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the Socialist

Issue 1338

2-8 October 2025

formerly **Militant**

Labour's conference confirms

WE NEED A PARTY OF OUR OWN



PHOTO: NO.10/ OGL

Brace yourselves for a government making decisions that are “not cost-free or easy”. In other words, one that is going to make you poorer and cut public services. That message from Keir Starmer speaking at Labour Party conference is not really news.

Reading between the lines from spokespeople, the government will make cuts and raise ‘taxes on working people’ in the budget on 26 November. Then again, Starmer’s Labour breaking its manifesto promises is not really news either.

Millions have already drawn the correct conclusion that Starmer’s Labour is governing in the interests of the capitalist bosses, and not the working class. That is why Labour is languishing in the polls. And the prospect of future electoral disaster is why MPs at Labour conference were openly talking about Starmer’s successor.

What’s behind Starmer’s crisis is not personal but the crisis of British capitalism. His government is haunted by the spectre of ‘the bond markets’ - the profiteering speculators

who see through the false optimism of conference speeches to the reality of British capitalism’s fragility. And they are determined that it is the working class that is made to make sacrifices so that they can defend their profits and wealth.

But the working class organised and fighting back is the biggest spectre. Already, faced with working-class anger, the government has been forced into partial U-turns on pensioners’ winter fuel payments and disability benefits. That anger should be given expression by the trade unions mobilising a mass Saturday demonstration ahead of the budget, as a warning of future workers’ struggles. The six million-strong TUC (Trades Union Congress) has a policy for a demo, now it must name the date.

Workers uniting to demand it is the super-rich who are made to pay - not us - would go some way to undermining Reform UK’s ability to pose as being on the side of the working class. Likewise, a new mass party of the working class, fighting against austerity. Support for Corbyn and Sultana’s ‘Your Party’ shows the enthusiasm there is for a new party.

To bring an end to austerity means being prepared to mobilise working-class struggle against the capitalists. A starting point would be ‘Your Party’ councillors elected next May setting no-cuts, needs-based budgets - building council homes and reopening services. Then demanding Starmer’s government coughs up and that the super-rich are made to pay.

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

Issue 1338
2-8 October 2025

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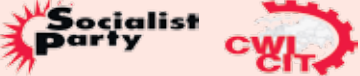
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Karl Marx

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- what did a political
voice for workers in
struggle look like?**

**After Polanski's
leadership win - Can
the Greens become
a viable socialist
alternative?**

**Model motion: ‘Your Party’
councillors can defy austerity**

The May 2026 local elections present a huge opportunity for ‘Your Party’ candidates to be elected as councillors in [your area]. The thousands of potential supporters here are desperate for an end to council tax and charges hikes, and permanent austerity cuts to our services.

[Closed libraries, a lack of council homes, youth services underfunded, council-owned parks sold off, and you can also enter local issues here] ... there are countless issues residents here are angry about, and a huge need for investment in public services.

Your Party candidates pledge to take these issues and more into the council chambers, campaigning for a no-cuts budget that meets the needs of our communities and demanding the money to pay for it from central government. There is vast wealth in society, the super-rich should be made to pay.

This is the best way to expose and cut across Reform UK who pretend to offer an alternative but are also led by millionaires – and Tories. They divide working-class people so that it's harder for us to fight back.

To that end, Your Party in [your area] agrees to bring together an open public conference, including representatives of trade unions, community organisations, anti-austerity political organisations, socialist parties, and others, to draw up a draft budget to fund what services [your area] needs – a no-cuts ‘Peoples’ Budget’ based on our community’s needs not Starmer’s continued austerity.



**Opportunities and challenges for a new
working-class party in May 2026**

**Read the discussion
document online,
including:**

- Can councils defy government austerity?
- Ideas from Jeremy Corbyn’s Labour manifestos
- Preparing for the May elections: local People’s Budgets
- Preparing for the May elections: what if registration is delayed?



tusc.org.uk

‘YOUR PARTY’ MEMBERSHIP LAUNCHED

**Socialist Party members join to argue for a workers’
party with a socialist programme**



After a week of public disagreement between the two left MPs – Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana – who launched the call for ‘Your Party’, the show is back on the road. It is now possible to join ‘Your Party’, and the email inviting supporters to join also announced that a “founding conference will be held at Liverpool ACC on Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 November”.

The fact that steps are being taken to develop ‘Your Party’ will be very welcome news to the 800,000 who have already said they want to join. Against the background of brutal austerity from Starmer’s New Labour Mark II and electoral gains for Reform, the need for a workers’ party with socialist policies could not be clearer. Socialist Party members will be joining ‘Your Party’ and arguing for how it can meet its potential and become the kind of party the working class so urgently needs.

Democracy

Plans have been announced for discussion around draft documents on political principles, the constitution, rules and organisational strategy. However, the current outlined plan for the discussion is unfortunately not a route to serious debate and decision making. Regional ‘deliberative’ meetings are to be followed up by the founding conference which the organisers expect will be attended by 13,000 members, with 6,500 attending each day. Those attending are to be selected by lottery. Following this, final votes will be taken online with all members voting on a one-member-one-vote basis.

In our view, these proposals are not an effective means to build a democratic workers’ party. Practically, how could 13,000 people actually debate a party programme? Who will the conference ‘delegates’ be accountable to? Who will they report back to? No trade unionist would want their shop steward or workplace representatives to be chosen by random lottery, rather than electing the person who would best fight for their interests. A democratic conference should be based on representative and accountable delegates, including from affiliated organisations.

Nonetheless, despite these problems, the foundation of ‘Your Party’ will be an important beginning, and we will take full part in the discussions within it, as well as continuing



PHOTOS: PAUL MATTSSON & UK PARLIAMENT/CC

to argue in the trade union movement that a new party is needed and trade unions need to be central to it.

The application to join ‘Your Party’ initially stated that a member could not be a member of another ‘political party’. Now it says another ‘national political party’. Presumably, the change has been made to take account of the myriad of local left parties that have sprung up over the recent period. Debarring current members of establishment political parties – the Tories, Reform or Labour, for example – is an entirely legitimate precaution against attempts at sabotage, which of course doesn’t preclude individuals who have previously been part of establishment parties being allowed to join if they have changed their views.

However, a recent article in The Observer (25.09.25), was a first hint of the inevitable campaign by the capitalist elite to try and ensure it is socialist organisations that are excluded. The author, Donald Macintyre, concluded that tight control of

the membership was “understandable when a whole hotchpotch of Trotskyite and revolutionary organisations vie for a place in a party meant to appeal to ‘ordinary’ and working-class members.” It says everything about Macintyre’s prejudices that he discounts the possibility of Trotskyist organisations being made up of working-class people, and including many workers’ leaders, like the eleven elected members of trade union National Executive Committees that are members of the Socialist Party.

Unity

No doubt some of the left organisations within the new party will prove irritating to others, but it would be a very serious mistake to submit to the demands of the capitalist press and conclude that the solution is exclusions. Attempts to impose unity from above never work, as recent events have indicated. Instead it is necessary to allow free and democratic discussion on the many crucial issues this

party will face, within which there are bound to be organised trends.

It is vital that includes the right of Marxists to organise within the party, including the Socialist Party. We were previously called the Militant Tendency. In the 1980s and early 1990s we led two massive battles that defeated the Thatcher government, first in Liverpool City Council and then the battle against the poll tax. Throughout those years we were witch-hunted from the Labour Party, starting with the expulsion of the Militant Editorial Board in 1983.

Jeremy Corbyn was among those in the Labour Party who always took a principled position in opposing our expulsion. He understood that, while our alleged ‘crime’ was ‘being an organisation within an organisation’ that was nonsense. The right-wing of the party were also organised, just as they were in Labour Together during their struggle to defeat Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader. Our real crime was our ability to win widespread support for our clear Marxist programme and, as we warned at the time, our expulsion was the start of a process that ended in the Labour Party we have today: a willing tool of the capitalist class.

That experience has important lessons for ‘Your Party’ which rightly aims to be a party which really is ‘for the many not the few’. It will not achieve that if it takes the Labour Party road of excluding organised socialists and Marxists. It is absolutely clear that, especially as the party takes off, the capitalist elite will try to make sure that ‘Your Party’ becomes one more establishment party, putting pressure on from the outside – including to expel so-called ‘extremists’ – but also organising to argue for ‘moderation’ inside the party. That can only be countered by a democratic structure, based on the working class, in which Marxists, along with other trends in the workers’ movement, can debate out the way forward in the struggle for socialism at each stage.

**Editorial: The case for a workers-
led new party gets even stronger**

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Jaguar Land Rover cyberattack, furloughed worker speaks

Workers left in limbo, we need nationalisation

At the end of August, a cyberattack halted production at Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) car factories. The Socialist spoke to a furloughed worker at a supplier to the car plant about his experience.

I got a phone call from my supervisor to say, "yeah, you're not coming in. We've been hit by a cyber attack and we don't know how long we're going to be off for." Every week after that we've had to wait to find out whether we're going back or not. I've been told this morning that I could be back either later this week or next week.

It's been around a month and agency staff in the supply chain have not been paid. They can put it as holiday if they like, but that takes it away from your holiday later in the year.

For a month, it's been hit and miss whether we're going to be back or not. Obviously a lot of us have got houses, jobs, cars, kids, whatever. It's affecting our material conditions.

I've spoken to a few of the colleagues that I worked with. I'm quite annoyed at it, to be honest, because it's all we've all got. We're all moved out and got kids or whatever. It's expensive. I don't know how many people are going to go back that have been furloughed.

It could be months. We don't know. Most likely, firms will have to rely on agency work to fill the gap in demand. A lot of the staff don't want to go back after the month, they've already gone elsewhere. So they're going to have to get low-paid agency workers in for a couple of weeks just to get back up to running.

This week, Jaguar have come out and said that they've agreed a £1.5 billion bailout loan from the government. They're still going to be there, and all the suppliers too, but whether they're going to be back up to full production, I don't know.

We don't know where that £1.5

billion is going to go. They've got a lot of suppliers in and around the West Midlands, around the UK and globally as well. It's going to be a lot to deal with, factories have been shut for the month. JLR relies on hundreds of manufacturers to build these vehicles, and these producers only makes parts for JLR. So it could ripple out into a wider crisis.

We've already had deindustrialisation here for the past 50 years. And it's been tough in our local economy, especially those in smaller towns. There are places that rely purely on JLR to sustain themselves.

What should the government do?

Unions at JLR wanted to push for furlough pay for those working for JLR and all the suppliers, because obviously it's no fault of their own, and it affects the local community as well. A lot of these people live near these factories and rely on them for their financial stability. So one thing they should have done is push up furlough pay.

Jaguar is a massive part of the West Midlands and it's been based here since it was founded. It was under the Ford brand and then it was sold off and then Tata bought it in the 2010s. They should renationalise it if they get the chance to. This would be a massive thing to undo the Thatcher-era privatisation. Putting it back under the British government would secure the jobs for those working there and investment.

If the bosses decide to sell JLR, then that places 250,000 people in



A worker at the Solihull plant
LAND ROVER/MENA/CC

very perilous conditions. There's a whole city essentially supporting that company in the local region, from lorry drivers to security guards, factory workers, engineers, and maintenance staff. The government should be nationalising it but the whole affair shows that they're not on the side of working-class people.

To workers around the country I say "go and join the union, push for unionisation in the workplace and to fight for better working conditions,

and push companies to invest in cybersecurity and infrastructure". Working-class people are the backbone of the industry. Without people, the companies can't run. And so people need investment as well as the infrastructure.

WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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Kneecap charges dismissed

The British state has suffered a humiliating defeat. Irish rapper, Mo Chara (real name Liam Óg Ó hAinle) of Belfast hip-hop group Kneecap, faced terrorism charges for allegedly holding a Hezbollah flag at a London gig and shouting slogans supporting Hamas and Hezbollah. The case was politically motivated and absurd.

On 26 September, Chief Magistrate Paul Goldspring dismissed the charges. The Crown Prosecution Service and Attorney General failed to secure the required consents within the six-month legal limit.

In its haste to prosecute, the state's own procedures were bungled.

Socialist Party members joined the large crowd outside Woolwich Crown Court supporting Mo Chara, despite police attempts to restrict access. Kneecap's high-profile solidarity with oppressed Palestinians touches a chord with many young

people. Outside the court, Mo Chara addressed supporters:

"This process was never about me... It was always about Gaza. As people from Ireland, we know oppression, colonialism, famine, and genocide. That's why we stand in solidarity with Palestine. If anyone on this planet is guilty of terrorism, it is the British state."

Some in government may breathe a sigh of relief – had he been convicted, Mo Chara would have become a global cause célèbre for Palestinian solidarity.

The victory is a celebration, but also a warning. Criminalising political expression and solidarity remain threats. The struggle to defend democratic rights – to protest, speak out, and show solidarity – must continue. This includes the ongoing fight against the criminalisation of Palestine Action.

NIALL MULHOLLAND



NO TO ID CARDS

AMNON COHEN
CAMDEN AND HARINGEY SOCIALIST PARTY

On 26 September, Sir Keir Starmer announced plans for the "Brit card", a new, mandatory digital ID card for all workers in the UK. 24 hours later, over a million had signed an online petition in opposition.

ID cards have long been policy of the Blairite Labour Party. Tony Blair's government introduced the Identity Cards Act 2006, which was later overturned. Then, it was touted as a necessary measure against terrorism. Now, keen to compete with the anti-immigrant rhetoric of Reform, Starmer has rebranded this new iteration of the policy as a measure to stop illegal immigrants from working in the UK.

But current legislation already requires employers to verify proof of their employees' rights to work. Failure to do this can result in a civil penalty of up to £45,000 for a first breach and up to £60,000 for repeat breaches per illegal worker. And if the employer knowingly employs someone who does not have the right to work, they can face criminal prosecution, up to five years in prison and an unlimited fine. The Brit Card will do nothing to stop bosses super-exploiting migrant workers, and that being used to drive down pay and conditions.

Starmer's proposed Brit Card will initially "only" be used to verify its holders' right to work, and control access to government and health services. This will mean that all government, health and financial records for an individual will be linked by their ID number.

This itself is a significant threat to civil liberty and privacy, meaning

a 'Big Brother' state, where the authorities have the technical ability to monitor all aspects of people's lives. A centralised database containing a vast amount of personal and sensitive data (identity, health, financial history) becomes an extremely high-value target for cybercriminals and hackers.

Blair's attempt

When the Blair government tried to impose ID cards in 2006, its legislation contained penalties of up to £1,000 for failure to notify authorities of change of address or of a stolen card, and up to two years imprisonment for using a card belonging to someone else. In Germany, failure to present an ID card can result in a €5,000 fine, in Israel it could result in a six-months imprisonment.

The Brit Card will be a digital card, which will require the installation of a government-issued gov.uk wallet app on every phone. Who will audit the code of the app? What is in place to prevent the state or other private entities following the lead of other states and using it for surveillance purposes?

The British government has a history of colossal and expensive IT failures with involvement from the private sector. The Post Office Horizon scandal, the failed NHS computerisation project The National Programme for IT (NPIIT), Test and Trace, Birmingham City Council's failed IT modernisation scheme...

There is a long list of victims of data loss and hacking, including ransomware attacks on the NHS and businesses, such as the recent high-profile M&S ransomware attack and Jaguar Land Rover (see opposite).

There is no evidence to suggest



Why can the government afford this, when it says it can't afford to restore all pensioners' winter fuel allowance, or scrap the two-child benefit cap?

that the Brit Card database and apps will be immune to these kinds of bugs and hacking exploits. Bugs and outages could lead to people being denied employment, access to services or evicted.

The Tony Blair Institute has claimed that the card will cost £1 billion with £100 million per year running costs. It is highly likely to cost much more, some estimates put the projected cost of Blair's 2006 scheme at over £10 billion before it was ditched, for example.

Why can the government afford this, when it says it can't afford to restore all pensioners' winter fuel allowance, or scrap the two-child benefit cap?

Blair's increasingly unpopular Labour government couldn't get its ID card scheme established. Starmer's Labour government is already far more unpopular and weak. To millions of workers it is clear that it acts in the interests of the profiteering bosses by pushing through further austerity. Starmer's Brit Card would be used as a tool for use against the workers' movement and its struggles to defend itself against increasing attacks by the government and employers. That is why it should be opposed.



MARY FINCH

Labour preparing new NHS private profit scheme

FRANK HAMMOND
COVENTRY SOCIALIST PARTY

Preparing a new round of big businesses making money from our health service, the Department of Health and Social Care has dished out contracts to management consultants Deloitte and lawyers Adleshaw Goddard, as reported in the Guardian. The firms are tasked with blueprinting a business strategy to build new NHS clinics using public-private partnerships (PPP). But PPP is not a fancy, friendly acronym, for the bosses it means: 'We'll take it from here, along with your assets.' Like 'splitting' a pizza with a mate, only to be handed crumbs and forced to pay extortionate interest for years afterwards.

Unfortunately, the private sector invading the NHS is nothing new. Tory prime minister John Major plagued the NHS by introducing Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) in 1992 as a privatising ploy to build hospitals and schools. Big business would stomp up the cash for investment in exchange for massive payments years later, and other profit-making perks. After their use was expanded by Blair's New Labour, the NHS has £40 billion of PFI debt to private companies. It was a disaster for us but Christmas for the bosses.

In Coventry we have seen the impact of this. Walsgrave Hospital was notable for being the biggest PFI hospital built at the time. The £334 million project 'super-hospital' replaced two demolished hospitals. Unlike the old hospital, the new 'super-hospital' isn't in the easily accessible city

centre, but rather on the eastern edge of the city. With their outrageous parking charges, you're out of pocket while you visit your sickly family. Even NHS staff aren't safe from these extortionate fees. And those charges go straight to PFI bosses, not even back to the hospital itself.

Coventry Socialist Party has led the fight locally against these measures, protesting in public weekly for our campaign. We meet many people during our campaigns, but we don't meet any supporters of further privatisation of our public services.

Once again, we can see a pro-capitalist government putting big businesses' wants above our needs. A government that claims to be 'for the people' while continuing the path to our doom paved by the Tories. They are spending billions repaying private contracts instead of investing in our health or paying health workers adequately.

Increasing the involvement of the private sector hardly sticks to Labour's manifesto pledge to keep the NHS "publicly owned and publicly funded"!

We need to kick out the big bosses looking to get rich from our health-care, and loosen their pockets to serve the interests of the many, not the few.

If Labour wanted to learn from the mistakes of the past, they would, though currently it seems their interests lie in what will keep 'the markets' happy.

Workers can fight against any new attempts to make profits that bleed our NHS dry. We can kick out private profit from our health service, including cancelling all PFI deals.



Keir Starmer's cabinet meeting NUMBER 10/CC

RMT trade unionists fighting for their party

Meetings have taken place in several trade unions following on from a 1,000-strong ‘Trade unionists for a new party’ meeting hosted by former Labour MP Dave Nellist on 21 July. We carry here an extract from the report of the meeting of RMT members. The full reports of this and the other meetings, and the full motion text, can be read at socialistparty.org.uk.
A reconvened ‘Trade Unionists for a New Party’ meeting will take place on Zoom on 13 October, see below for details.

On 23 September, a meeting of transport union RMT activists was organised by London Underground Engineering Branch, the largest branch in the RMT with 3,200 members, under the title ‘Your Party - what is the role of RMT?’
The meeting was addressed by two former Labour MPs: Jeremy Corbyn, now an Independent MP, who along with Zarah Sultana has announced the launch of a ‘Your Party’; and Dave Nellist, now chair of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC).

RMT’s potential role
The RMT could play a significant role in getting a new working class-based party off the ground. After being expelled from the Labour Party in 2004 for supporting Scottish Socialist Party candidates, the RMT under Bob Crow’s leadership continued to campaign for an anti-austerity working-class political voice. Bob helped to initiate No2EU-Yes to Democracy in 2009 and then TUSC in 2010. The RMT was formally represented on the TUSC steering committee for ten years from 2012. The RMT was also the first union to support Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership of the Labour Party, with the biggest donation to his campaign after Unite, despite not being a Labour-affiliated union.

It was therefore very important that this discussion took place between Dave, Jeremy, and reps, activists and leading figures in the RMT.
Contributors to the discussion agreed that a programme of anti-austerity, house-building, reversing cuts in services and the social wage, and opposing the genocide in Gaza, is paramount to building a political alternative that can start to undercut support for Reform and the far right.

Trade union affiliation
Speakers in the meeting outlined to Jeremy the benefits of allowing unions and local organisations to affiliate. In his introduction, Dave argued for “a discussion around the idea of a federal beginning to a party.” He said: “I think it’s time that the trade unions - with the reach that they have, with the resources that they have, with the activists that they have in working-class communities - play a central role in discussing how a new party should be formed, how it should be structured and organised, what sort of policies it should have.”

Jeremy confirmed that “the relationship with unions is open for debate and discussion”.
After hearing the discussion, he explained about the experience of having a group of MPs that took the policies of the RMT into parliament: “The RMT group in parliament used to be made up of MPs that were sponsored by the RMT, but they weren’t necessarily particularly in line with RMT policies on their behaviour, their voting records or anything else. John McDonnell, myself and others then set up an RMT group, which essentially was ‘friends of the RMT’.



Jeremy Corbyn supporting RMT members PAUL MATTHESSON

The response we got from Bob Crow and others was that a small group of socialist MPs was far more effective than those that were there before... We had a meeting roughly once a month to go through issues they wanted raised.”

He went on to argue that the “relationship between unions and the Labour Party... wasn’t always good. There were times at the Labour Party conference when very undemocratic casting of block votes would alter decisions massively without any authority from the members of unions.”

Therefore, he argued, “any affiliation needs to have some democratic safeguards that go with it. I’m not exactly sure what they are, but I like the idea that you form a branch of Your Party... and then you have an RMT branch affiliated who will be there and a presence at every meeting. Do they then have a block vote from the local branch, or do they come as local members, or do they have a special status with it? I don’t have all the answers to that, but I think it’s absolutely essential that the unions locally be fully involved.

“Maybe others could come in via the Trades Council. There’s a lot of ways of looking at it, but it’s absolutely right that for the party to be successful, it has to have a substantial and significant trade union involvement in it.”

RMT motion

The meeting discussed the motion that was passed at the Picadilly and District West RMT branch on 17 July, and subsequently agreed at the London Transport Regional Council meeting on 31 July, with 14 branches for and one against.

Below is an extract from the motion, which can be used as a model in RMT branches, and adapted if needed. The full motion can be read online at socialistparty.org.uk

- We call on the National Executive Committee to reach out to Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana to discuss mutual goals, and also to discuss with like-minded unions, such as Unite and others, about the need for trade unions to be at the forefront of the formation of any new workers’ party, and to discuss and be involved in the drafting of programme and policy at a founding conference, which should be based on representative delegates from trade unions, socialist organisations and community groups – as was the case when Labour was founded over a century ago.

- We need a voice for the working class and our union must engage with this new formation and report back to members before the run up to the May 2026 elections.

RECONVENED TRADE UNIONISTS FOR A NEW PARTY MEETING

Monday 13th October 2025 6:30pm

WHAT NOW FOR THE NEW PARTY PROJECT?

TIME FOR A TRADE UNION-LED RESET

Register at bit.ly/ReconvenedTU4NewParty



Petition: www.change.org/TradeUnions-LaunchANewParty

Unite executive decides not to nominate in Labour deputy leader election

SUZANNE MUNA
UNITE EC MEMBER, PERSONAL CAPACITY

The Unite Executive Council (EC) has taken the decision not to nominate or endorse any candidate in the Labour Party’s deputy leader election at a special meeting on 22 September.
Two candidates remained in the running after the Parliamentary Labour Party completed its nominations ballot - Bridget Phillipson, MP for Houghton and Sunderland South, and Lucy Powell, former shadow education secretary and the MP for Manchester Central. A third contender, the Socialist Campaign Group MP, Bell Riberio-Addy, a Unite-sponsored MP, did not get enough MP nominations to reach the next stage.
Phillipson is widely considered to be the government’s favoured candidate, whereas Powell, recently sacked as Leader of the House of Commons, is usually described as ‘soft left’ and has received the support of three trade unions, Aslef, the CWU and the Fire Brigades Union.
As a Labour Party-affiliated trade union, Unite was able to nominate one of the PLP-approved candidates, and encourage union members to cast a vote in their favour during the

final ballot. It fell to the Executive Council to decide whether to back a candidate, or back neither, and a special EC meeting was called to meet the tight deadline.
It was quickly clear that Phillipson was never in the running for Unite’s support, without a single vote cast in her favour. Instead, the EC was divided between supporting Powell and the ‘no endorsement’ option, with supporters of the so-called United Left group in the union arguing in favour of nominating Powell.
The main argument for endorsement was that, in exchange for the union’s support, we would have greater leverage at a high level within the party, another example of the line of the United Left towards ‘partnership’ with Labour, no matter what the government throws at workers. However, this was rejected by 26 votes to 22, with the general secretary Sharon Graham outlining members’ concerns with both candidates.
Powell not on side of workers
It is not long since Powell criticised the Birmingham bin workers in their current dispute. Mainly organised by Unite, they have been on strike since January. But Powell betrayed the workers, describing the pay offer made by the council as “a reasonable

agreement on the table”, and consequently ignoring the one-third reduction in salaries that would have resulted for some, up to £8,000.
Powell is also unpopular within Unite for supporting cuts to the Winter Fuel Allowance, later defending this by saying that failing to make the cut could have led to a run on the pound.
Those who opposed Powell’s endorsement argued that her actions show that her sympathies do not lie with workers. Endorsement would have had the effect of saying that our support is not conditional on representing working-class interests – and unconditional support does not generate influence.
It is important now for Unite to convey not just the decision but the reasons for rejecting Powell’s appeal for our support. And that the decision by this year’s policy conference to “discuss our relationship with Labour” is followed up by the convening of special policy and rules conferences as soon as possible, to draw all the political and organisational conclusions from the situation we find ourselves in.
• See the model motion at ‘Trade unionists discuss how their unions can fight for political representation’ at socialistparty.org.uk

UCU FE members to ballot for action - vote yes!



FE members on strike in 2023 LEEDS SOCIALIST PARTY

MARCO TESEI
UCU FEC MEMBER, PERSONAL CAPACITY

Over 100 Further Education branches of the University and College Union (UCU) in England will be balloting for strike action.

The UCU Further Education Committee (FEC) met on 26 September. Following our negotiators’ rejection of the Association of Colleges’ non-binding recommendation of a paltry 4% pay rise, we have escalated to an official dispute with the employers’ body.

Letters have been sent to over 70 colleges with a 3 October ultimatum for college principals to agree to implement the three core demands of the ‘New Deal for FE’ campaign (ND4FE), or local disputes will be declared and balloting will begin for participation in nationally coordinated strike action.

The ND4FE’s three core demands are: a 10% pay rise as the first step towards securing parity of pay with schoolteachers within three years; fully funded binding national bargaining agreements for FE colleges in England; and meaningful national agreements on workload.

Unfortunately, the launch of the campaign has been delayed and the number of colleges is less than it might have been, due to the decisions made at the previous FEC meeting in July.

At the July meeting, Socialist Party FEC members and their allies on the left fought a tug-of-war with those organised in the general secretary’s faction, UCU Commons, and the misnamed ‘Independent Broad Left’ (which is actually on the right of the union), as well as with the committee’s unelected secretary.

We argued to bring the ballot forward as much as possible to coincide with the first weeks of the academic year. They argued for the start of the process to be delayed to give branches time to ‘prepare’. Socialist Party members have long argued that preparation is vital, but believed there was already time to properly prepare members and aim for ‘Census day’ in early October, when colleges get their funding allocations per enrolled student.

Our opponents also argued, at the July FEC, for individual branches to be encouraged not to ‘opt in’ if official, UCU members in HE are also balloting at the same time, with a timeframe for action in December, giving potential for a big national strike in post-16 education.

Unfortunately our opponents have a majority on the FEC (and National Executive Committee), and so won the day.
But in the September FEC meeting, the mood was quite different. Members’ appetite for a fightback against this government’s refusal to tackle the funding crisis in FE has palpably grown further since July.

Need to fight

With the sector now beginning to face significant cuts to jobs and courses, including in Higher Education (HE), and with staff reporting further unsustainable workloads resulting from recent drastic cuts in the Adult Skills Fund, the impetus to come out in protest is no longer containable.

The current consensus to initiate the strike ballot with no further delay is welcome to Socialist Party activists, though unfortunately now the earliest colleges will be able to take action will be around December (hardly the best time of the year for education workers to make the strongest impact!).

It is to be regretted that only about half of FE branches in England have been included in the ballot. Nonetheless, UCU members in the over 100 branches being balloted should be feeling positive right now.

The moment is propitious, with Starmer’s government so weak and rebellion against austerity stirring in all sectors. Yes, some FE principals will try to discourage their workforces from strike action with 4% offers and small concessions on workload. But, in general, it’s feeling like principals’ offers will have to be a whole lot better than that this time!

Socialist Party activists in UCU will campaign vigorously for a big ‘yes’ vote in the ballot in order to get through the Tory turnout thresholds (disgracefully still in place after more than a year of Starmer’s Labour government). While individual branches have the authority to settle their disputes, we will be advocating for maximum branch participation in the ballot and in any industrial action which follows. We are stronger together, and this is not only a fight about pay now but in the future, which will be best secured through binding national pay agreements.

As previously reported in the Socialist, UCU members in HE are also balloting at the same time, with a timeframe for action in December, giving potential for a big national strike in post-16 education.

RMT tube dispute: Reject the offer – call more strikes!

SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS IN RMT

RMT members on London Underground should reject the so-called ‘improved’ offer from management.
The original offer of a one-year pay deal with no concessions on hours worked, or any movement on the introduction of staff concessionary national rail travel, was a poor one and was rejected by a massive 96% ‘no’ vote.
This offer is just the same but stretched over three years: a 3.4% increase in year one and a flat RPI increase, with no other improvements, in years two and three. In addition, unlike previous pay deals, there is no underpin for the lower paid. The deal would prevent any industrial action on the issues we balloted on for those three years.
Average yearly RPI inflation this year is 4.6%. Because prices are going up, particularly for food, already the one-year deal represented a slight cut in real wages, as it was based on the February RPI rate.
The week of rolling strike action on the tube that we took in early September was linked up with our members on the DLR, and the network shut



PHOTO: PAUL MATTHESSON

down. It showed management that members mean business, and has forced some concessions from them, such as over Boxing Day working.
But this offer doesn’t deal with the issues that are vital for us, especially the workload demands on members.

We need a mass meeting to discuss the offer and to discuss further action throughout the network.
While the offer isn’t good enough, it shows that our action is working. Further rolling strike action can win.

PETE DICKENSON
TOWER HAMLETS SOCIALIST PARTY

As the major capitalist powers’ refusal to seriously invest to tackle climate change becomes ever clearer, some are looking again to nuclear energy as an alternative because it does not emit carbon dioxide, the main driver of global warming.

Rising costs and public opposition after a series of disasters has meant that the total energy produced by nuclear has largely flatlined globally since the turn of the millennium. Now several states, including Britain, are turning again to nuclear fission – harnessing the energy released by splitting the atom, the basis of all presently operational reactors.

In desperation at the pressing need to phase out fossil fuel production, prominent environment writer George Monbiot, changed his position on nuclear power fifteen years ago, thinking that capitalist governments would be more willing to adopt nuclear than wind, solar or other renewables. He can now point to Britain’s pro-nuclear change in policy, and that of other governments, to support his case. China for instance, has significantly stepped up its nuclear programme.

Direct action groups such as Extinction Rebellion and Just Stop Oil, do not take a position on the nuclear question, they have members who are both for and against. Also, support for nuclear appears to be spreading to some extent among activists on the socialist left, in particular among younger activists.

It is claimed that, because global warming is correctly seen as the major threat facing the planet, risks associated with nuclear power can be justified, since they are significantly less than those linked to climate inaction - and it is a tried and tested technology.

Risks from nuclear power and climate inaction cannot be balanced in abstract against each other without considering in absolute terms just how dangerous nuclear is. Prolonged

climate inaction for a significant period could be truly catastrophic. Nuclear risks, although relatively smaller, nevertheless still pose a major threat.

Nuclear safety

Nuclear power generation has two major sources of risk: from future accidents and from storing spent radioactive material, a by-product of the nuclear reaction, for the indefinite future.

The 1986 Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine, although the worst, was just one of a series of nuclear accidents going back to the 1950s. The first was at Sellafield in Britain, then called Windscale, where there was a large leak of radioactivity, then in 1969 at Three Mile Island in the USA, where a meltdown of the reactor core, with potentially disastrous consequences, was only very narrowly avoided. This was followed by Chernobyl in 1986 where a series of explosions in the reactor building sent a massive radioactive cloud around the world and forced the long-term evacuation of land for hundreds of square miles around the site. The most recent disaster was at Fukushima in Japan in 2011 when, following an earthquake and tsunami, the cooling system failed, leading to a meltdown of the reactor core followed by explosions that contaminated surrounding land and sea.

88,000 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel was stored in 2023 in the USA alone. Considering the nearly 600 plants around the world operational, under construction and planned - some already accumulating waste for up to 60 years - the size of the problem is clear

Fukushima and Chernobyl, the worst disasters to date, both had particular design flaws that were instrumental. At Fukushima, the multiple back-up systems should not have had common causes of failure. The earthquake brought down the power lines, cutting off electricity to the cooling system, and the tsunami triggered by the earthquake put the back-up power systems out of action. The power failure could have been avoided by having higher perimeter walls or having the back-up generators on higher ground.

There were multiple design flaws at Chernobyl, the most serious was the absence of a containment vessel around the reactor core. At Fukushima there was a containment vessel but it was poorly designed and could not completely prevent leakage of radiation in the event of an accident. However, the area where spent fuel was stored did not have any containment structure. This was where the fire began and radiation was emitted. However, because there was no protection at all around the reactor at Chernobyl, a much larger amount of radiation was given off compared to Fukushima.

Risk analysis done by designers before nuclear construction always claims vanishingly small chances of a disaster. Their calculations could not foresee the circumstances causing the accidents described, a combination of human error, technical failure, poor design and natural disaster. It is claimed now that at modern nuclear power stations there will be similarly tiny chances of accidents happening.

However, consider the current situation at the nuclear power station at Zaporizhzhia, the largest in Europe. Since 2014, it has been on the front line of the Ukraine war with fighting all around and shells and missiles exploding nearby. Large quantities of radioactive materials are stored on site, some in unprotected ponds. It is just luck that a disaster has not occurred. Or consider future possible flash points, for instance if China attacked Taiwan. Nuclear reactors would be on the front line on the

DOES THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE NEED NUCLEAR POWER?



PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN

coast of mainland China if there was a counter-attack. Or a major war over Kashmir between India and Pakistan, both with nuclear power stations and nuclear weapons, could create a similarly dangerous situation.

These factors are not and cannot be foreseen and built into a risk model. It could be argued that similar events are unlikely to happen in Britain, but Chernobyl, where radioactive material was quickly blown around the world, proved that nuclear disasters are not contained by borders.

There is controversy over the extent of danger caused by the release of radioactivity. It is agreed that exposure to ‘high level’ and ‘medium level’ nuclear waste is deadly. However, the majority of the waste is ‘low level’, posing a lower risk. How low is disputed. Monbiot makes the point that at the nuclear accidents mentioned here, relatively few casualties occurred, linking this to a small risk attached to low-level radioactive spent material.

At Chernobyl, the worst disaster, he points to the UN figure of a death toll of ‘only’ 4,000. This figure is disputed, with some estimates of 25,000 deaths by 2065, and others far higher even than this. This uncertainty is partly linked to research into the long-term radiation effects not beginning until many years after the accident. Also, because of the long timescales cancer can take to develop after exposure to radiation, and the chaos the Soviet Union descended into in subsequent years, the true figure will never be known.

Many people who were affected dispersed over the former Soviet republics, a huge area, and then around the world after the Soviet Union collapsed, and will never be traced. This also applies to the ‘liquidators’, conscripts who were in the front line of the initial response and were exposed to very high levels of radiation.

Recent research has detected genetic damage in children whose fathers were exposed to radiation after the disaster. Leaving other factors aside, the uncertainty surrounding the danger of low-level radiation calls for a precautionary approach before endorsing a further expansion of nuclear power, as Monbiot has done. Also, on the day of the accident, had the wind blown the radioactive cloud over the nearby city of Kyiv, with its millions of inhabitants, there could have been a far larger loss of life.

An even bigger long-term danger than a nuclear accident is safely storing spent radioactive nuclear material for the indefinite future, at least 100,000 years while it remains dangerously radioactive. No safe method has yet been devised to do this. If the radioactive waste is stored deep underground or at the bottom of the ocean, it could be vulnerable to earthquakes, undersea volcanic activity, major meteorite strikes or changes in geological conditions over such a long time scale, possibly caused by climate change. The materials used to store waste could deteriorate over 100,000 years. All these factors could cause leakage of radioactivity.

In Britain, existing very radioactive ‘high-level’ waste is stored in the nuclear plants themselves and less dangerous ‘low-level’ waste at Sellafield in Cumbria. The quantities involved are large. The Sizewell C nuclear station in Suffolk, recently given the go-ahead by climate secretary Ed Milliband, will generate an estimated 26,880 tonnes of radioactive waste over its 60-year lifecycle. Also, the

plutonium used in making nuclear bombs creates further toxic waste.

In 2023, 88,000 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel was stored in the USA alone. Considering the nearly 600 plants around the world operational, under construction and planned, some already accumulating waste for up to 60 years, the size of the problem is clear. A solution will have to be found, it would be irresponsible to add to it further.

Does nuclear expansion meet the urgency for climate action?

In its latest report, the IPCC, the UN body that advises on climate change correctly stresses the need for rapid action if the worst effects of global warming are to be avoided. If nothing meaningful is done in the next 20 years, current extreme weather will get far worse and tipping points, where there is an uncontrollable rise in temperature, will become more likely. However, if a massive expansion of nuclear is contemplated to address the situation, experience has shown that very little would be operational within 20 years. For example, planning began in 2007 on the Hinkley Point C reactor in Somerset, construction started in 2016 and it is expected to be operational in 2031, although some observers put it at 2033. It is true there have been particular problems with Hinkley but, even without construction delays, it would still have taken nearly 20 years from inception to completion.

At present, ‘base load’, i.e. electricity continuously supplied to the national grid, generated by nuclear, is up to 20% of the total. Most of the remainder is provided by renewables and natural gas, which is a greenhouse gas emitter. When the main renewables are not available, e.g. no sun or wind, demand is met mostly by gas and nuclear.

This raises the question of whether demand can be met without fossil fuels and nuclear. One possibility is to use nuclear fusion reactors, where electricity is generated by harnessing the energy released by fusing together atomic particles rather than splitting them. As well as not emitting greenhouse gases, this technology has the advantages compared to fission reactors of not producing radioactive nuclear waste and having a built-in fail-safe mechanism if there is a power failure. However, despite recent breakthroughs and stepping up of development work, particularly in China, it will probably still take decades, at least 20 years, before working reactors are available at the scale needed.

The need to cut the fossil fuel emissions causing global warming is urgent. Other approaches using renewable energy are needed to fill the gap before fusion power could become available. If conventional nuclear fission reactors are removed, extra green capacity will have to be added to meet the approximately 20% of lost capacity.

Investing to improve energy efficiency could be part of addressing the issue, for example by improving home insulation. In 2013 around half a million homes a year were benefiting from government insulation programmes, by 2022, under the impact of austerity cuts, that had reduced to just 60,000. Since, the ‘Great British Insulation Scheme’ promises to assist 400,000 homes by 2026. Larger investment could do more, quicker.

Through democratic planning internationally, possible only on the basis of socialist change, with the energy industry, big business and the banks nationalised, investment can bring an end to deepening climate disaster

Also, extra power generation capacity will have to be added for the few occasions when wind and solar are not available. Green hydrogen can do the job. It can be manufactured using renewables, wind and solar, when surplus power is available, and existing turbines in power stations converted from burning natural gas to green hydrogen. The technology exists now to do this, it just has to be implemented on the scale needed. Converting power stations to burn hydrogen would of course have a cost, but it can be implemented far faster than nuclear and almost certainly more cheaply, considering the £40 billion-plus cost of the Hinkley Point C project alone.

With the energy industry nationalised under democratic workers’ control and management, investment could be directed towards these developments. Nationalised, democratically controlled banks could finance the huge investment necessary. Workers employed in the industry, including those who would be employed constructing and running nuclear projects, could have their jobs, pay and conditions guaranteed, with the oversight of their trade unions.

Not just because of the unacceptable danger but also due to the long delay before it can be operational on the scale needed, the use of fission-based nuclear power to tackle climate change should be opposed. Viable alternatives are available. None of the capitalist powers can be trusted to put the need to tackle global warming at the top of their agendas, since, for them, profit and increasingly ‘national energy security’ in the era of trade wars and growing international tensions comes first. Through democratic planning internationally, possible only on the basis of socialist change, with the energy industry, big business and the banks brought into public ownership, investment into a ‘green transition’ can bring an end to deepening climate disaster.

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One in five women students experience uni sexual assault

Fight for services and democratic control, against sexism and capitalism

MIHAELA IVANOVA

QUEEN MARY SOCIALIST STUDENTS

A recent survey by the Office for Students (OfS) found that one in three women had experienced sexual harassment during their time at university, nearly one in five experiencing sexual assault, with 40% occurring within the university environment.

Unfortunately, these horrific statistics are not surprising for many people. Despite the wave of global protests against sexism and sexual harassment, most notably during the #MeToo movement, little action has been taken to address the issues which disproportionately affect young students and women.

These statistics come amidst 15 years of austerity, which has seen funding from vital public services cut, such as to nighttime public transport, counselling services, campus lighting and domestic violence services.

The fact that only 13% of students who experienced harassment in the past 12 months reported it to their university or college, shows that

there is not enough being done to prevent such attacks or help students feel safe and supported on campus.

Instead of providing the funding necessary to fight against these attacks on students, university bosses have raked in millions in bonuses and Starmer's Labour has increased our tuition fees.

Over half of students take on paid employment to be able to survive through uni, with the highest maintenance loans unable to cover basic necessities like housing, transport or food. This puts vulnerable young people in even more precarious positions, with students often having to travel home late at night with insufficient public transport and infrastructure, like street lighting.

We cannot trust greedy university bosses who line their pockets with our tuition fees and a Labour government which has made it clear it does not represent young people. Students must fight back to guarantee our safety ourselves. Student unions should link up with trade unions on campus to campaign against sexual harassment in schools, colleges and universities.

Disciplinary procedures should not be left in the hands of management who clearly cannot handle our education or our safety. Part of the campaigning should involve building for democratically elected committees of students and staff to be in charge of investigating reports of sexism and sexual violence on campus, ensuring that the processes are effectively implemented and accessible to those who need them. Instead of our places of education being treated like businesses, students and staff should have democratic control.

Socialist Students has initiated the Funding not Fees campaign to build a movement for fully funded, free education – paid for by taking the wealth out the hands of the super-rich. We fight for the scrapping of tuition fees, for maintenance grants – not loans, and the democratic control of our resources. And we fight for a socialist alternative to the capitalist system which perpetuates sexism and misogyny.

This is necessary as part of the fight for a future in which society and our places of education are a safe and accessible place for all.

PHOTO: NORTHAMPTON SP



Protest greets Labour conference against their support for Israel's war on Gaza

PHOTO: THEO SHARIEFF



THOMAS BUTLER

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST PARTY

On the eve of Labour Party conference on 27 September, hundreds of people came out and marched on the streets of Liverpool to display their anger at the Labour government's complicity in the ongoing slaughter of the Palestinian people.

The only thing Starmer's government can offer is the recognition of a Palestinian state, a meagre symbolic act. Ultimately it does nothing for the present conditions of the Palestinian people. The working class of Liverpool have not been hoodwinked

by this measure and still recognises that Starmer continues to support the Israeli government. It was made clear by this demonstration and by Starmer's own actions, which is to maintain the vast majority of Israeli arms exports, also allowing the RAF to carry out surveillance missions for the IDF. The vote at conference calling on government to "fully suspend the arms trade with Israel" is not binding, showing the conference for what it is, an anti-democratic farce.

Members of the Socialist Party were out on the demonstration distributing leaflets and selling copies of the Socialist paper, containing our

ideas on how we cannot rely on the ruling class for peace in the Middle East, and that only a working class-led movement for socialism can open a way forward.

Liverpool Socialist Students also played a strong role off the back of a successful freshers campaign, a Trump walkout and a packed first meeting bringing new interested students to, in some cases, their first demonstration. Both the Socialist Party and Socialist Students were firm in calling for the organised workers' movement led by the trade unions to fight in solidarity with the Palestinian masses.

'Elite decisions mean unpaid work – we won't take it'

Leicester uni staff strike

ALANAH CAREY-PEACHER
LEICESTER SOCIALIST PARTY

Senior management want to cut the staffing budget by £11 million. Yet even the uni's own data shows that spending on pay has fallen relative to income.

Cuts would mean that hundreds of staff lose their jobs, and students would face course closures. So members of the University and College Union (UCU) are striking.

We marched through campus, clanking instruments and blasting music. Staff, as well as representatives from Leicester Trades Union

Council and students, then spoke out.

One worker states: "The uni management elite take £100,000 for making the decisions that mean lecturers must work unpaid overtime. Lecturers do it as they care for their students."

Another worker emphasised: "We must make a strong case as today chemistry is under threat, tomorrow it could be physics. We won't take it lying down."

These sentiments are carried throughout the country, with multiple universities increasingly affected by the funding crisis and greed.

Socialist Students meeting at Leicester University which had a striking UCU rep speak PHOTO: STEVE SCORE



Socialist Students at freshers

● Manchester – over 100 at first meeting

GEORGE
MANCHESTER SOCIALIST STUDENTS

We handed out a whole box of 4,000 Socialist Students flyers, proof of the growing interest in socialist ideas and getting organised among students. Many were eager to discuss socialism as a real alternative, spurred on by the crisis in mainstream politics and the launch of Your Party.

As a first-time campaigner, it was a great opportunity to gain confidence in listening to people, understanding their concerns, and linking those concerns to our fight for socialism. Manchester Socialist Students campaigning on issues relevant to students helped, for example Funding Not Fees and the University of Manchester rent strike. But it was the alarming economic situation many students face that brought them over to us.

That enthusiasm translated into real engagement at our Socialist Students campaign stall. Collecting sign-ups for Socialist Students meant longer conversations. But this made the experience even more valuable.

Over 100 students attending our first meeting of the year, was a testament to this momentum. It showed the potential we have to continue to grow a strong, active base amongst the students of Manchester and Salford.

The task now is to build on this energy - raising the profile of our society, channelling the enthusiasm of freshers week into lasting involvement and collective action.

● Liverpool Hope – ‘we’ve already joined!’

LIZZIE ARDREY
LIVERPOOL HOPE SOCIALIST STUDENTS

With Socialist Students campaign stalls every day, we’ve seen positive reaction to our group, and openness to socialist ideas. We are the only socialist group on campus, meaning that we are the first exposure to socialist and Marxist ideas for many incoming students.

Many people told us that they had already signed up to our Socialist Students society. Our first meeting had 18 people.

We gave newcomers more understanding of socialism, and highlighted Liverpool’s socialist history. Talking to people outside of the meeting showed the importance of clear and upfront explanations, the importance of centring the working class in mass movements, and the power of collective action.

Discussion was on Your Party, and workers’ organisation to the history of socialism, and current socialist activity in Liverpool. Newcomers were engaged, showing enthusiasm Socialist Students activity at Hope.



Manchester ALEX SMITH



University of Arts London

● Birmingham – new party resonates

JAMES TAYLOR
BIRMINGHAM SOCIALIST STUDENTS

The launch of Your Party has resonated with young people. Most of our conversations were about our approach to the new party.

The other issue most often raised was the rise of Reform. That Reform have made such gains under this weak Labour government has made it clear to people that socialist politics are the only way to beat the far right.

17 attended our first meeting. The

new people there are representative of a wider layer of youth, who, following the announcement of Your Party, are becoming more aware of the role a socialist party can play in taking on Labour and Reform.

● Southampton – Reform threat

JAMES GRETTON
SOUTHAMPTON SOCIALIST PARTY

‘Your Party’ was among the most popular topics for people taking an interest in our Socialist Students campaign stall, particularly with the public fallout between Corbyn and

Sultana. Those excited about the opportunity for a mass movement, posing an alternative to our failing system, were disappointed to see infighting. Students are fully aware of the threat of a Reform government.

Despite arbitrary obstacles, such as the student union’s prohibition on distributing leaflets, getting the word out about our weekly meetings, and our perspective on the new party was a massive success.

44 signed up to Socialist Students. Our first meeting discussed Your Party.

Southampton is grappling with far-right protests against a hotel in Portswood, near the university. But people can be won over by socialist policies. So, for next year’s local

elections, the workers’ movement must be prepared and organised to take on Reform, and present an alternative to capitalism.

● Reading – leaflets flying

SARA GILLMAN
READING SOCIALIST PARTY

Leaflets were flying out of our hands. Student debt was the main concern.

Even a security guard, who had been told to move our Socialist Students campaign stall by the student union, said: “I need to kick you off, but before you go, can I buy a [Socialist] paper?”

● Leeds – ‘yes!!!’

IAIN DALTON
LEEDS SOCIALIST PARTY

“Yes!!!”, said students, seeing our posters advertising how Corbyn and Sultana’s Your Party could become a political voice for students.

In the wake of the public disagreements between them, many students wanted to discuss why that had happened, and the way forward. We stressed that the organised working class, particularly trade unions, should be involved.

Our campaign stall was repeatedly mobbed during three days of campaigning, with over 100 students leaving their details to find out more about Socialist Students. We sold out of Socialist Student magazines, with students buying 21 copies of the Socialist and we raised over £30 fighting fund on top.

Nuneaton walkout

MAX MCGEE
WEST MIDLANDS SOCIALIST PARTY

King Edward IV College (Kegs) students in Nuneaton were inspired and enthused seeing the Socialist Students walkout against Trump on Wednesday 17 September. Students approached us, after attending our Socialist Party public meeting about Your Party.

They wanted to organise a walkout using our Socialist Students material. If you want to get involved, and aren’t sure of the impact you can have, be certain that all it takes is one leaflet passed around a classroom to strike a chord.

As was the case for many school and college walkouts, while some Kegs staff attempted to lock the main gate to prevent students from speaking to us, the students themselves asserted that they had a right to protest. On 19 September, there was a 30-strong student strike against Trump’s visit, Starmer’s belly crawling, racist division, and education cuts.

● Read more about the Trump walkouts ‘Trump walkouts give youth a voice’ at socialistparty.org.uk

Join the student fightback
JOIN socialist students
socialiststudents.org.uk/join

Newcastle – far right outnumbered and chased off

SAM MORDEN

TYNE AND WEAR SOCIALIST PARTY

Coinciding with a Ukip march calling for ‘mass deportations’, far-right Tommy Robinson was launching his Advance Party, both in Newcastle on 27 September. Unfortunately, the antifascist and anti-far right counter-demonstration was split in two, led by different organisations.

One was at Grey’s Monument in the city centre, organised by Newcastle Unites. Hundreds also gathered near the Quayside, directly confronting the far right, this was run by a coalition of parties and organisations, and seemed to rely on police protection. However, this protest did manage to prevent the far right from taking their initial marching route.

At the Monument, 2,000 joined the larger anti-racist demo. However, there was confusion over the start time, as the organisers complied with the police desire to start the demo early, in order to have the Monument free for the far right. But anti-racist protesters did not go willingly, and so held the Monument.

At the Monument, police allowed people clearly aligned with the far right into the crowd. There was insufficient stewarding on the anti-racist protest. This resulted in one of our Socialist Party members being hit by a member of the far right, as they grabbed a Palestine flag from a counter-protester.

After marchers down at the Quay-side successfully stopped the far right from taking their intended route, the far right instead headed for



NICK FRAY

a local hotel housing asylum seekers. A properly organised and stewarded protest could have successfully challenged the far right when they tried to march to the hotel.

On the anti-racist demonstration, we put forward the necessity of trade unions organising against the far

right – including organising stewarding. Our Socialist Party placards – ‘Smash racism – jobs and homes for all’ were well received, with people approaching us wanting a photo.

Geordies were proud to send a resounding message, that racists are not welcome here.

Reform cuts adult education in Derbyshire

JON DALE

MANSFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

Less than four months after winning control of Derbyshire County Council (DCC), Reform announced the closure of five adult education centres. They had already closed two other centres in July. Without any consultation, DCC gave just three days notice. Over 1,300 learners and 22 staff have been hit.

Courses at these centres give local people a better chance of getting a job or changing their type of work. They give an opportunity to people who have missed education at school for whatever reason. They are especially important to parents with young children, people with care responsibilities or disabilities; for whom travel is difficult and time limited.

A ‘Stay, Play and Learn’ course – “helping build parenting skills and giving parents the confidence to support their children’s learning” – is now only run by DCC in Buxton. A return journey from Shirebrook, where the centre has just closed, takes seven buses and an overnight stay! A parent making that journey with a young child would need to brim with confidence before starting the course!

Adult education centres also offer

courses for enjoyment and to improve health, from arts and crafts to yoga – again, vital for those with restricted time and means to travel.

Socialist Party members in Shirebrook are campaigning to get the local centre re-opened. We say everyone should have access to free life-long learning.

DCC aims to ‘save’ £1 million a year through these closures. Public buildings in the heart of their communities could be sold, with property developers’ profiting.

For all Reform’s anti-establishment posturing, Reform-run DCC accepts the logic of the East Midlands Combined Authority, with its Labour mayor, that £1.3 million should be cut for adult education. This comes after years of government austerity. Spending in England on adult skills and apprenticeships has fallen 23% since 2009-10. Classroom-based adult education, as provided in these closed Derbyshire centres, has been cut over 40%.

Another 6% cut to the Adult Skills Fund has been made this year. Tory and Labour governments, a Labour mayor and now Reform DCC are all responsible. A new mass working-class party is needed committed to oppose all cuts and fight for this money back.

The adult education centre in Shirebrook DCC is attempting to shut DAVE BEVIS/CC



Leicester – students elevate new party meeting

HEATHER RAWLING

LEICESTER SOCIALIST PARTY

This was our third public meeting on developments towards a new party for the working class since July. And it was the best yet.

In fact, it was the best public meeting we have held in years. This meeting was jointly organised by the Socialist Party and Socialist Students.

23 attended, with 12 new people. Everyone’s contributions elevated the meeting.

A taste of the meeting

A student who said this was his first political meeting, and said he wasn’t used to speaking, made an outstanding contribution. He clearly understands the importance of a party based on the organised working class, and also a party like the Socialist Party, fighting for the socialist transformation of society. We agreed with him.

Another student argued for checks and balances on the leadership of a new party, to ensure democracy and genuine representation of our interests. In reply, we explained our demands on workers’ representatives to be subject to the right of recall, and to take only the average wage of the workers they represent.



We also emphasised the role that the Socialist Party has played in campaigning for a new party for decades. We are determined that we will assert our right to be an integral part of the new party.

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www.socialistparty.org.uk/events



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the Socialist more valuable than ever – subscribe!



The Socialist, on one of many picket lines at which it is sold

In our view, the Socialist is the best and most important tool for workers and young people fighting back. With the huge interest in a new party, shown by the enthusiasm for Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana's 'Your Party' announcement, and the struggles developing against a Labour government continuing with brutal austerity, our audience continues to grow.

It is more important than ever that our paper gets into the hands of as many people as possible, including our subscribers. To achieve that objective, we are asking for your solidarity.

Since 2022, the cost of posting the Socialist weekly to a subscriber has increased by more than £1.50 a month. Similarly, the cost of posting our sister publication Socialism Today has increased too. Privatised Royal Mail's profit-seeking bosses continue to hike prices and drive down the quality of service. Of course, the Socialist has consistently campaigned for renationalisation, and in support of postal workers' struggles.

It is nearly ten years since our subscription prices have increased, to partially offset the increased costs over that time, we are now raising prices.

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Readers of The Socialist buying their copy for the solidarity price of £2, and often for more, is vital for our finances. If you are able to afford more towards the cost of our workers' publications, please consider topping up your subscription with a regular donation to the Socialist Party's fighting fund: socialistparty.org.uk/donations

If you are already a member of the Socialist Party, you can consider raising your subs (membership fee), in discussion with your branch or regional treasurer.

Thank you for your continued support.

'I joined the Socialist Party for working-class unity'



Hannah, second right, with other members of Camden and Haringey Socialist Party

HANNAH BIRD

CAMDEN AND HARINGEY SOCIALIST PARTY

Activism was my passion. I've always been political. But in recent years, I've been disengaged. One reason was living in a political climate that thrives on polemic, gossip, and intrigue, rather than the fundamental issues confronting humanity.

I reengaged through voluntary work with migrant groups. In my outrage at the rise of Reform, seeing my old neighbourhood decorated with their appropriated flags, and fearing a right-wing populist future, I decided to search for a political home on the left.

I was drawn to the Socialist Party, because it sticks to and keeps fighting for the original basis of socialism – that a non-capitalist future can exist, that there is a real alternative to austerity and inequality, and that it isn't enough to merely tweak the edges of the current system, as other left-wing parties propose.

The Socialist Party truly embraces the diversity of our modern society. Being Jewish, I was initially nervous of the left. I was concerned that I might have to confront and challenge assumptions that being Jewish equals supporting the Israeli government's horrendous war.

But I've come to believe that anti-semitism accusations levelled at the left are a distortion by capitalist politicians and commentators. There are all kinds of prejudices to challenge in all parts of society, including on the left.

But there is a home for Jewish people, and all people, in the Socialist Party. Successfully countering prejudice, through showing how it

only serves to divide ordinary working people, is something the Socialist Party consistently works for.

My first weekly meeting was welcoming and fascinating. The diversity of the party was clear, with members spanning age groups, ethnic and religious backgrounds, and employment experiences.

It was one of the few truly non-hierarchical spaces I've been in, where everyone's opinion counted equally and everyone spoke. It's offline, person-to-person, community-building towards an alternative future for working people.

It's what we need in the party, in the country, and in the world.

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to find out more about joining us today!



Profit-seeking insurers cancel Green Festival campaign stalls

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST PARTY

Just the day before Nottingham's annual GreenFest, 28 stall holders, including Nottingham Socialist Party, were informed that their stalls were cancelled.

GreenFest organisers informed us that insurance underwriters had threatened to cancel insurance for the whole festival unless various stalls were cancelled.

At short notice, we organised a branch committee meeting and agreed: to send a message of support to the organisers, to contact other stall holders to join a protest against the insurance broker, as well as to produce a Socialist Party leaflet.

The organisers expressed their gratitude for the message of solidarity and agreed with the approach we put forward, to organise a protest rally outside the festival, in a way that

would not undermine the smooth running of the event.

Stall holders' protest

The protest rally of censored stall holders was a great success. Over 30 people from various stall organisations attended, with speakers from various stalls, including both the joint secretary and also international officer of the Notts Trades Union Council.

It later emerged that the underwriters had reinterpreted a clause referring to "protests, or religious and/or politically motivated activities". In other words, the stalls are banned because of the activities of the far right generally. There has never been any trouble at GreenFest.

GreenFest organisers say they have used the same insurers for 30 years, without issue. Nottingham Socialist Party and its predecessors have held stalls for decades too.

It is clear that profits come before our democratic rights. We say the insurance industry should be nationalised under democratic workers' control and management so that it can be run to meet needs rather than for profit.

We are determined not to be censored again next year, GreenFest organisers are seeking alternative insurers.

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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

Do you agree? Join the fightback!

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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.
- For the right of nations to self-determination. For an independent socialist Scotland and for a socialist Wales, both part of a voluntary socialist confederation of Wales, England, Scotland and Ireland.
- Oppose the dictatorship of the billionaire owners of the media. For the nationalisation of newspaper printing facilities, radio, TV and social media platforms. Access to these facilities should be under democratic control, with political parties' coverage being allocated in proportion to the popular vote at elections.
- For a new mass workers' party, based on the trade unions, and drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplaces, and community, environmental, anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, socialist political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

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

Plumstead mural commemorates the anti-poll tax struggle



The mural PHOTOS: BERKAY KARTAV



Bill Mullins speaking

YAVNIK GANGULY

SOUTH EAST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

On 21 September, South East London Socialist Party organised a public event in Plumstead, to discuss our party's involvement in the anti-poll tax movement, which eventually led to the resignation of prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

The event was organised after a local artist, Jack Walker, painted a mural for a pub, dedicated to the anti-poll tax movement. The brilliant mural depicts the strong working-class solidarity, across different ethnic communities and cultures, which defeated the poll tax and Thatcher.

The poll tax was introduced by Thatcher's government. For working-class families who were already suffering, the poll tax posed the threat of being financially ruinous. Militant, the predecessor of the Socialist Party, played a key role in building the mass non-payment campaign, which resulted in approximately 18 million people refusing to pay the tax. This accounted for just under one-third of the entire adult population, which was a historic display of class solidarity. The magistrates courts were overwhelmed with a staggering 25 million cases of

non-payment of tax between April 1990 and September 1993. Enforcement of the tax became impossible.

The event organised in Plumstead was an inspiring discussion about the anti-poll tax movement, up to 40 people attended from the local community, raising £209.03 for the fighting fund.

Jack Walker, who is related to individuals who were involved with Militant at the time of the anti-poll tax movement, spoke about the painting. Bill Mullins, who was a regional secretary of Militant at the time and a key organiser for the anti-poll tax unions in the West Midlands, then spoke about the role the party played in this historic movement.

Members of the public in attendance also contributed to the discussion, including other individuals who were involved in the movement themselves. Berkay Kartav, London Socialist Party regional organiser, chaired the discussion, and ended by linking the anti-poll tax struggle with working-class struggles today, and the role of Militant, now the Socialist Party. Younger attendees got to hear directly from the older generation who were involved in the victorious struggle. The event served as an important reminder of the power of the working class when united.

WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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RYAN LEONARD

HILLINGDON SOCIALIST PARTY

Unlike his parents and older brother who were born in Trinidad, protagonist Anthony (Tony) Watson was born and raised in Ladbroke Grove, west London. Pressure starts with Tony eating his breakfast of bacon and eggs, preparing for yet another job interview. Collin, his brother, is putting pepper sauce on an avocado. This is the first of many juxtapositions throughout the film.

I have fond memories my grandfather teaching me the proper way to eat avocado and my grandmother teaching me to make pepper sauce. I could taste all the food in this scene. Tony's job interview is with Mr Crepes, an unpleasant man with an even more unpleasant comb over! Despite having good grades at O-level, he is told: "You'll hear from us" and leaves the interview dejected.

The film's next culture clash comes when Tony attends a dance with some of his white friends. The scene is juxtaposed with his brother, who is a member of the Black Panther Party, speaking at a political meeting. Scenes of both are intertwined. The sea of Black faces at the meeting contrasted with the dance, where Tony is in the minority. The loud rock music at the function hall, blocking all thought and focus, opposed to the captivated audience with a clear hunger for consciousness.

Anthony walks a young lady home, he's had a crush on her since school. Her job has meant that she can afford to move out of home and out of Ladbroke Grove. Ironically at the time this was a key goal of those seeking social mobility. How times have changed!

The young lady's landlord banishes Anthony for reasons unsaid, but well understood. Feeling rejected by white society, Tony starts to spend time with Winston, Jacko and their friends. They are his age but were born in the Caribbean. Even among his peers he's shown to be an

FILM REVIEW: PRESSURE (1976)



PHOTO: BFI

outsider. He likes fish and chips not patties.

While Collin is harsh on Anthony and his new friends, Louise, a sister from America, recognises you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar. Despite receiving a message of colour, culture and consciousness, the group are more concerned with numbing their pain at a blues dance.

This rejection of Black consciousness is juxtaposed by his parents' connection to the church and yet, to quote Karl Marx, "Religion is the sigh

of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people".

Both Anthony and his parents are engaged in 'false consciousness' and desperate to ignore their mistreatment at the hands of the capitalism's systemic racism. The priest calls on his congregation to "drive Black thought from your heart". In fact, he is preaching that racism and capitalism are not the machinations of God but of men, and that the destruction

The Socialist Party's Black Workers Charter, a programme for fighting racism, produced by the Black and Asian group of the Socialist Party



of those twin evils will rely on the action of mere mortals.

When the labour exchange (job centre) exposes Anthony to structural violence and individual racism at the hands of his would-be employer, the choice is clear: settle for a job you're over-qualified for or constantly face rejection.

The group of friends' exclusion from society leads them to find their way into the grey economy, with disastrous consequences. At a rally for the Panthers, Louise gives a rousing speech calling on those present to rise up in unity and confront their oppression. This is a call to smash the racist state to, where possible, build in its place community-based structures that can fulfil the needs of Black people.

The speech rouses the rally audience, and also the film's viewers. It invokes the spirit of all those who have fought injustice, including those brave souls in Haiti, who shrugged off their chains to defeat the world's most feared general in a battle for human dignity and freedom. The meeting is smashed by police and Black Panther members are arrested.

Pressure is a film about dispelling illusions. The Watson's white dream is utterly smashed by the reality of Black life in 1970s London. Their vulnerability to the structural racism which is part and parcel of the capitalist system is laid bare.

However, the overarching emotions I was left with were empowerment and hope. Anthony, once an 'English boy' in a shirt and tie, desperate to fit in, now dons Panther leathers with pride. He has joined the struggle and yet he is able to separate his treatment by the state from the white people around him. He connects the struggle against racism with the struggle against those very few in society who own a great deal, declaring no war but class war!

- **Pressure can be streamed online on BFIplayer. player.bfi.org.uk**

March to commemorate Manningham Mills struggle



PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN

YORKSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

Workers threatened with drastic pay cuts, police used to break-up picket lines, scab labour being brought in - and the various layers of government all in the hands of

a pro-capitalist party that workers had previously looked towards, but is viciously prosecuting the struggle against them.

This all applies to the Birmingham bin workers today, but equally to the great strike in Manningham

Mills 135 years ago, a key dispute which pushed forward the question of independent working-class political representation among trade unionists.

The mostly non-unionised workforce faced a determined attack on their pay from management, backed by their multi-millionaire owner, Samuel Cunliffe-Lister. Over the course of four winter months, the public and other trade unionists sustained the growing ranks of predominantly women workers who joined the initial 600 strikers.

They were defeated ultimately by the Liberal Party establishment, which demonstrated it is not possible to represent both capitalists and workers. Leading figures in the strike concluded they needed their own representatives on the council, watch committees and Poor Law guardians that controlled the city, its policing and out-of-work benefits - the powers of all that had been used to break the strike.

Bradford and Shipley TUC is holding a march and rally to commemorate the strike and draw out the lessons for today, with Socialist Party Yorkshire secretary Iain Dalton as the keynote speaker. The rally assembles Sunday 5 October, 1pm outside Lister's Mill to march to Lister Park.

Following two previous huge days of strike action and protest, all trade union federations in France have called another for 2 October.

The action is against President Macron and his policies, and against his fourth prime minister of the year, Lecornu. Workers and young people don't want another, they want him and Macron out altogether.

The question of how to remove Macron and what to replace him with is central. Gauche Révolutionnaire, the Socialist Party's sister party in France, puts forward the need to fight for a workers' government that would serve the majority of the population, born out of, and supported by our struggle.

- **See socialistworld.net for more and updates following 2 October**

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the Socialist

Issue 1338

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formerly **Militant**

TRUMP AND BLAIR: HANDS OFF PALESTINE!

End Gaza slaughter, Fight for socialist change

JAMES COLLETT

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

Dozens have been slaughtered daily in Gaza by Israeli state forces. After nearly two years of genocidal slaughter, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the United Nations (UN) general assembly his government intends to “finish the job”.

Then came a proposal from Trump to end the war, which included that former UK prime minister and scourge of the Middle East, Tony Blair, would be part of “a new international transitional body” for Gaza that would oversee a ‘transitional technocratic governance committee’.

Trump previously expressed his grotesque vision of ethnically cleansing the entire Gaza strip and turning it into the “Riviera of the Middle East”.

None of the proposals involve the Palestinian people deciding their own fate. Instead, the conversation is taking place amongst the capitalist classes about how to impose a new unelected administration in Gaza.

As prime minister between 1997-2007, Blair led the UK to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, in which hundreds of thousands were slaughtered.

This ‘qualified’ Blair for his next job as Middle East envoy for the UN, EU, US and Russia between 2007-2015. During this period he also worked for investment bank JP Morgan Chase and as a PR man for the repressive regime of Kazakhstan, helping to polish its image after the 2011 Zhanaozen massacre.

Since leaving this role, Blair founded the Tony Blair Institute, which has massive financial backing from Larry Ellison, one of the world’s richest men and also a donor to

‘Friends of the Israeli Defence Forces’ and a close friend of Netanyahu.

As Middle East envoy Blair focussed on, according to the BBC: “Bringing economic development to Palestine and creating the conditions for a two-state solution”. To see how successful he was, you only have to look at Gaza today, where over 68,000 have been killed in the last two years and almost the entire population has been internally displaced, facing famine.

Only the Palestinian people should decide their own future. Any ‘solution’ drawn up by the capitalist ruling classes internationally will be unable to offer a decent future for Palestinians. Instead, it is mass struggles of workers and poor people, establishing their own mass working-class organisations and parties fighting for socialism, which offers the way forward.

We say:

- End the siege of Gaza and the occupation of all the Palestinian territories. For the permanent withdrawal of the Israeli military from those areas
- The release of the thousands of Palestinian political prisoners held in Israeli prisons and the Israeli captives held in Gaza
- A mass struggle of the Palestinians, under their own democratic control, to fight for liberation and the right to self determination
- The building of independent workers’ parties in Palestine and Israel and links between them
- An independent, socialist Palestinian state, and socialist change in Israel, with guaranteed democratic rights for all minorities, as part of the struggle for a socialist Middle East
- No trust in capitalist politicians internationally. Fight to build workers’ parties that stand for socialism and internationalism



JOIN SOCIALIST STUDENTS ON THE NATIONAL MARCH FOR PALESTINE

SATURDAY 11 OCTOBER
CENTRAL LONDON, 12 NOON

socialist
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MEET FROM 11.30 FOR SPEECHES
BEFORE MARCHING - LOCATION TBA



WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN DEMANDS ►► see column on page 14

