SATURDAY 5 JULY, 11AM-4.30PM
CONWAY HALL, LONDON WC1R 4RL
Conference 2025

PREPARING TO TAKE ON STARMER AND THE BOSSES

VICTORY TO THE BIRMINGHAM BIN WORKERS - AND ALL STRIKERS AGAINST LABOUR ATTACKS

ORGANISE AGAINST DIVISION. MAKE THE RICH PAY, NOT WORKERS!

Bring a delegation from your union branch

Confirmed speakers so far: Eddie Dempsey RMT General Secretary, Steve Gillan POA General Secretary, Steve Wright FBU General Secretary, Ian Hodson BFAWU President, Ed Harlow NEU Vice-President, Fiona Brittle PCS NEC (personal capacity), Annoesjka Valent NAPO National Official, Unite Birmingham Bin Striker, Rob Williams NSSN Chair

Join the fightback

Socialist Party members campaign for fighting, democratic trade unions, wherever possible working alongside others, to campaign for the industrial and political strategies workers need

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'Magnificent 37' phlebotomists' strike forces management climbdown



BILLY JONES

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

After 84 days of strike action, Gloucestershire phlebotomists - medical professionals who take blood samples - have seen a major breakthrough in their fight for fair pay.

Caroline Hayhurst, elected rep of the phlebotomy team, writes: "As a result of our determination and unity, along with the solidarity and pressure we've built up locally, the Trust has been forced to back down and stop blocking the job evaluation panel from reviewing our pay. We've stood firm, and they are finally forced to treat us with some respect."

The phlebotomists' pay has been unfairly set to Band 2 - just pence above the minimum wage - despite how difficult and dangerous their work is. The small team of mostly women workers, now nicknamed 'The Magnificent 37', were not unionised 19 months ago, but pushing back against their conditions has quickly turned them into fighters.

They have consistently stood in solidarity

with other struggling workers, including the Birmingham bin workers on strike against their council for fair pay. Recently they rallied alongside the Fire Brigades Union to protest against Gloucestershire County Council changing the shift times of firefighters.

Caroline spoke at the Socialist Party's South West regional conference in June and received a standing ovation. She will also be speaking at the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) conference on 5 July.

The strike has set fires of motivation for other phlebotomy teams across the region. Phlebotomists in Swindon, suffering on similar wages, have held an indicative ballot for strike action, returning a 100% result in favour.

Dawnie Elliott, another member of the team, sums up the feeling in Gloucestershire: "It's been a long and often exhausting journey, but this breakthrough shows that our courage, unity, and refusal to back down are starting to make an impact. We know this isn't the end, but it finally feels like we are being heard."

PCS strike at Civil Aviation Authority

CALLUM JOYCE

SOUTHERN SOCIALIST PARTY

PCS union members at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) have taken six days of strike action to oppose a derisory, below-inflation pay offer from the arms-length government body.

Socialist Party members visited their picket line in Crawley near Gatwick Airport to offer solidarity and to discuss the way forward for the dispute.

Despite providing an important public service - including among other things being responsible for providing financial protection for consumers if a profiteering airline company ever goes bust - these workers are not being fairly compensated, reporting that their pay has been repeatedly undermined through years of below-inflation pay 'rises'. What they have been offered this year does not even reach the level of the already insufficient pay mandate authorised by the government for the rest of the civil service.

Despite many of the workers living outside of the immediate area due to working from home,

many had travelled for hours to attend a small but defiant picket line, engaging with other workers still going into work and discussing with them about the need to join the union. Strikers reported that they have seen an increase in union membership since the beginning of the dispute.

Prospect union also organises workers in the CAA and they have previously taken strike action on the same day as PCS members as part of their own pay dispute. Unfortunately they have not organised any further action at this stage. Prospect agreeing to coordinate future strikes with the PCS would be a positive step to unite the struggle across the workforce and apply the maximum pressure to the bosses to pay the workers what they deserve.

The employer has now agreed to further negotiations as a result of the strike action, but strikers said they would consider further action if a decent pay offer is not forthcoming.

This small but important dispute is part of the greater battle taking place across the civil service and the public sector as a whole to oppose Starmer and Reeves's attempts to make workers pay for the developing economic crisis through low wages and job cuts.

University of Liverpool strike over hybrid working and conditions

NIVEN DAY

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST PARTY

The Socialist Party and Socialist Students supported the pickets of Unite and University and College Union (UCU) members at the University of Liverpool (UOL) on 19 June.

Unite and UCU workers were on strike over issues relating to hybrid working. The university has imposed an extra day to the hybrid working option, expecting staff to be on campus for 60% of their working week, without any negotiations with the unions. Unite has stated that this will have a negative impact on "employee's work-life balance, personal well-being, family-friendly working, and the principle of flexibility that hybrid working arrangements was intended to

support". One of the speakers at the picket said that, as an autistic person, the mandatory extra day in the office would put a mental strain on her.

The other issue that faces workers is the lack of office space. Following Covid, office spaces had been repurposed into meeting areas and storage facilities, leaving a shortage of space. This means that staff would have to work in unsuitable locations, with the management going as far as recommending that meetings could take place in pubs or cafes. Unite and UCU members have discussed this with the UOL management, but feel they have shown a disdain for the workers who keep the whole show running.

Under this Labour government, UOL workers have already received voluntary redundancy notices, and more cuts to jobs and services in universities nationally are expected. We need to fight against all of these cuts, and fight for a fully nationalised education system, where trade union rights are recognised.

FIGHTING FOR LGBTQ+ RIGHTS IN 2025

MICHAEL JOHNSON

SOCIALIST PARTY LGBTQ+ GROUP CONVENOR AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The pace of attacks can feel overwhelming. Donald Trump's second term began in January with cruel attacks on LGBTQ+ rights in the US on a much bigger scale than in his first term.

Just this month, the US Department of Health and Human Services confirmed that the federal government has proposed to cut all funding for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline's LGBTQ+ youth specialised services. Despite only being signed into law during Trump's first term, this programme has provided an estimated 1.3 million crisis contacts with LGBTQ+-inclusive services.

Trump's attacks have led more people to seek such services. He signed multiple executive orders in his first three months in office that impact the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the US, from healthcare, to legal recognition, to protection from discrimination. In February, the BBC reported, for example, that "leading public health agencies appeared to have culled webpages that discussed gender, sexually transmitted diseases, and LGBT health" in the US.

While it was never true that LGBTQ+ liberation was an inevitability within the system of profit-before-all else capitalism, the basis for that hope has suffered major blows in the last year.

The fight for LGBTQ+ rights in 2025 takes place against a backdrop of governments and right-populist politicians seeking to whip up division as a distraction from their inability to solve the cost-of-living crisis and the rest of the problems capitalist crisis means for the 99%, while the 1% get richer. LGBTQ+ workers and young people alongside migrants are among those at the sharp end.

Less than a year in, Keir Starmer's Labour is embarking on further austerity cuts to day-to-day spending on services. And, like all governments attacking workers' living standards in service to the capitalist bosses, Labour has shown that it cannot be relied on to defend the rights of oppressed sections of society.

April's Supreme Court ruling on trans rights proves yet again that minority rights are not secure in a society in which a capitalist elite relies on scapegoating to preserve their rule. This is especially the case now when that rule is engulfed by crisis and its defenders are unable to build and maintain support bases. The local election results showed the alienation from Labour, who lost about 60% of the seats they had held before polling day on 1 May.

This Supreme Court ruling will do nothing to improve women's safety or access to services. But the tiny trans population will face more challenges in terms of access to public services, toilets, and legal rights, and the dangers to trans rights and identities from

an emboldening of those who oppose them.

The 2021 census found that there were around 262,000 people, 0.5% of the population, who identified as having a gender different from their sex assigned at birth. The number of recorded hate crimes against transgender people rose by about 60% between 2021 and 2024.

The Supreme Court ruling was carried out by five judges from the capitalist establishment, all educated at Cambridge or Oxford. Sometimes judges can be used to take decisions that politicians are afraid to take for electoral reasons.

The Labour government has also sought to pass off its attacks on trans health provision as something required of it by a 'greater' power, in this instance by an academic review by Dr Hilary Cass. But the 388 pages of the review have no power to force governments to act. The government's decisions are part of its broader approach of cutting public services and whipping up division.

The working class is far from uniform. We have different skin colours, religions, languages, sexualities, genders, ages, ethnicities, and more. But we have a shared experience of being exploited by the big business bosses in the capitalist class.

Flowing from that is the potential to organise collectively and challenge the policies of the capitalist class - and to replace them and their system with a socialist alternative based on planning society to meet the needs of all. It is to prevent this that divisions among us are sought using everything the capitalist class has at their disposal including so-called culture wars.

But the ability of the capitalist class to whip up homophobia has been weakened - including by the resistance of LGBTQ+ workers and young people, and greater confidence to reject backward divisive ideas.

However, the capitalist class has spent a decade investing in presenting the tiny population of trans women as a threat to women's rights. They have the advantage that women's safety and services are under threat - but from cuts and capitalism not trans women. The absence of a mass workers' party to answer their lies is another major advantage to them. Unfortunately, some trade union leaders, even those who have been seen as on the left, have not countered these lies with a mass struggle to end austerity, oppose discrimination, and fight for all our rights.

Trans women are in the front line. But that does not mean that lesbian, gay and bisexual people, trans men and non-binary people are not also impacted - as well as the wider working class.

Austerity attacks have led to a collapse of youth services generally, huge waiting lists for mental health care, widespread closures of public toilets, and more. A lack of decent



PHOTO: PAUL MATTSSON



Socialist Party activists will take part in Prides putting forward what is needed to defend the rights of LGBTQ+ people and all those facing oppression. That is building united mass working-class struggle for a socialist society

affordable housing often forces LGBTQ+ people into unsafe situations or back into the closet with unsafe families or housemates, too.

Sexual health services have been described in the British Medical Journal as at "breaking point" following £1 billion in cuts over the last ten years. For context, this year the Sunday Times Rich List revealed that the five richest people in Britain alone own £128 billion. Labour's policies, including Streeting's moves to escalate privatisation, will only add to pressures already hitting the NHS and continue the transfer of wealth from the working class to the richest.

In the workplace

One in five LGBTQ+ people already report verbal abuse in the workplace and one in 20 have experienced physical violence or threats, according to research by the Trades Union Congress. All this means more than a quarter of LGBTQ+ people aren't open with anyone at work. Just under half of respondents reported that they experienced bullying at work, rising to eight in ten for trans people.

Homophobic bullying remains a problem in schools. In November, research by a charity found that 78% of primary school children across the UK hear homophobic language.

This situation was made worse by the threat of the Tories to introduce draft guidance on gender-questioning students in schools. They received pushback from the government's lawyers as well as some education unions. Labour has not so far taken action to progress the draft, but neither have they acted to cut across its chilling effect, undermining school workers' confidence that they can support gender-questioning students.

The Tory draft guidance for schools has been likened to Margaret Thatcher's Section 28, a reactionary and homophobic attempt to ban the 'promotion of homosexuality' in schools, part of the Local Government Act 1988.

Education workers were anxious about falling foul of Thatcher's law, many feeling unable to even mention that gay people existed or challenge homophobic bullying, let alone be 'out' at work. Such was the climate of fear, even after it was repealed in the sixth year of the Blair Labour government, many teachers were worried it was still in force.

However, it is worth remembering that although the Tories went all-in on anti-trans women attacks in their general election campaign, it didn't save them from being smashed. There is huge anger in society at the consequences of Tory austerity, and its continuation by Starmer's Labour and the potential for a mass fightback - but that requires the struggle to unite the working class.

The changed context of that struggle is something that fighters for LGBTQ+ rights need to recognise, discuss, and respond to.

For a whole period, capitalism and capitalist politicians have been compelled by changing social attitudes and the struggles of LGBTQ+ people, to outwardly appear to support our rights. This has led to investment into Pride events, corporations monetising and marketing their support by slapping rainbows on their logo during Pride month, for example. That 'support' was never reliable.

The cancellation of this year's Liverpool Pride event is a stark example. Under pressure from LGBTQ+ workers and young people organisers cut ties with Barclays Bank but have

struggled to secure funding from other sponsors.

In the US, brands such as Amtrak, Anheuser-Busch, Benefit Cosmetics, Boeing, Booz Allen Hamilton, Citi, Comcast/Xfinity, Deloitte, Diageo, Garnier, Goldman Sachs, Lowe's, Mastercard, Meta, Nissan, Pepsi, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Skyy Vodka, Target, Visa and Walmart have pulled back Pride sponsorships and donations this year.

But Pride never needed corporate sponsorship to be successful protests for LGBTQ+ rights. The retreat by these corporations is a response to the changed approach from the White House - but also the limited success their rainbow-washing had. In the US, only 16% of LGBTQ and 13% of non-LGBTQ adults believe companies are motivated by a "genuine desire to celebrate LGBTQ people."

We need a fighting Pride

Pride events can play a key role in bringing people together to fight for what's needed. They have their roots in the political campaigning for LGBTQ+ rights, identifying the major issues affecting us and challenging the establishment. While Pride events should of course celebrate the massive steps forward since Pride started, faced with culture war attacks and the crisis of capitalism we need a fighting Pride more than ever. This should include, rather than banning political parties, challenging those that would pass on these attacks like Labour and the Tories, making them face the community.

The decisions from some organisers

of various Pride events to ban political parties from Pride events is in part an expression of disgust at all the establishment parties - but have not been made on the basis of democratic decisions and are not the answer. From some organisers tied to Labour and even the Tories, they are attempts to avoid the need to discuss how to fight for LGBTQ+ rights in 2025.

These attacks are happening now, not because people have suddenly stopped supporting LGBTQ+ rights, but as a reflection of the era of capitalist crisis we are living through.

Faced with this new situation, self-appointed leaders of the LGBTQ+ community, and organisations like Stonewall and others, are lost. Their strategy of relying on incremental legal improvements under capitalist governments is shattering.

Legal changes and steps forward to improve the lives of ordinary working people should be welcomed. But the Supreme Court's decision, and the way it is being used by capitalist politicians and sections of the establishment, shows we can't rely on the courts or other capitalist institutions to defend our rights.

It shows how reforms can be rolled back. What is needed is an organised working-class fightback. The working class has a proud history of both fighting for what is needed but also making unjust laws unworkable, such as with the mass non-payment of the Poll Tax, under the leadership of the Socialist Party (then Militant).

The fightback against Section 28 saw mass protests pulling together

the LGBTQ+ community, trade unions and wider society. It directly challenged the homophobia of the state and media, including abseiling down the houses of parliament and invading news broadcasts!

But it was a failure of the trade union and Labour leaders at the time that there was not a greater link built between the struggle against Section 28 and the other sections of the Local Government Act of 1988 which introduced vicious privatisation.

The potential for that was shown in the trade union solidarity for these protests, in particular from the National Union of Miners (NUM). That stemmed from the LGBTQ+ community and trade unions recognising their shared battle against the hated Thatcher government, and in reciprocating the support shown to striking miners during the 1984 miners' strike, as depicted in the movie *Pride*.

While this movement was not able to immediately defeat Section 28, partly due to being redirected into less militant campaigning by organisations like Stonewall, it was a major factor in changing attitudes towards homosexuality and laid the groundwork for its eventual repeal.

Critical in taking forward our current fight will be the trade unions. Bringing together over six million workers in workplaces, they have the power to make the Supreme Court ruling unworkable where it is used to divide in the workplaces.

The trade unions can also play a key role in taking the fight further, by striking to challenge Labour austerity and fighting for the services and resources the working class needs. The trade union movement can be a space for workers to come together, to discuss and debate what is needed in terms of healthcare, housing, education and more, cutting across the toxicity of the culture wars.

The trade unions are also key to building a party of our own! A new party of the working class would bring together LGBTQ+ people, immigrants, women and other campaigners. That would give us a voice and way to challenging the politics of austerity and division at the ballot box, offering a socialist alternative.

Socialist Party activists will take part in Prides this year, putting forward what is needed to defend the rights of LGBTQ+ people and all those facing oppression. That is building united mass working-class struggle for a socialist society, free from want and capitalist division which would enable us all to live freely.

If you want to help us fight for LGBTQ+ rights in 2025, and fight for a socialist world free from oppression - join us!



Socialist Party members and trade unionists marching at Swansea Pride in May PHOTO: SWANSEA SP

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NEU: Fight to increase funding now! Pay awards are not enough



NEU young workers discuss how to build the pressure on Starmer

JAMES ELLIS
LEAD NEU REP, PERSONAL CAPACITY

In June, the National Education Union (NEU) hosted its New Professionals and Young Workers annual conference. There were hundreds of education workers, many new to the profession, discussing important political issues such as how to oppose academisation, win funding for schools, and the best way to build a strong and unionised workplace.

I represented the NEU on a panel alongside representatives from NAS-UWT teachers' union, the University and College Union and the Communication Workers Union. This was a varied discussion, with one of the themes being the best way for unions to effectively work together.

My contribution focused on how to push back against privatisation in education, drawing on the lessons from the successful strike campaign in my academy trust, the University of Brighton Academies Trust. I called for coordination across unions to oppose privatisation, and for the trade

union movement to end ties with Labour and put its financial and organisational strength into building a new workers' party.

Daniel Kebede, NEU general secretary, opened the weekend with a speech followed by questions. He spoke about the negative impact that the academy system is having in education, highlighting excessive CEO pay as just one example. At NEU conference this year, a motion was passed almost unanimously calling for the union's executive to launch a national campaign on academisation, with a first concrete step being to fight for legislation to be passed in parliament that creates a mechanism for academised schools to be able to return to local authority control.

I asked Daniel for an update on this, but unfortunately he did not give a clear reply, instead talking about the need to 'begin a discussion in our union about the kind of education system we want'. We already know what we want - democratically controlled and properly funded local authority education! We don't want to be left to

fight privatisation locally in our workplaces and districts alone - the NEU must launch a national campaign on this issue as a matter of urgency.

Daniel correctly attacked the inadequate levels of education funding and called on the government to fully fund the upcoming teacher and support staff pay awards. However, he stopped short of fully committing to a formal ballot on the issue, instead calling for the union to launch a 'political campaign' to secure funding.

The Socialist Party bulletin for the conference argued that it would be a mistake to back away from balloting over pay at this stage - even the threat of strike action has forced an improved pay offer. Funding is crucial - but any political campaign will be much stronger if we maintain pressure on Starmer's New Labour by moving to a formal ballot, alongside other unions - this is the approach that was agreed by NEU national conference. Our executive now needs to show clear, bold leadership by calling a ballot and fighting for action.

SEAN MCCAULEY
WORCESTERSHIRE NEU DISTRICT SECRETARY,
PERSONAL CAPACITY

Rachel Reeves felt the pressure of potential further strike action from the National Education Union (NEU) over school funding when she announced a £4.7 billion increase in school funding over the next four years. Any new money will clearly be welcome to cash-strapped schools and colleges but it is not enough.

School costs will increase by 4.1% for 2025-26 and school funding was previously slated to leave a £630 million gap in funding.

The ringfenced £410 million previously announced for the expansion of free school meals and the £760 million for 'reform of the SEND system' (far from enough) are both included in the announcement.

The threat of action pushed the pay offer to teachers to 4% - higher than the 2.8% Labour originally funded - but it remains partially unfunded to the tune of £600 million, to be funded

through efficiencies. And it is not enough - the real value of our pay has fallen by a fifth since 2010. 4% is below April's RPI inflation rate of 4.5%. We should reject the government offer and fight for a pay award that starts to return pay to 2010 levels.

Support staff have been offered only 3.2%, an insult to mainly very low-paid workers, and which is totally unfunded.

Over £2.4 billion, therefore, of a £4.7 billion increase meant to take us to April 2029, has already been spent this year! This is far from the NEU's stated aim of fighting to increase overall spending on school to 5% of GDP.

The threat of a potential fight has forced the government's hand. The pressure needs to be maintained. We cannot let Starmer's Labour off the hook now.

150,000 teachers voted in the indicative ballot to strike: demanding an above-inflation pay offer that would be fully funded. The NEU national conference in April voted to move to a formal ballot.

The NEU National Executive has launched a consultation to ask members if they agree with the following strategy:

"Your executive believes that any pay award that is not fully funded is unacceptable and will lead to cuts in schools. Your executive wishes to register a dispute with the secretary of state and launch and pursue a political campaign into the autumn term, to secure additional funding.

"Your executive further recommends that all members, local, regional and national structures of the union prioritise this political campaign, including building the union and engaging with the public, as well as the organising work to get 'ballot ready' with the aim of being in a

position to be able to call such a national ballot in the autumn term."

Members should vote 'agree' to keep the option of action on the table, but continue to press the leadership to seriously prepare for national action. We say reject the government offer! Prepare for national strike action, and include support staff in the fight. Let's keep up the pressure on the executive for a ballot!

We support a political campaign, and propose that that should include calling pro-worker MPs - including Jeremy Corbyn, independents and suspended Labour MPs - to a meeting of the executive, so that we can establish a group of MPs who will champion our demands in parliament.



CWU restructuring conference: CWU can grow if it has a fighting industrial and political strategy

SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS IN CWU

The leadership of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) has called a Special Restructuring Conference. At this stage, this is the only national CWU conference this year. Last year there was a rules conference, and industrial sector conferences. That means that there hasn't been a general conference of the union for over three years, despite it being an annual conference by rule.

Yet this has arguably been one of the most intensive and dynamic periods experienced by the CWU, at all levels. This period has included the strike wave, which saw the union fight on three fronts: Royal Mail, BT and the Post Office; the end of the Tories, when they tried to bring in more anti-union legislation; the election of the Starmer Labour government; and the takeover of Royal Mail.

In reality, this conference flows on from the 2024 rules conference, and represents the next stage in what can appear to reps and members as a continuous process of restructuring, reorganisation, and - most worryingly - retrenchment.

Socialist Party members in the CWU recognise that this is a pivotal moment for the union. But a discussion on assessing the resources of the union can't be separated from a debate about the terrain facing us, and the industrial and political approach and programme needed.

A major contraction of membership will open up the consideration of a merger with another union, but the CWU can continue and even grow as an independent stand-alone union.

We aren't opposed to temporary measures to marshal our forces, on



condition that it is used to prioritise resources to build the union and grow the membership. But this must not be at the expense of lay member democracy and control. In fact, this is crucial in galvanising members to go forward. It is why we will oppose measures to cut lay democracy, such as moving to two-yearly conferences. Debate and discussion are essential in developing union activists.

And this must include winning reps and members to a fighting industrial approach and open up a real discussion on our political orientation. Otherwise, this conference will be followed by others, on a downward curve to amalgamation.

The CWU is vulnerable because it is overwhelmingly based on three major employers - Royal Mail, BT

and the Post Office - all of which have continued to face management and government policies of privatisation, outsourcing, closures and redundancies.

But at critical times, notwithstanding recent disputes, the CWU leadership, both nationally and at sectoral levels, have not sufficiently challenged these attacks.

At the height of the brutal Royal Mail struggle under the Tories, when management threatened to take the company into administration, clearly raising the stakes during the dispute, the union leadership refused to raise the demand of returning the company to public ownership.

Incredibly, this mistake has been repeated in the Kretinsky takeover under the new Labour government.

UCU NEC: Congress takes a fighting stance - now the leadership needs to act

DUNCAN MOORE
UCU NEC PERSONAL CAPACITY

The first National Executive Committee (NEC) of the University and College Union (UCU) since its congress took place on Friday 20 June.

This year's congress saw dozens of motions brought by branch delegates calling for nationally coordinated strike action, in both higher and further education.

Although the Socialist Party now has two members elected to the NEC, this year's elections were a setback for the left overall. Those organised around the 'UCU Commons' faction, supporters of general secretary Jo Grady, took just enough seats to tip the balance in favour of those who have consistently opposed coordinated national action.

The clear mandate from congress, to fight for funding and pay on a national basis, is now in the hands of NEC members who do not want to bring our union into conflict with the

Starmer government.

At the NEC meeting, a motion crucial to getting the union battle-ready for the autumn was timed out due to conscious filibustering, including the immediate past-president demanding a break 20 minutes before the meeting was scheduled to finish!

In order to keep up the pressure on the leadership to build for national strike action across both the higher and further education sectors in the autumn, activists who want a serious fight must stay in contact with each others' branches, and left NEC members arrange to speak at as many branches as possible.

It is vital that support for action is built within branches, that members understand it is their campaign, and that we fight for them to have genuine democratic control over the dispute.

● This is a short edited version of the full article online at socialistparty.org.uk



This is despite renationalisation not only being CWU policy, but also Labour Party policy after the union won the position at the 2022 Labour conference.

By fighting for this demand, backed up by action, it could have put pressure on Keir Starmer - who is now starting to be forced to U-turn on such failed policies as the cut to Winter Fuel Allowance - and it might have been possible to win some important gains. And at the very least, it would have appealed to the significant and growing layer of non-union members in Royal Mail.

This shows the need to link a militant industrial approach to a review and discussion over our political strategy. Socialist Party members have long argued that, given Starmer's pro-big business policies, the CWU and the rest of the union movement must launch a new workers' party that supports our members, our strikes and our policies. At the very least, the union must open up its political strategy so that we can support and stand pro-worker candidates, and build up a bloc of MPs (whether Labour or independent) that fight for our policies in parliament.

There is a future for the CWU, both in our legacy companies and others in the communications sector. But that means prioritising an organising strategy in companies where we already have a foothold as a base to move into others. The GMB general union is not always known for its militancy, but it has pioneered organising in Amazon, on the back of being prepared to strike against low pay. There is no reason why CWU, especially with its fighting tradition, can't do the same or more.

There is a future for the CWU - join us in the struggle for a fighting, democratic union.

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with the NSSN bulletin shopstewards.net



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 trade union struggle for the immediate implementation of the TUC demand of a £15-an-hour minimum wage for all as a step towards a real living wage, 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 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.
- xFor 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.

Do you agree? Join the fightback!

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

- Visit socialistparty.org.uk/join
- or call **020 8988 8777**
- or text your name and postcode to **07985 032 071**

to find out more today!

Help fund the fightback!

DONATE TODAY

socialistparty.org.uk/donate



Nigerian socialists and activists face treason trial



On Wednesday 25 June, Adaramoye Michael Lenin, a member of the Democratic Socialist Movement, the Socialist Party's sister party in Nigeria, faces trial - alongside a number of other activists, including Mosiu Sodiq - charged with treason, which carries the death penalty.

At least 1,400 peaceful protesters have been detained, mostly without trial, following #EndBadGovernance protests in August 2024 against hunger, economic and social crisis. An Amnesty International report found at least 24 protesters were killed by government forces.

Nigeria Solidarity has been building an international campaign calling for the release of the protesters.

Jeremy Corbyn MP and prominent trade unionists have signed the petition on nigeriasolidarity.com calling for the dropping of the charges against the accused.

A protest will take place outside of the Nigeria High Commission in London on 25 June.



Add your name to the petition:

nigeriasolidarity.com/petition

New video tribute to Peter Taaffe now online



Peter was a central figure in building Marxism in Britain and internationally, as Editor of Militant, later General Secretary of the Socialist Party and a leading member of the Committee for a Workers' International.

Abortion decriminalised: Fight for the resources for full access for all

HEATHER RAWLING
SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

MPs voted to decriminalise abortion on 17 June. If the amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill successfully passes all its stages, women will no longer be arrested and prosecuted if they are suspected of terminating a pregnancy outside the rules of the 1967 Abortion Act. It is potentially the biggest change to abortion laws in England and Wales for over 60 years.

Abortion may be about to be decriminalised, but it has not been legalised and is not always obtainable from the NHS. The 1967 Abortion Act only allows abortions up to 24 weeks if two doctors agree that a woman's health would be worse if she proceeded with the pregnancy.

In the past three years, six women have appeared in court charged with ending or attempting to end their own pregnancy illegally, four were prosecuted. In all those cases the women deserved compassion not prosecution.

One woman spent two years in prison after being coerced by her violent and abusive boyfriend. He escaped prosecution.

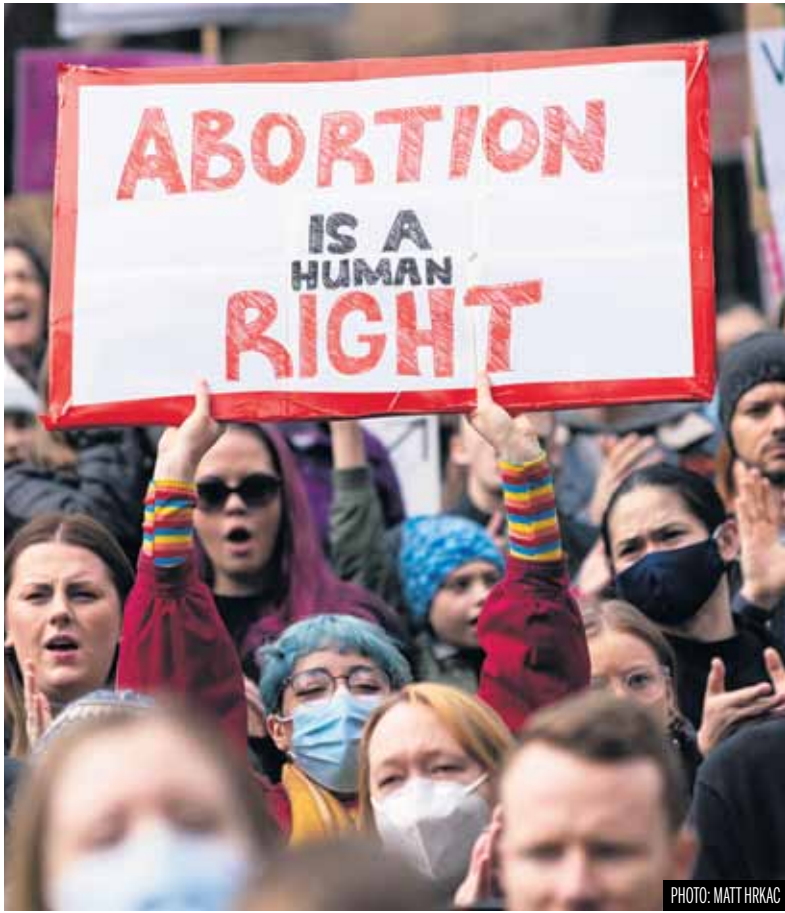


PHOTO: MATT HIRAC

Yet the National Centre for Social Research reveals that around three-quarters of the population support the right to abortion in any circumstance and 95% believe that abortion should be allowed if the woman's health is seriously endangered. Nearly 99% of abortions occur before 20 weeks and late abortions only occur in extreme cases.

Two amendments were put forward but only one was voted on. Tonia Antoniazzi's amendment to decriminalise abortion passed by 242 votes.

However, an amendment to delete clauses of the 1861 Offences Against the Persons Act, which criminalise abortion outside of the 1967 Abortion Act provisions, was not voted on.

Women seek an abortion for a variety of reasons. Some, because it is not the right time for them, but for others it is because there is not sufficient provision for their needs.

For women to have genuine choice on whether, when and how many children they want, we need a fully funded NHS that can provide good maternity care, universal access to free, safe and early abortions, and free, safe and reliable contraception. We need fully paid maternity and paternity leave in the first year to care

for the baby without financial worries or jeopardising jobs and impacting careers.

The cost of childcare has skyrocketed to almost £100 per day in my area. And although parents can claim some financial support it is totally inadequate – a maximum of £2,000 per year per child. And private companies are profiting, whilst often paying their staff barely above the minimum wage. We need free, publicly run, high-quality nurseries and child-minding facilities staffed by qualified well-paid carers.

The cost of raising a child is massive and many women delay their families because of it. A minimum wage of at least £15 an hour would help. Many young people still live with their parents because of the lack of decent housing at rents they can afford. A massive building programme of high-quality council houses and democratically decided fair rents could guarantee decent housing for all.

The money is there to afford all of this. The top 50 richest families in the UK now hold more wealth than the poorest half of the population, comprising more than 34 million people. Take the wealth off the rich to provide the services we need.

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

- Send your news, views and criticism to editors@socialistparty.org.uk - or PO Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9GT
- We reserve the right to shorten and edit letters. We need your full name, address and phone number - but confidentiality will be respected if requested

THE SOCIALIST INBOX

• Assisted dying

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, which would legalise assisted dying for terminally ill adults in England and Wales, passed its third reading in the House of Commons on 20 June.

There has been a lot of debate around this issue, and people have a lot of disagreements. On the one hand, people rightly sympathise with those in so much pain that death would be preferable. On the other hand, there are concerns about the bill in practice and the safeguards it has. For example, Jeremy Corbyn voted against the bill on these grounds.

What we need to fight for is assistance while we are still alive. Both the Tories and Labour have enacted austerity cuts, including to our NHS and to disability benefits. It is this which makes people feel uneasy about the state sanctioning the right to choose dying over living.

We should fight for full NHS funding and a socialist NHS, to reverse cuts to disability payments and provide more support for working-class communities.

What we need is a socialist transformation of society, which would allow all people to have access to services and adequate healthcare, which the capitalist system is refusing to grant at the moment.

JOE WOOLFALL, LIVERPOOL

• Voices of Medway

I have lived my whole life in Medway. It is a mosaic melting pot of people, which I love. So, there were many different people to I wanted to interview, asking what they thought were the main problems in Medway. The first was my mate Mich: "It seems like everywhere you go there are homeless people, definitely in Gillingham. I don't know what it's like in Chatham, but it's bad here".

I proceeded to explain that the Socialist Party activists I have been campaigning with have been fighting on that very thing, as it does seem to be the main problem in Medway. Whenever I talk to people, whether it be in a queue or on Socialist Party campaign stalls, housing is the main problem people face, along with financial difficulties.



PHOTO: CHRIS WHIPPET



PHOTO: MICHAEL HIRST

• Response from a retired defence industry worker

You mention in the editorial on defence spending (issue 1325, 'Defence spending and the workers' movement' at socialistparty.org.uk) that "some workers might also argue that the arms spending is necessary because we need to keep safe".

I spent 20 years up until 2004 working for a UK defence contractor and three of the projects I worked on proved to be literally totally useless and were scrapped.

The Nimrod MRA4 reconnaissance aircraft cost £4.1 billion and

had huge development problems and was eventually scrapped.

The JP233 airfield attack system development cost £10 billion, with production figures never officially released. The system was scrapped due to operational issues during the Gulf War.

The Phoenix unmanned aerial reconnaissance drone cost £345 million. It was scrapped due to operational issues.

These are just three examples that I have personal knowledge of, a little research reveals that there are dozens of other examples.

The defence industry is a bottomless pit and the best way to achieve security is international socialism.

NEIL WAREHAM, BRECON

We Demand Change, Leeds

How can we fight for a new party?

IAIN DALTON
LEEDS SOCIALIST PARTY

120 people attended the We Demand Change summit in Leeds. Some attended the summit looking for a new workers' party.

I spoke from the platform, on behalf of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), at a workshop discussing the left and elections. But, some of the groups leading We Demand Change in Leeds opposed a new party.

The Green Party were represented by Leeds councillor Mothin Ali. He is standing to be the deputy leader of the Green Party.

Mothin pitched the Greens as the already-existing 'new party' – backed up by several Green Party members speaking from the floor. However, they were incapable of responding to points from the floor about their role in passing huge cuts in the council they lead in Bristol.

Mothin denounced their critics as demanding 'purity' tests. As if council workers' jobs, and services many depend on, are somehow secondary.

Independent?

A number of speakers from the Socialist Workers Party, also opposed the idea of a working-class party – instead counterposing the idea of a coalition of independents. One of their members summed up: "It's the time to stand in elections, but not for a new party".

In contrast, the two independent councillors on the platform did come out for a new party. Michael Lavallette, elected as an independent in Preston, is part of a 'Progressive Lancashire' bloc with the Greens. He detailed how he had been elected as a socialist councillor in the past.

Jake Williamson is a Wakefield councillor, who was suspended from the Labour Party for voting against cuts. He also supported the idea of a new party. But he emphasised the need to not just to wait for that to be set up, but to fight for local communities now, and encourage

working-class people to put themselves forward in elections.

When I spoke, I emphasised how TUSC is seeking to bring those together who want to stand as openly anti-austerity, anti-war, socialist candidates – on a common core platform.

It's important that working-class organisations stand in elections, and that elected representatives see themselves as a vehicle for working-class movements. Left-wing councillors should organise with local trade unions and community campaigns to discuss what could be put forward as an alternative to austerity in council budget debates.

Labour attacks workers

We need to take the campaign for a new party into the trade unions. For example, demanding that Labour-affiliated unions stop funding political representatives in Labour that attack their members – such as Birmingham Labour council attacking bin workers in Unite.

Trade unions could stand their own candidates, as an alternative. Fringe meetings should be organised in union conferences to discuss the issue, and motions put to union conferences to push this debate forward.

I raised the petition launched by leading trade unionists, demanding a conference to discuss establishing a working-class political voice. During the conference, a further 18 people added their names to it.



SIGN THE PETITION

Time for trade unions to take the lead in forming a new working class party

• www.change.org/TradeUnions-LaunchANewParty



DAVE SINCLAIR

Campaigners demand Orgreave answers on 41st anniversary

ALISTAIR TICE
SHEFFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

There was optimism amongst the hundreds of supporters of the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign at the rally in Sheffield, marking the 41st anniversary of the police riot against striking miners.

13 years of relentless campaigning by ex-miners and supporters has led to a positive meeting with the home secretary to discuss implementing Labour's 2024 manifesto commitment to an Orgreave investigation, and the options and format of the inquiry.

Police riot

On 18 June 1984, during the year-long miners' strike to save jobs and communities, 95 striking miners were arrested at Orgreave, near Sheffield. Police in full riot gear, with truncheons, dogs, and charging horses, brutally attacked miners dressed in T-shirts and trainers, who had gathered for a mass picket at the coking plant.

Those 95 miners were later charged with either riot or unlawful assembly, offences that could carry a life prison sentence. But when the cases went to court, the trial collapsed due to the unreliable and untruthful evidence of South Yorkshire Police. All 95 were acquitted.

Thatcher's Tories

However, as the latest report from the campaign says, neither the police or Margaret Thatcher's Tory government have ever been held to account for "the Conservative government's political interference and involvement in the 1984-85 miners' strike, and how they used the courts, violent policing, and the media to demonise and criminalise the miners, and give the police confidence to behave with impunity throughout the strike."

Amongst the many great speeches at the march and rally this year, Socialist Party member Lois Austin spoke on behalf of the Campaign Opposing Police Surveillance (COPS). She explained how, just as during the miners' strike, over decades, special

units of the police and MI5 infiltrated many campaigns – including entering relationships and fathering children, in order to spy on, gather information, and try to provoke violence.

Lois, along with now Socialist Party general secretary Hannah Sell, were spied on for 5-6 years, as young leaders of the Youth Against Racism In Europe (YRE) campaign in the early 1990s. Their undercover cop handler subsequently became a whistleblower, leading to the ongoing public inquiry into undercover policing SpyCops, where Lois is a key witness.

Capitalist state machine

Both the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign and COPS have exposed the role of the police as part of the capitalist state machinery – not a neutral impartial arbiter in society, but ultimately "armed bodies of men", which act to defend the interests of the rich and powerful, whenever they are seriously threatened by the workers' movement and mass opposition.

£2,600 raised at groundbreaking South West Socialist Party conference

TOM BALDWIN
SOUTH WEST SOCIALIST PARTY SECRETARY

Socialist Party South West regional conference brought 60 people together to discuss where things are going, and how we build the socialist fightback. We discussed trade union struggles, developments in left electoral politics, and how we fight the rise of Reform.

Solidarity

We were joined by guest speaker, Caroline, one of the striking NHS phlebotomists in Gloucestershire. She spoke about their dispute, and the potential for it to spread to other trusts, including the hospital in Swindon.

Bristol Socialist Party member

Lindsey Morgan said: "It was great to see new socialist fighters, and to hear how the Socialist Party has supported the phlebotomists in their struggle."

We discussed how we can win young people and students to the Socialist Party, and how we can best use the Socialist newspaper to raise socialist ideas among the working class. Then we came back together to discuss how we build the party more widely.

Devon Socialist Party member Lynn Gunnigle said: "Great to see lots of younger members – a refreshing discussion about the Socialist paper, and the use of technology as another tool we must use to our advantage."

Over £2,600 was raised to help the work of the Socialist Party and of the

international organisation we belong to – the Committee for a Workers' International. The turnout included many people who were at their first regional conference.

Plymouth Socialist Party member Rich Stallard said: "Inspiring. I left with motivation and willingness to try new things, and bring new ideas to the Socialist Party."

Determined to fight back

Combined with the determined, fighting mood and the thoughtful contributions about the complicated period we're living in, it showed the way the Socialist Party has grown in south west England in the last year. Bristol Socialist Party member Clint Hatcher said: "It was an amazing day seeing comrades and building each



SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

AREA	£ RECEIVED	£ TARGET	Q2: APRIL-JUNE 2025	DEADLINE: 30 JUNE 2025
North West	2,159	1,200		180%
South West	2,855	2,100		136%
East Midlands	2,545	2,050		124%
Wales	2,638	2,400		110%
London	4,804	5,000		96%
Southern & SE	1,746	2,400		73%
West Midlands	1,705	2,700		63%
Yorkshire	1,607	2,650		61%
Northern	425	800		53%
Eastern	505	1,300		39%
Other	3,195	2,400		133%
TOTAL	24,183	25,000		97%

other up for the task ahead". We're breaking new ground, winning new members, and new fighters for the working class.

Help fund the fightback
DONATE
socialistparty.org.uk/donate



Help build walkouts against Trump

SOFIA PANDOLFI
SOUTH WEST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

Socialist Students is building for youth walkouts against US president Donald Trump's planned visit to the UK. At our campaign stall outside West London College in Hamersmith, we had a strong response from students, teachers, and people passing by.

Many students were keen on demonstrating their opposition to both Trump, and Keir Starmer, who has invited him. With our leaflets on the youth walkouts, we explained to students how they could get others in their college to participate, and how they could prepare for a walkout.

People applauded our initiative. Walkouts support our fight for workers and young people to unite against Trump, and also the capitalist system he is part of.

By campaigning for the Trump walkouts among students in schools, colleges, and universities across the country, we can build an organised, national response against his visit.

● Leeds – building walkout on my first stall

I took part in a campaign stall protesting Trump's visit to the UK. It was my first stall.

I was able to hand out many leaflets, targeting students. We were able to get five students to leave their details to help with organising the protest, as well as handing out almost all of our leaflets.

I talked to many who were curious, yet had limited knowledge on politics. But they acknowledged that

the current state of affairs is tumultuous, and may start to affect their lives. One man was worried and conflicted on the war between Israel and Iran.

Some of the apolitical rhetoric has not just come from ignorance, but from a lack of left representation in politics. This has left the majority of the youth with a 'why bother' attitude, as they believe their vote is powerless, and that no current party can truly capture their views.

DYLAN
NOTRE DAME SIXTH FORM COLLEGE STUDENT

● MidKent College – anger at Trump and Starmer

Socialist Party members promoted the youth walkout against Trump to students at MidKent College in Medway. At our campaign stall, students opposed to Trump likewise opposed Starmer. They organically connected the dots that both leaders favour the capitalist class, exacerbating the cost-of-living crisis for everyone.

But a common response from MidKent students was how Trump and his consequences are confined to the US, not concerning the UK. But Trumpism is accelerating the capitalist crisis. And Trump's far-right populism threatens the rights of various groups, including students.

In times of capitalist crisis, world leaders hope their people won't fight back. Students and workers, including at MidKent, can disprove that with a socialist fightback.

JAMES GRETTON
KENT AND EAST SUSSEX SOCIALIST PARTY



Building for the Trump walkouts in west London JASPER DAVID CHAPLIN

Socialist Party 'Youth and Student Bureau'

Building the Socialist Party among youth

TJ DINIZ MOTA
LEEDS SOCIALIST PARTY

I attended the Socialist Party 'youth and student bureau' – a national event to bring together members leading our campaigning among young people and students.

A consistent theme was growing youth struggle. Climate action, Palestine solidarity, anti-racist campaigns, anti-austerity efforts – each draws new layers of young people into activity. But too often, these issues are treated as separate. The role of socialists is to expose the common thread – they all stem from capitalism's decay.

I listened, learned, took notes, and felt the weight of the room – young socialists stepping up to be leaders in the struggles of young people and workers.

Trumpism

Discussions took place on the new era of Trumpism, and what this represents for capitalism. We reanalysed what we discussed at our Socialist Party congress in March, including how we fight for our demand for a new mass workers' party.

I made my own contribution. I spoke on the importance of uniting student campaigns with campus trade union links, referencing a recent meeting I had with Unison in Leeds, promoting the Funding not Fees campaign.

I also touched on the role of the Socialist paper. It's a tool for analysis, and a living bridge between ideas and organisation, a

vital instrument in meeting new members, and increasing their understanding.

The 'Funding not Fees' campaign initiated by Socialist Students, building a youth walkout against Trump's visit, the Socialist Party's efforts to build among young workers and trade unionists – these are essential to building an organised revolutionary force.

There were reports from the Merseyside independents rally, where our young member presented former Unite the Union general secretary Len McCluskey with the petition for the trade unions to take the lead in forming a new workers' party. McCluskey signed, and former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was asked to as well.

There were reports on the youth-led fight for decent, affordable student housing in Manchester, headed by Socialist Students, and many more campaigns around the country.

Rising youth anger

We are entering a period of increasing volatility and opportunity. With the collapse of the main capitalist parties, and rising anger among young people, new 'left-wing' efforts need a socialist programme, and to be based on the working class.

What sets our party apart? We analyse events seriously, and organise seriously.

We define the change we want to see. A socialist change – jobs, homes, and services for all.

Young people play a vital role in the fight for our future.



Protesting against Trump's last state visit in 2018



£1/£2 solidarity price

socialistparty.org.uk



the Socialist

Issue 1327

26 June - 2 July 2025

formerly **Militant**

NO TO WAR



PHOTOS: PAUL MATTSSON

Walk out against Trump

HANNAH PONTING
LIVERPOOL NORTH SOCIALIST PARTY

It is no secret that Donald Trump's second term as president spells out even further chaos for the world. His bombing of Iran is an alarming escalation of an already explosive situation. He has bragged about doing "monumental damage" in Iran, but all he is doing is creating monumental fear and instability.

He has disgustingly backed up the Israeli state's slaughter in Gaza, calling for it to be made into a holiday resort dubbed the 'Gaza Riviera'.

It follows his aggressive use of trade tariffs - particularly in relation to China - which has already

worsened international tensions. On top of this, Trump has demonstrated his willingness to trash the climate for his own interests, calling to "drill baby, drill" more fossil fuels, and withdrawing the United States from the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement in 2020.

The chaos Trump brings is a reflection of a system that prioritises profit first and foremost, at the expense of the working class and young people. Trump's capitalist agenda offers no real solutions for ordinary people in the US and instead, through his international aggression, actively endangers people across the globe.

This is why Socialist Students has launched the Youth Walkout Against

Trump campaign in preparation for 'Day X' - the day of Trump's second state visit, the date of which has not yet been announced. To give students in schools, colleges and universities the opportunity to organise and protest against Trump's visit and the capitalist system which it reflects.

But this isn't simply about one man. Trump is a symptom of capitalism - a system which prioritises profit above all else, fuelling war and inequality worldwide.

In order for us to effectively oppose Trump, it is necessary to oppose the capitalist system he represents, and instead present an alternative way forward, against wars and austerity, and towards socialism.

YOUTH WALKOUT AGAINST TRUMP



Want to organise a walkout?
Scan the QR code to get involved



WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN DEMANDS ►►► see column on page 12

