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the Socialist

Issue 1342

30 October - 5 November 2025

formerly **Militant**

Rising cost of living and bumper bank profits

END STARMER'S BUSINESS AS USUAL

LINDSEY MORGAN
BRISTOL SOUTH SOCIALIST PARTY

If you bank with Barclays, NatWest, Lloyds or HSBC, you'll be glad to know they're continuing to rake in huge profits.

For us - low-paid work, cuts to services, extortionate rents and rising bills all combine to make the cost of living a daily battle.

For them - the lucky fat cats have been making nearly a billion pounds a week. After the Tories slashed the bank 'surcharge' - a tax on banks' profits - from 8% to 3%, bank profits are now higher than they were before the 2007-08 financial crash.

They buy yachts and we worry about how we're going to afford Christmas.

Even big business newspaper the Financial Times is warning that corporate greed is unsustainable!

Despite Keir Starmer's Labour government being elected over a year ago, hard-up working-class people have yet to notice any of that profit trickling down to us - no wonder, with a government that defends capitalism at our expense.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves says that "those with the broadest shoulders should pay their fair share". We'd agree with that. But how does she plan to do that in the Budget?

A few tweaks to National Insurance and income tax and possibly going after the gambling companies won't hack it. It was Tony Blair's Labour government that relaxed the rules on advertising gambling 'products' after being lobbied by the industry. Are they really willing to go against the free market wishes of big business? Once again, in the Budget, it'll be the working class that pays the price.

The TUC (Trades Union Congress) says that Labour should increase the bank surcharge and so raise between £20 billion and £50 billion over the next four years.

But the TUC represents more than 6 million workers. We

can't keep waiting for backroom discussions and private lobbying to produce the transfer of wealth to us we need. They should use the power of the workers they represent to place real pressure on Labour.

It is TUC policy to organise a national weekend demonstration against Labour's austerity. We have to keep demanding that they name the date.

The initial huge enthusiasm for 'Your Party' shows that masses of people know Labour is not on their side. It is the betrayals of Labour and the capitalist system it defends that leads big numbers of people to consider voting for millionaire-led Reform UK.

We say nationalise the banks under democratic workers' control and management. And not just the banks - socialist nationalisation of the big companies would let us plan production and decide how the wealth created is spent. Fund decent jobs, homes, services, pay and benefits for the real wealth-creators in society - the working class.

We can sweep the floor out from under Reform's feet and start fighting for the socialist future we deserve.

COME TO SOCIALISM 2025 - FULL PROGRAMME >>> p8-9

'SOCIALIST' ZOHAN MAMDANI LEADS NEW YORK MAYOR POLLS >>> p10-11

YOUR PARTY LATEST >>> p4-5

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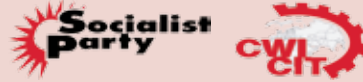
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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."
Karl Marx

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Labour's violence against women and girls plan won't reverse cuts

ELEANOR DONNE
ESSEX SOCIALIST PARTY

Labour Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood has vowed to treat violence against women and girls as a "national emergency", as she announced her 'Plan for Change'. It is an emergency. Every year around 85 people, overwhelmingly women, are killed by their current or ex-partner. NHS figures from 2023 indicate that one in three pregnant women experiences domestic abuse. Over 105,000 children live in homes where there is high risk of domestic abuse.

Yet Labour's plan aims only to halve the rates of such violence and gives themselves ten years to do so. Meanwhile, the government's self-imposed 'fiscal rules', i.e. forced austerity, mean that women's refuges and outreach services are still chronically underfunded and constantly at risk of closure. Women's Aid reports that, in 2024, almost one in four women in need of one couldn't get a suitable refuge place, and were subject to further abuse whilst waiting. Some were forced to sleep rough. Farah Nazeer of Women's Aid said: "What the sector desperately needs is resources for frontline survivor services which support women and children at a time when they most need it".

It's shameful that, 15 months into a Labour government, refuge services are still struggling. Domestic abuse survivors in refuges can't move on to a stable home because of a chronic shortage of genuinely affordable

housing. Labour councils have failed over decades to build council homes in their areas and to mount a fight for the resources they need. Now in power, the Labour government's housing pledges are focused on private ownership, with 'affordable' housing a tiny and expendable element. The Tory benefit cap and two-child benefit limit, kept in place by Starmer's Labour, and poverty wages make it more difficult for women to leave a violent relationship.

Sexual assault and rape are notoriously under-reported crimes. No wonder, when disgusting misogyny and racism within the police force have been exposed yet again (see 'BBC documentary exposes racist, sexist Met police' at socialistparty.org.uk). A new Police and Crime Performance Unit at the Home Office will apparently work to ensure they are 'rooting out those who are not fit to serve'. But we need a genuinely accountable police service, subject to democratic control by local communities.

Come and discuss
The fight to end misogyny and violence against women – and the struggle for socialism

SOCIALISM 2025
15 and 16 November
A weekend of socialist ideas in London



The Socialist Party says:

- Fully fund refuges and domestic violence services, councils should set no-cuts needs-based budgets. A mass campaign, mobilising working-class people can win the resources we need from the Labour government
- We need council houses now. Rents should be controlled and insecure tenancies ended
- Build a united struggle for zero tolerance of sexism and sexual harassment in workplaces, schools and colleges
- Fight for democratic community and trade union control of the police and criminal justice system
- Build a new mass workers' party. To bring an end to the inequality and division of capitalism, we need the socialist transformation of society

Come to a Socialist Party meeting near you

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Lucy Powell's official photograph when she entered Starmer's government LAUREN HURLEY / NO 10 DOWNING STREET/CC

Powell wins Labour deputy leader We still need a new workers' party

BEN GOLDSTONE
CROYDON AND SUTTON SOCIALIST PARTY

Lucy Powell, MP for Manchester Central and recently ousted from Starmer's cabinet, won the race to be deputy leader of the Labour Party, against Bridget Phillipson, current Education Secretary. Powell received 87,407 votes, nearly 14,000 more than Phillipson, on a turnout of 16.6%.

Phillipson was Keir Starmer's choice. Powell's win will likely be used by some trade union leaders and others to argue for the unions to back opposition figures in Labour – a diversion from the urgent need for a new workers' party. A reflection of Labour's unpopularity, it is worth noting that Unite refused to promote either of the candidates, after a vote on its EC.

Angela Rayner, supposed 'friend of

the unions', was deputy leader for a year, but that didn't stop Starmer from attacking the working class as soon as he got into Number 10 – winter fuel payments, tuition fee hikes, attacking disabled people's benefits and more! She was a member of Unite until she was suspended for backing strike-breaking by Labour-run Birmingham City Council against striking bin workers, members of Unite. Powell herself has said what bin workers have been offered was a "reasonable deal on the table", despite it meaning workers could lose a third of their salaries, for some up to £8,000!

Labour is not a party that represents the needs of the working class, and a new deputy leader isn't going to change that. That is why we need to continue to fight for a new mass workers' party, armed with a socialist programme, that will!



Friedrich Engels
PUBLIC DOMAIN

The Guardian takes aim at Engels Join the socialist fight to end poverty

HELEN PATTISON
LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

Socialist, and co-thinker of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels "took creative liberties with descriptions of class divides in Manchester", read a recent article in the Guardian newspaper, taking unnecessary aim at his writings over 170 years after they were published.

Engels wrote "The Condition of the Working Class in England" in 1845. It was his first work and it wasn't exhaustive - our own review explains how, at that time, Engels hadn't yet developed a full programme about how to change working-class living conditions (see 'Review: Friedrich Engels - Condition of the Working Class in England' at socialistparty.org.uk).

Instead, the book mainly focuses on his own experiences and the outrage it made him feel, seeing how people lived. The new research which the Guardian has used shows that around 10% of the population of some Manchester slums were from better-off classes. Historian Emily Chung also found that in some of the wealthier areas, there would have also lived unskilled labourers, including in the same houses. Workers though, it seems, would have lived in overcrowded subterranean cellars, where disease spread quickly. These circumstances were in areas of the city which Engels focused on less in the book.

The real question is: why does the Guardian want to undermine the work of Engels today – 15 years

after a great recession after which living standards haven't recovered for workers and young people?

Capitalism means poverty

Clearly, living conditions are vastly different from the Manchester slums of the 1840s. But capitalist society hasn't ended poverty, poor living standards and much more. In 1845, sewage ran through the streets of Manchester. Today the river Irwell, which flows into the city, is one of Britain's most polluted rivers.

'Liberal' papers like the Guardian are fearful of new generations of workers and young people, disgusted by their conditions, seeing that these are not new problems. They fear people beginning the draw the conclusion we have to fight to change society, and that writers like Marx and Engels will give such people a historic backdrop and programme for these ideas.

If you want to join the fight against capitalist deprivation and poverty, join the Socialist Party today, to put those ideas into action.

Come and discuss
Great Revolutionaries: Marx, Engels, and the foundations of scientific socialism

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- to find out more about joining us today!



Labour smashed in Caerphilly Plaid win but Reform threat remains

GERAINT THOMAS
CAERPHILLY SOCIALIST PARTY

It was a crushing result for the capitalist establishment parties at the Caerphilly Senedd by-election on 23 October. Labour and the Tories together got a combined 13% of the vote. Together, they won the support of barely over 6.5% of the total electorate. Labour's vote plummeted by 35.4 percentage points.

The turnout, at 50.4%, was the highest in the Senedd constituency since the Welsh parliament was created in 1999, and the highest ever for a Senedd by-election. People were motivated to vote as a way of registering their discontent. Labour has led the Welsh government since its inception.

Plaid Cymru's Lindsay Whittle won with 47%. Reform, which had led in opinion polls, came second with 36%. The Green Party got 516 votes (1.5%), around half the 1,074 it got for the regional list in the last election in 2021.

Labour has held the Senedd constituency since its creation, and the parliamentary constituency for over 100 years. The experience of over a year of a Starmer's Labour government has evaporated the idea of Labour being a 'lesser evil'. "Worse than the Tories", is how they have been described by many approaching our Socialist Party campaign stalls. Socialist Party members have led a campaign against library closures by the cutting Labour council.

Many people, understandably,



Blocking Reform will not address what is driving many people to look at the right-populist party as a solution



Lindsay Whittle (right) being sworn in SENEDD CYMRU/CC

will have breathed a sigh of relief that Reform didn't win. But blocking Reform will not address what is driving many people to look at the right-populist party as a solution. Poverty, deindustrialisation, decades of being ignored by the political establishment, have been topped up with 15 years of austerity.

How to stop Reform

To cut across Reform's growing support across South Wales requires a party with a programme and action to improve people's living conditions.

Plaid controlled Caerphilly Borough Council for a period until 2011, with Whittle as council leader. Fundamentally, its approach to leading the council differed more in style than substance to Labour. In fact, Plaid carrying out of £17 million cuts, in the same way that Labour has done since, was part of the reason for it losing control of the council. Plaid currently leads Gwynedd Council and is the largest party in Carmarthenshire – both authorities

are implementing austerity rather than building a working-class campaign to win more money from government.

This Senedd by-election was the last to use the first past the post system. May's elections will use a form of proportional representation. Reform are highly likely to win seats. Rather than standing aside for Plaid or the Greens, a Your Party stand against austerity and for socialist policies could start to undermine support for Reform and win seats.

Come and discuss
Will Farage be the next Prime Minister? And how to stop Reform UK

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Youth services cut

According to John Harris in the Observer (12/10/25) "During the first 10 years of the spending cuts that began in 2010, councils' funding for youth services in England and Wales suffered a real-terms cut of 70%. By 2023, about 1,200 publicly run youth centres had closed, and more than 4,500 youth workers had lost their jobs". This is the responsibility of the Tories and Labour in government and local councils.

The situation is similar in Scotland under the Scottish National Party. In Unison's 2016 'Scotland's Damage' report, 83% of youth workers who responded to the survey said they had experienced cuts to budgets since 2010. Any wonder then that there is massive alienation, loneliness and a mental health crisis among youth?

ONS figures show youth suicide figures are up 50% in the same period in England. With 16-year-olds about to be given the right to vote, it is urgent that Your Party, if it is to gain a mass base in the working class and win the next generation, must fight for youth services and the mass restoration of facilities across the country. This can be part of a no-cuts needs budget fighting strategy by socialists in devolved governments and councils uniting in struggle with the trade unions.

MATT DOBSON, GLASGOW

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- We reserve the right to shorten and edit letters. For legal reasons, we need your full name, address and phone number - but confidentiality will be respected if requested

THE SOCIALIST INBOX

STOP THE CUTS!

STOP THE CUTS!

Your Party – first all-Wales gathering meets

DAVE BARTLETT
CARDIFF CENTRAL SOCIALIST PARTY AND
SECRETARY CARDIFF TRADES UNION COUNCIL

Around 250 assembled in Merthyr on 25 October for the first 'all-Wales gathering' of Your Party. The meeting was led by Beth Winter (former Labour MP) and Mark Serwotka (former general secretary of PCS) who have been given the leadership of Your Party Wales.

This was a Your Party Wales event but Your Party centrally still controls the data of the 31,000 signed up in Wales, not yet passed on to Wales. The attendees were either signed up to 'proto-branches' or directly with Your Party Wales.

This drew some criticism and discussion on the validity of the event. A paper from North Wales wanted to rule out the ability of the conference to make decisions. After a debate, the meeting voted overwhelmingly to continue. The irony was that, at the end, no votes were actually taken on the proposals on the agenda.

Following a four-minute video from Jeremy Corbyn, Mark Serwotka introduced the first session on core principles in which he outlined the basic programme, not dissimilar to the workers' charter agreed at the Wales trade union conference initiated by Welsh trade councils held the week before.

He also referred to the role of the trade unions and commented that some of them are not fighting as hard as they could against the Labour government. The floor was opened to contributions, which allowed Socialist Party members to argue for affiliation by trade union and socialist organisations, and the need to fight

for needs-based budgets by Welsh government and councils.

The afternoon session included debate on Your Party structures and the crucial question of standing in the Senedd elections just seven months away. Beth Winter left open the possibility of standing right across the board, as Socialist Party members urged, or just standing in targeted seats. A number of our members argued very effectively for the case of standing in every seat, pointing out that, under the D'Hondt proportional representation voting system that will be used, parties in the 16 dual constituencies can get candidates elected with 10% of the vote. Recent polls have shown the huge potential support for Your Party in Wales to completely undercut Reform.

However, some of the organisers implied that tactical voting is the way to stop Reform, referring to the Caerphilly by-election (see page 3). I don't think they grasped the potential electoral support for Your Party.

All the positions put by Socialist Party members in the various debates drew warm support and applause: on the question of a needs-based budget to fight the cuts in Wales, on democratic structures, on the central role and weight of the trade unions, and the wide support for dual membership.

The leadership proposed the Your Party Wales Founding Conference in October 2026 – five months after the Senedd elections!

This event was positive, although mainly comprised of older activists. What it demonstrated is both the potential but also the obstacles to building Your Party as a new mass party of the working class.

Your Party Scotland's first councillors must fight on a socialist no-cuts platform



Trade unions protest at the Scottish parliament calling for a no-cuts budget SOCIALIST PARTY SCOTLAND

SOCIALIST PARTY SCOTLAND STATEMENT

Your Party Scotland has its first elected representatives with the defection of three Glasgow Scottish Green councillors.

This is a welcome development and could be an important bridgehead for building an even more powerful and fighting anti-cuts movement in Scotland's largest city.

As the former Scottish Green members who have left, including the councillors, say in their statement: "As members, we felt we could no longer be complicit in decisions which do not align with our socialist values."

Those decisions include Scottish Green MSPs voting for cuts budgets for years at Holyrood. In Glasgow, Scottish Green councillors have voted for cuts budgets in the past.

Even where the Green Party England and Wales have controlled councils in Brighton and Bristol they have implemented cuts. Something that the new leader Zack Polanski has not pledged to fight to change.

As one prominent former Scottish Green member explained: "Where every single one of the existing Holyrood parties is complicit in passing on brutal cuts to public services, it's clear to me that only Your Party can be taken seriously in standing firm against austerity and working to materially improve the lives of the working class."

However, fulfilling that pledge to

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Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2026 – a testing ground for a new party?

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The three Your Party Glasgow councillors should urgently meet with the Glasgow City Council trade unions to discuss how they can work together to advance a genuine anti-austerity and pro-public service policy

stand "firm against austerity" requires more than words. It demands an ironclad determination to use the council positions held by Your Party to refuse to implement austerity. That means putting forward a no-cuts budget and building links with the council trade unions to fight for its implementation.

Specifically in Glasgow, the council trade unions have a long-standing policy of demanding from councillors a no-cuts budget as a first step towards building a mass campaign to win back the hundreds of millions stolen from Glasgow through austerity by Westminster and Holyrood.

The three Your Party Glasgow councillors should urgently meet with the Glasgow City Council trade unions to discuss how they can work together to advance a genuine anti-austerity and pro-public service policy.

It is therefore welcome that Glasgow City Unison – within which Socialist Party Scotland members play a leading role – is writing to the three councillors to request a meeting to advance those discussions.

As the first Your Party councillors in Scotland, the three could set an example of what a fighting socialist policy on cuts looks like. With a council budget due to be drawn up

in the early months of 2026, there is an immediate opportunity to create a new tradition in Glasgow by proposing a no-cuts budget.

This would also set a template for the Holyrood elections just a few weeks later, giving Your Party candidates a clear platform that differentiates them from all the others who have an appalling record of making working-class communities pay for austerity.

On the other hand, if that opportunity were squandered, it would damage not just the reputation of the councillors themselves but also the party as a whole.

Liverpool road

Socialist Party Scotland and our predecessor, Militant, have a long history of fighting for such a socialist approach – including in Liverpool, where the strategy of a no-cuts, needs-based budget was pioneered between 1983 and 1987 by the socialist council.

The council refused to implement the cuts demanded by the Thatcher government in 1984 and mobilised a mass movement of the city's working class, including a one-day general strike that forced the Tories to concede tens of millions in extra funding for the city.

That money was used to build thousands of council houses, new nurseries, sports centres, and to improve services throughout the city.

That example can and should be repeated today – especially by Your Party – if it is to become a fighting pole of attraction for the working class in Glasgow and beyond.

Given the housing crisis, the horrendous cuts to public services and rising poverty in Glasgow and beyond, it is an urgent task to build a fighting socialist alternative based on the trade unions and wider working class.

Socialist Party Scotland members who have joined Your Party will work to achieve such a fighting socialist stand within the trade unions and Your Party in the months ahead.

From inside the North London Your Party assembly

OSCAR PARRY
ENFIELD AND LEA VALLEY SOCIALIST PARTY

Your Party' is hosting 15-20 regional 'deliberative' assemblies to discuss the draft founding documents that have been uploaded to the Your Party website (yourparty.uk).

A few hundred Your Party members attended the five-hour North London Regional assembly on 25 October, including 14 Socialist Party members. We set up stalls outside, selling the Socialist paper, handing out Socialist Party leaflets, and inviting people to Socialism 2025.

There was no introductory plenary-type political discussion, and the event was structured around 'small group' discussions of 10 people. A volunteer 'facilitator' who had received some online training before the meeting ran each group. The groups were assigned tiny sections of the documents and asked to answer predefined questions about them. At the end of the meeting, a few 'facilitators' were picked to give feedback to the whole assembly on what had been discussed.

Criticism of the format of the meeting seemed to be widespread. One of the facilitators even started their group discussion expressing their view that the process was flawed! It was unclear how the written and verbal submissions from the groups will be used to implement changes to the draft documents. The assembly

Come and discuss
Forum - How can the new party be built as a voice for the working class?
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set-up meant it could take no democratic decisions.

Through the course of discussions, many groups decided to set their own agendas and discuss the documents as a whole. A number of the facilitators feeding back at the end similarly spoke generally about what their group had discussed.

Socialist Party members argued the importance of aiming to secure trade union involvement as quickly as possible with elected delegates at local, regional and national level. This would be central to putting 'the working class at the heart' of Your Party. These ideas tended to get general support, but there was a tendency for those present to also support a 'one member one vote' type system, which would not recognise the collective voice of workers organised in the trade unions. Where there was the opportunity to discuss how such a system would actually disadvantage members by limiting what they could vote on to questions determined by the leadership, attendees recognised the limitations.

However, the idea of a 'sortition' system to the founding conference, picking members at random, was widely criticised as an ineffective way of having members' views expressed. Many of those present could see, including through the course of the discussions themselves, the value of a meeting of delegates as opposed to an online vote of all members to determine policy. Discussion in person allows for people's minds to be changed, and policy to be hammered out in course of debate. The idea of local branches electing delegates, and putting motions to conference, seemed to get support. So too did the idea of Your Party groups bringing together trade unions and community campaigns to draw up a no-cuts People's Budget – community organising that can direct how Your Party councillors elected next May become our voice.

A majority of attendees seemed to reject the idea in the draft constitution



Jeremy Corbyn addresses the meeting AMNON COHEN

that states "Members may not hold membership in any other national political party, except if specified by the Central Executive Committee". This would mean excluding organised socialist groups like the Socialist Party. Attendees could present their personal opinions on this on post-it notes at the end!

Criticisms of how Your Party has been organised so far, not only the public disagreement between Corbyn and Sultana, but also that the proposed roadmap to conference was extremely limited in allowing members to have a democratic voice, were quite widely expressed. There was, however, a determination to press ahead.

The need for membership control over the leadership was seen as vital. There seemed to be support for the

right to recall of any member of the central executive committee. Term limits were proposed, so too the demand that elected representatives should take the average wage of a skilled worker, and some argued that there should be no seats reserved for MPs.

The founding process and Your Party documents does not lay the foundations for its development as a mass party of the working class. Socialist Party members will engage in the process, emphasising the central role the trade unions should play, under the direction of the members democratically. And fighting for Your Party to adopt a socialist political programme, including by putting up an electoral stand in defiance of Starmer's austerity in May's local elections.

Birmingham bin strike: 'It's time to build a party rooted in the workplaces and unions'

At the 17 October Your Party meeting in Coventry, **Matt Reid**, Unite convenor for the Birmingham bin strike, spoke. The Labour council, backed up by the government is using fire-and-rehire tactics to tear up workers' terms and conditions and impose an £8,000-a-year pay cut. Workers in Unite the Union have been on strike for over ten months. We publish extracts of Matt's speech.

Trade unionism at its core is about fairness, equality, and dignity at work. It's about lifting up the many, not bowing to the few. It's about saying we refuse to let working people be disposable, to let families be ground down, to let our communities be hollowed out. And if Labour cannot find the courage to live up to those values, then maybe it's time to return to our roots. Maybe it's time to build something new. A party that is unshamefully rooted in unity and solidarity that demonstrates our values.

A party that is rooted in the workplaces and unions. A party that will fight not just for seats in parliament, but for real material change in people's lives.

It's clear to us that the Labour Party has lost its way. And with the rise of Reform, many working people are turning away from the party that no longer protects and supports them, into the waiting arms of those who would divide us and lie to us and paint a picture of a nationalist, patriotic country. But we know the undercurrent that comes from this

rhetoric: anything foreign, anything different is not welcome, and anyone who speaks out will be vilified and silenced.

Change is needed. The future is not written yet. We still have time to make positive moves to stem the tide and show people there is another choice, a better, more inclusive party based in fairness, equality, and workers' rights, with the trade unions at its core. That's a party I would vote for. That's a party that many working people in this country would vote for, and together, we can reshape the country to a place of fairness, respect, and equality, not a place of fear and division.

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editors@socialistparty.org.uk



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PCS NEC abandons campaign to improve pay and protect jobs

Socialists fight for serious strategy

FIONA BRITTLE

PCS NEC MEMBER, PERSONAL CAPACITY

It's been nearly five months since the PCS conference in May, where members instructed the National Executive Committee (NEC) to build a campaign on the widest possible basis to fight for better pay and pensions, job security, and working conditions. If insufficient progress was made, the NEC was instructed to move to a ballot for industrial action in mid-September.

At the emergency NEC meeting on 23 October, general secretary Fran Heathcote tabled a paper which recommended that the NEC agrees PCS "will not be moving to action at this stage." Instead, the general secretary recommended that we "continue to engage in talks" and will "keep the position under review in light of any progress in negotiations and changes to our organisational position."

Her reasoning was to allege members have "limited appetite for action."

This view was based on three 'structure tests': a hastily arranged activist forum and 'ballot-ready' schools in late August, and meetings on pay which branches were asked to call from mid-August to mid-September. This was far too late to ballot members in September, and was during a peak holiday period. This eleventh-hour gesture towards organising, following three months of complete silence, cannot be considered a reliable gauge of members' desire and need for a fight on pay.

Broad Left Network (BLN) members on the NEC, including Socialist Party members, strongly opposed this. The paper contained no plans for mobilising members and build confidence after years of lacklustre campaigns which have failed to achieve members' demands or see off threats of job cuts from the Tories and now Labour.

Left Unity giving up fight

Make no mistake – this is the misnamed 'Left Unity' group (LU), which dominates the NEC, giving up the fight on pay and jobs without achieving members' demands, as they have done many times before.

Fran Heathcote's paper: 'we will not be moving to action at this stage'



DIMITALEN/CCC



PCS members at the British Library on strike, October 2025. Members understand the need to fight. ROB WILLIAMS

The NEC majority, led by president Martin Cavanagh and general secretary Fran Heathcote, sent departmental negotiators into delegated talks as soon as the government published the pay remit – 3.25% plus 0.5% to address low pay – rather than preparing to enter into dispute to increase it.

This remit was never going to be sufficient to deliver anywhere close to the PCS demand of 10% for all members and an £18-an-hour minimum wage. It is unfunded, which means cuts. Without a remit increase, any increase above 3.75% achieved through delegated talks in departments will have to be funded by further cuts in existing budgets.

All trade unionists know that means job cuts, higher workloads, and/or selling off terms and conditions. A co-ordinated strike campaign is the only chance to force the government to increase the pay remit.

In previous months the NEC has rejected requests from some groups, such as the Department for Education and HM Revenue and Customs, to press forward with their own challenges to the pay remit, on the basis that it would "undermine the national campaign" – which the general secretary now seeks to cancel.

BLN fights for serious strategy

I moved a motion which censured the NEC for failure to deliver a pay campaign. This motion also instructed Heathcote to issue materials for members on how and why we must challenge the pay remit industrially, and prepare now for a ballot to move the government on 2025-26 pay. This motion was defeated by the LU majority.

However, the general secretary

continues to argue that having talks at all is a win, compared to the previous Tory government. But pleasantries and warm words from the employer without concrete commitments mean nothing.

Heathcote was asked how anything contained in her paper would concretely prepare members so that, when we test the mood again, we get a different result? We are not researchers conducting a neutral study, we are a trade union and want our members geared up to defend their pay and jobs.

NEC members from LU and PCS Democrats (together known as the Democracy Alliance) made contributions in the debate to say that members "aren't angry about 3%"; "everyone wants a pay rise but members are not willing to do anything about it."

This is as insulting as it is wrong.

It is a now-familiar pattern from the general secretary and president: refuse to build a campaign, 'test the mood' at the last moment, declare members have 'no appetite to fight', and abandon the campaign. This was the same argument used by former general secretary Mark Serwotka to run down the 2022-23 campaign.

The BLN believes that members will fight when it is needed, and when their elected leadership builds a serious campaign to deliver a ballot for industrial action designed to win. This is evidenced by the numerous successful ballots this year in PCS – Ofgem, Met Police, FM workers, Land Registry, MyCSP, British Library, to name just a few. Members understand the need to fight, but they have no faith that their union will wage the necessary battle against the UK government.

Elect a new, socialist leadership for PCS

It has been clear for a long time that the current leadership does not have the political will to stand up to the employer. We have watched the value of our pay erode and threats to our members' jobs, without a fight. PCS members who want to fight the government on pay and jobs must unite to elect a socialist leadership for our union in the NEC elections next spring.

Join the BLN: bln.org.uk

Join the fightback JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

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

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Come and discuss The struggle to build fighting trade unions under Labour

SOCIALISM 2025

15 and 16 November
A weekend of socialist ideas in London

TUC must fight Labour austerity

On Wednesday 22 October, supporters of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) lobbied the leading body of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), the General Council. Trades unionists talked to the general secretaries of some of the different unions attending the meeting about the urgency of enacting the policy agreed at TUC Congress in September, to call a national demonstration against Labour austerity.

ROB WILLIAMS, CHAIR OF THE NSSN, SAID:

In September, the TUC congress passed motions that we were supporting and that I think were unanimously supported, that committed the TUC to calling a national Saturday demonstration against Keir Starmer's austerity.

On 26 November, Starmer, Rachel Reeves and this New Labour government are going to deliver their Budget. It should be making the rich pay for this crisis. But the chances are it will make working-class people pay.

There is a responsibility on the trade union movement to fight back against that. And therefore we are calling on the TUC General Council today to name the date for that demonstration.

We think a good date would be the Saturday before the Budget, 22 November. Right now, no doubt this Starmer government is being lobbied by big business, to bring on austerity, to make working-class people pay. The trade union movement needs to lobby for our interests.

As we know, the far right are on the march. They're looking to exploit

the attacks of Starmer's government. They're looking to falsely present themselves as representing ordinary people. It's a load of rubbish. They're racists. They're trying to divide working-class people. We know we're stronger when we're united.

TUC passed, in 2018, a policy to launch a campaign for 'jobs and homes, not racism'. Why not call a demo against austerity, against the cuts, for jobs homes and services, not racism? To unite working-class people from all communities, a united movement against austerity of Starmer's government and the far right.



Rob addressing the lobby on 22 October. PAULA MITCHELL

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Hospitality workers have a record of fighting back. SOCIALIST PARTY

Pizza Hut threatens job losses – Seize their dough!



JOHN WILLIAMS
CHAIR OF CARDIFF GENERAL UNITE THE UNION (PERSONAL CAPACITY) AND HOSPITALITY WORKER

Pizza Hut, for the second time this year, has gone into administration. Half of its UK restaurants could close, cutting 1,200 jobs.

The cost of eating out has increased by 5% in the past year, with a 6% decrease in people eating out. Inflation is the highest since April.

Are Pizza Hut's problems down to people's changing eating habits? One Pizza Hut managing director blames app costs.

But these factors do not explain Pizza Hut's collapse. They merely explain why it made £3 million profit this year, instead of £10 million.

The real story of Pizza Hut recently is a business being passed between private equity firms, funded with short-term, high-risk credit. Pizza Hut is owned by YUM! with an annual income of \$1.5 billion! The restaurants are now run by Directional Capital, an equity firm.

It is a travesty that Pizza Hut is being asset stripped, with massive job losses, simply because the return on investment is not high enough, quick enough. There is no reason for it to close.

Workers' livelihoods are more important than risky creditors. These closures and job losses have to be fought.

This is part of a wider crisis in hospitality. In August, UK Hospitality reported that half of the job losses since Labour's last Budget (89,000) have been in hospitality. That's estimated to be more than 100,000 by November.

That's 1 in 20 jobs across the sector gone. 33% of businesses are cutting opening hours. One in eight are closing sites. 60% have cut staff. We haven't seen anything like this since Covid.

Many bosses complain that the increases in the minimum wage and National Insurance (NI) have hit their pockets. The trade unions should demand that the bosses 'open the books' to trade union inspection. Show the workers what has happened to all the profits generated by our contribution.

With Pizza Hut, the Labour government should step in. The Socialist Party argues for state subsidies, where genuinely needed, for socially useful small businesses.

But big companies should be taken into public ownership, and decisions made by the workers, trade unions, and the local community. Pizza Hut restaurant sites could be preserved, for example, and improved. But if particular sites are not needed, councils should guarantee alternative well-paid useful work, and take over the buildings to run them as local community resources.

Longest strike in NHS history

Gloucestershire phlebotomists still fighting poverty pay

CHRIS MOORE
GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

After more than 200 days of continuous strike action, these heroic NHS strikers simply want fair pay for their skilled work.

Management has refused to properly evaluate their jobs and has distorted the portrayal of events during this strike.

On the picket line, Kelly said: "It's disgraceful, some staff have worked here for 20 years and look at how we've been treated." Another picket said: "We're fighting for our jobs. We either stand and fight and get the wages we can live on and the recognition of the skills needed for our job, or we'll be off."

They are a small but vital part of the NHS workforce; many other NHS trusts are watching carefully the outcome of this dispute.

Phlebotomists take and handle blood samples from patients that need specialist care. They are on Band 2 pay at just £12.36 an hour, just 15p above the minimum wage. According to NHS rules, staff with the phlebotomists' knowledge and training should be paid at Band 3.

The workers approached the trust management in November 2024 to demand a review of their job evaluation. A review was promised but never

happened so, since mid-March, there have been continuous picket lines.

A job review panel was set up, but was closed without warning by the trust senior management when it looked likely it might find in the phlebotomists' favour. Then for months the trust refused to engage in negotiations. Eventually they were forced to set up another panel but were not transparent about its findings. Another panel had to sit again in October, and ACAS are also involved in negotiations.

Rewriting rules

Now bosses are trying to change the job description! One picket commented: "They're not following rules, they're rewriting them." As staff rep Caroline

said: "This dispute is about correctly evaluating the skills of our dedicated and hard-working staff to the correct pay band and paying us what they owe us." Staff rep Dawny added: "It's abhorrent how the Trust has been able to drag out this process."

Strikers have told us that the trust CEO Kevin McNamara receives a salary of £300,000, his background is marketing not medical. According to the BBC, he had his £100,000 legal fees paid by the NHS for a tribunal and two failed appeals after a tribunal found him responsible for bullying in a previous NHS role.

As many strikers commented, instead of business managers, "we should have a say in how things are run."



PHOTO: CHRIS MOORE



PHOTO: SPOT

Union solidarity with Turkish workers

Solidarity with the People of Turkey (SPOT) held its annual conference on 25 October. Rob Williams spoke on behalf of the National Shop Stewards Network in the afternoon session, 'Building Solidarity Between Struggles'.

Rob said that it's vital that unions in the UK build support for workers and unions in Turkey. But faced with a UK government that is in effect in league with the likes of Trump, Netanyahu and Erdoğan, unions here must take on Starmer's New Labour government industrially and politically.

SOCIALISM²⁰²⁵

THE WORKSHOPS:

Glossary: CWI is the Committee for a Workers' International, the world socialist organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated; pc designates speakers in a personal capacity

Saturday 11am-1pm	Saturday 2pm-4pm	Sunday 10am-12 noon	Sunday 1pm-2:45pm
<p>After Polanski's leadership win - are the Greens a viable socialist alternative? Zoom Speaker: Tom Baldwin, Socialist Party South West secretary</p>	<p>Forum - How can the new party be built as a voice for the working class? Zoom Hosted by Dave Nellist, former socialist Labour MP and Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition national chair</p>	<p>The lessons of Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party Zoom Speaker: Clive Heemskerk, Socialist Party Executive Committee</p>	<p>The Liverpool council struggle – what did a political voice for workers in struggle look like? Zoom Speaker: Dave Walsh, Liverpool Trades Council President</p>
<p>Why can't Starmer save the sinking ship of British capitalism? Speaker: Helen Pattison, Socialist Party London Secretary</p>	<p>Will Farage be the next Prime Minister? And how to stop Reform UK Speaker: Hannah Sell, Socialist Party General Secretary</p>	<p>Does international re-armament mean we're heading for World War Three? Speaker: Nick Chaffey, Socialist Party National Committee</p>	<p>100 years since Trotsky's 'Where is Britain Going?' – and its relevance today Speaker: Dave Reid, Socialist Party National Committee</p>
<p>10% DISCOUNT ON TICKETS UNTIL 5PM ON 14 NOVEMBER</p>	<p>How can the wars against the Palestinians be stopped and a genuine and free Palestinian state be achieved? Speaker: Judy Beishon, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat</p>	<p>15 years since the 'Arab Spring' Speaker: Jon Dale, Socialist Party Mansfield</p>	<p>After the 'Unite the Kingdom protests' – how can workers and youth fight back against racist division and capitalism? Speaker: Hugo Pierre, Socialist Party National Committee</p>
<p>The Sahel coups – how can colonialism in Africa be defeated? Speaker: Deji Olayinka, Socialist Party Black and Asian members group convenor Zoom</p>	<p>Trump 2 – is this a brand new era for world capitalism? Speaker: Tony Saunois, CWI Secretary Zoom</p>	<p>Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2026 – a testing ground for a new party? Speaker: Philip Stott, Socialist Party Scotland National Secretary Zoom</p>	<p>The Mamdani moment - will New York City turn socialist? Speaker: Josh Asker, editor of the Socialist newspaper Zoom</p>
<p>The Russia-Ukraine war – is there an end in sight? Speaker: Niall Mulholland, Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) International Secretariat</p>	<p>Great Revolutionaries: Marx, Engels, and the foundations of scientific socialism Speaker: Martin Powell-Davies, Socialist Party National Committee</p>	<p>Great Revolutionaries: Lenin and Trotsky Speaker: Nick Hart, Socialist Party West Midlands organiser</p>	<p>The German Revolution 1919-1923: a lost opportunity that changed the world Speaker: Bob Labi, CWI International Secretariat</p>
<p>The fight for refugee rights Speakers: Lawanya Chandra, Tamil Solidarity and the Refugee Rights Campaign and TU Senan, CWI International Secretariat</p>	<p>The fight to end misogyny and violence against women – and the struggle for socialism Speaker: Bea Gardner, Socialist Party National Committee</p>	<p>The poll tax: when mass civil disobedience defeated Thatcher Speaker: Steve Nally, former Secretary of the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation</p>	<p>The fight for trans rights after the Supreme Court ruling Speakers: Rachel Cox and Michael Johnson, Socialist Party LGBTQ+ members group</p>
		<p>October 1917 – when workers took power Speaker: Steve Score, Socialist Party East Midlands Secretary</p>	<p>50 years since the end of the Vietnam War Speaker: Chris Thomas, Socialist Party Executive Committee</p>
<p>Was the USSR 'state capitalist' – and does it matter? Speaker: Sarah Sachs-Eldridge, Socialist Party Executive Committee</p>	<p>1926 General Strike – when workers tasted power Speaker: Isai Marjerla, Socialist Party Executive Committee</p>	<p>The fight against climate change: world capitalist disorder or socialist planning? Speaker: Pete Dickenson, author of 'Planning for the Planet'</p>	<p>How was apartheid defeated in South Africa? Speaker: Sean Figg, Committee for a Workers' International, International Secretariat</p>
<p>After the TUC congress - the struggle to build fighting trade unions under Labour Speaker: Rob Williams, Socialist Party Industrial Organiser</p>	<p>Building a trade union and workers' defence organisation against the far right Speaker: Padraig Mulholland, Militant Left, CWI Ireland</p>	<p>Spycops - the undercover police inquiry and the role of the state Speakers: Lois Austin, Spycops undercover policing inquiry core participant Paul Heron, Solicitor and founder of the Public Interest Law Centre</p>	<p>Defending the right to protest in the age of authoritarianism Speaker: Callum Joyce, Socialist Party Southern and South East organiser</p>
<p>What does the AI boom mean for the working class? Speaker: Mark Best, Socialist Party National Committee</p>	<p>Why is the working class still the agent of socialist change? Speaker: Alex Smith, Socialist Party North West organiser</p>	<p>Fighting Starmer's disability cuts Zoom Speaker: David Maples, Socialist Party Disabled Group Convenor</p>	<p>Is China a model for socialism? Speakers: Oscar Parry, Socialism 2025 organising team Clive Heemskerk, Socialist Party Executive Committee</p>
<p>How could a new party help save the NHS? Speakers: Sally Griffiths, staff side Chair NCA Unison (pc) and Maggie Fricker, Chair of Unison Hospitals branch</p>	<p>Building the trade union movement among young workers Speakers: John Williams, Unite Wales Youth Committee, Kris O'Sullivan, ASLEF youth committee and Adam Harmsworth, NAPO NEC member (all pc)</p>	<p>What could a socialist solution to Britain's housing crisis look like? Speaker: Paul Kershaw, Unite the Union housing workers' branch chair</p>	<p>Hosted by Socialist Students: 'Fight for Free Education - Can student struggle ignite the fightback?' Speaker: Adam Powell-Davies, Socialist Students national organiser</p>

SOCIALISM²⁰²⁵

A WEEKEND OF DISCUSSION OF SOCIALIST IDEAS
 15th and 16th November
 Institute of Education, Bedford Way
 London WC1 0AH

Saturday rally 5-30pm:

**How can
 Your Party
 be a party of
 working-class struggle
 and socialism?**

WHERE AND WHEN?

Socialism 2025 takes place at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0AL, on the weekend of the 15th and 16th November. The venue is a 5 minute walk from Russell Square tube station, and a 15 minute walk from Euston station.

WHAT TIME DOES IT START?

The event will start at 11am on Saturday and finish at 4:15pm on Sunday. Registration will open at 9am on Saturday.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST AND WHERE CAN I STAY?

Ticket prices start at £5 and are available at socialism.org.uk. A 'golden ticket' includes entry to the entire weekend and one night in a London hostel. The hostel is the Generator at Tavistock Square - less than a ten minute walk from the venue, Institute of Education. **There is also a free creche which runs throughout the event. To book your place, please email theosharieff@socialistparty.org.uk.**

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3:15PM-4:15PM

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Zohran Mamdani
PHOTO: BINGJIEFU HE/CC

'SOCIALIST' ZOHRAN MAMDANI LEADS NEW YORK MAYOR POLLS

FRANK MERRITT
COMMITTEE FOR A WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL

Social and political convulsion in the US only increases. The Trump administration is widening its use of administrative 'bonapartist' powers, engaging in militarised methods and attacks on the "violent left" in the aftermath of the Charlie Kirk assassination and shootings.

This includes the incitement of military leaders, large-scale anti-immigrant terror operations by an unleashed, tooled-up ICE and sending troopers to the streets of major US cities. Vice President JD Vance encourages corporations to fire workers for simply criticising Kirk and his politics. All this encourages the far right and the visibility and presence across the country of armed militias.

Meanwhile the cost-of-living crisis means working-class Americans struggle with price and insurance premium rises, cuts to Medicaid and food stamps. This and the threat of job losses and further insecurity are exacerbated by the federal government shutdown, at the time of writing, for which the two corporate parties blame each other.

This is the back drop to the 4 November New York City mayoral election, with Zohran Mamdani, whom the President and Wall Street bankers accuse of being a "communist", currently leading the polls.

Mamdani, identifying as a 'Democratic Socialist' and an activist in the

Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), shook the establishment with his victory in the Democratic Party primary in June, winning half a million votes.

His campaign, with 44% of the vote, defeated the current mayor Eric Adams, and the former governor of New York state, a darling of Wall Street and the hedge funds, Andrew Cuomo. Currently, Mamdani is leading in the opinion polls but does not yet have majority support, meaning he could still be defeated. However, he has become a pole of attraction against Trump.

The primary vote and interest generated by Mamdani's radical reform programme, which he says is to be funded through taxation of the rich, includes setting up five city-owned grocery stores, affordable housing, free bus travel, and a \$30 minimum wage (currently \$16.50 an hour). It reflects the desire for change from corporate two-party politics. New York is a city where homelessness has rocketed since the great recession and the pandemic, while the rich have never been richer.

This, and his sharp attacks on Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, have made Mamdani's campaign a reference point far beyond New York. According to multiple press reports, Mamdani is mobilising tens of thousands of activists, mainly radical youth from a college background, outside the corrupt New York Democratic Party and is also increasingly seen as a threat to it.

Struggle

No doubt many of New York's millions of voters will be inspired by Mamdani's programme to vote for him. Many radicalised youth and worker activists are also being inspired to go out and campaign for him, despite their hatred and opposition to the corporate Democratic Party for which he is running. However, voting and even campaigning for Mamdani, by itself, will not be enough to win radical, let alone socialist, change in New York and nationally.

A victory for Mamdani would lift the confidence of radical workers and youth and the left generally in the US and internationally. But what kind of programme and methods are needed to defend, deepen and win his programme and, at the same time, strengthen the socialist opposition to capitalism?

Socialists have opposed working in and standing for capitalist parties like the Democrats who, by their very nature, defend capitalism and aim to prevent the growth of socialist movements. This issue has for decades been a central debate within the US left. Mamdani's success in becoming the Democratic mayoral candidate will, for some, be another test as to whether to stay within the Democrats or, as the CWI argues, work now to build the basis for a genuine workers' party with a socialist programme. We call on Mamdani to break with the

\$30 per hour minimum wage that Mamdani is calling for, almost double the current \$16.50

Democrats and assist in this process.

While the term 'communist' is being used by sections of the capitalist press, Trump and Mamdani's opponents, in a CNN interview in early October he explicitly said he was not a "communist", but a "democratic socialist". He quoted Dr Martin Luther King saying: "Call it democracy, or call it democratic socialism, there must be a better distribution of wealth for all of God's children". Mamdani was clear he had more of a "critique" of capitalism today, that he wants to reduce income inequality and give New Yorkers dignity rather than actually advocating an end to the economic system. It must be explained socialism is not a "better distribution of wealth". A section of his supporters, or at least those whom he has caught the attention of, can be won over to a real position of fighting for a socialist democracy, with the working class decisively removing capitalism and taking over the key and major parts of the economy and democratically running and planning for society's needs.

It is not just authoritarian Trump, who threatens to use federal powers to shut down a Mamdani administration in the city, who will wage a war on his campaign. In effect, the completely pro-corporate Democratic Party leadership is blocking with opposition candidates to undermine Mamdani. The likes of Schumer and Jeffries - leaders of the Democrats in the federal Senate and House respectively - can't even face appearing with

him in public. At the time of writing, Mamdani leads Cuomo by a double-digit margin. Now that corrupt Mayor Adams has dropped out of the race, only Cuomo and Curtis Sliwa remain. According to the Guardian US, "Sliwa, the Republican nominee, said last week that he had turned down multiple offers of millions of dollars to end his own campaign".

Cuomo stated after Adams withdrew: "We face destructive extremist forces that would devastate our city through incompetence or ignorance, but it is not too late to stop them." Cuomo used the flexible ballot line during the primary in New York to register his own "Fight and Deliver" party and is now running as an independent claiming, "I'm a Democrat running independently, he is a socialist using the Democrat line". Mamdani will need to deepen and widen his base, which is currently largest among young college graduates in areas like parts of Brooklyn, to win over unionised workers and black voters who voted by majority for Cuomo in June's primary.

It must be remembered how the Democratic leadership and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) did everything they could, utilising major resources, to succeed in beating Bernie Sanders in the 2016 Democratic New York primary against Hillary Clinton, which was key in her winning that year's Convention and the presidential nomination. They are well practiced in defeating left populism. In the run-up to the 2016 primary, 200,000 Democratic voters just in Brooklyn were dropped from the list of those entitled to vote in the primary. Although this is now an election in a situation of polarisation, both in the city and wider US society, the machinations of the Democratic corporate machine are still in play.

Radical workers and youth must, independently from the Democrats, organise now, to not just defend the radical parts of Mamdani's programme, but to build support for their extension while arguing that socialist change is necessary. Mamdani's reforms on wages and housing are limited to being phased in over a period of years when there is no reason that they could not be implemented with New York's considerable mayoral and municipal budgetary powers, immediately after he takes office.

Mobilise

Key to this will be organising workers, labor unions, tenants' organisations, students and all who want to fight, preparing a programme for struggle and, crucially, to hold Mamdani to account. Politically this will mean in the future running independent socialist candidates against the Democratic Party machine at city council and state levels to stop radical reform being blocked and strengthen the opposition to capitalist rule.

Mass assemblies in neighbourhoods, colleges and workplaces should be organised during the campaign to discuss the way forward and draw up an emergency socialist budget for New York City, demanding the funding the city needs. A Mamdani administration, if it seriously took such a fighting approach, must also appeal to the wider working class across the US to join the struggle to prevent NYC being isolated. This would include encouraging

the building of movements across the country to force city councils to fight and, if the councils don't, work to replace those councillors with labor-backed councillors, independent of both Democrats and Republicans, who will.

Workers and labor unions and city councils cannot just wait for Mamdani, they should convene mass meetings now and begin to make demands over wages, the democratic right to strike and conditions on whoever is the new mayor, along with plans for labor action, campaigns and strikes to win such demands.

Renters must organise on a mass basis with occupations of empty properties, rent strikes and protests to force the issue of rent freezes and more public housing immediately. Independent campaigns should be launched for state ballot initiatives on these issues like the current rent control ballot in Massachusetts.

The young protesters who have faced police violence over Gaza encampments at universities like Columbia should organise now and demand Mamdani, with his potential powers over the New York Police Department, refuse to attack and dismantle their protests and defend democratic rights.

Significant gains, let alone socialism, cannot be won in New York alone. The US capitalist class and particularly an authoritarian Trump administration will not tolerate even Mamdani's limited radical economic programme. That is why preparation for mass struggle is necessary. Of course, the economic power of New York and its political importance can also be utilised by a mass movement to win concessions from US capitalism.

Pressure

Mamdani, if he wins may try and take a middle road of implementing parts of his programme while trying to avoid a battle with the state, the council and Trump. But under this Trump administration, with its

authoritarian stance, this could only last a matter of days or weeks as they would want to stop an example of resistance developing. When asked directly about the National Guard being used by Trump, Mamdani said New Yorkers should prepare for this to be an inevitability but he gave no sign in his answer he would mobilize a fightback, merely pointing to the judiciary stating that Trump's intervention into cities was illegal, after their corporate Democrat administrations went to court. New York, like most US cities, faces financial problems and a defeat of Mamdani by Cuomo or the Republican Silwa, can also mean major attacks.

Since his primary win, Mamdani's campaign has tended to moderate and retreat on statements like "Billionaires shouldn't exist" that were popular with youth and workers but not the Democrat national leadership.

He also has made inroads into sections who previously voted for Trump, including young men. The president's handling of the economy has disappointed this layer most with his approval rating falling 23 points. Mamdani is also seen as principled over Gaza, even by those who disagree with him economically, seeming to defy the common idea politicians in America can be brought. There is a clip of him debating during the primary where he says he will visit boroughs of the city rather than going to Israel, which all the other candidates pledged.

On the other hand, he has met with corporate representatives and Wall Street bankers, seemingly to attempt to reassure them, and has distanced himself from the DSA's radical official programme, such as on defunding the police, for example.

If Mamdani wins, colossal pressures will be unleashed. It is clear sections of the corporate Democrats are seeking to influence and neutralise his campaign. This danger is shown by his endorsement by the New York state governor Kathy Hochul, a corporate Democrat with an anti-working class record.

On the contrary, a mass movement needs to be built and the Mamdani campaign must stress that the struggle will continue, even if he loses in November. It cannot simply be an electoral campaign but has to attempt to both win immediate improvements and to start to build a movement to change society.

Mass workers' party

If Mamdani were to take up the kind of mass struggle we raise, he would quickly find himself and his base, and possibly others, isolated from the Democratic Party machine, and then the question of building a political vehicle to represent workers and youth would be sharply posed on a mass level and understood by significant numbers. Of course, Mamdani betraying the hopes invested in him and his programme would disillusion a layer. It can also lead to the best workers and youth looking for a combative independent socialist alternative.

Ultimately, the mayoral contest and the run-up to the 2026 midterms with Trump's 'Make America Great Again' base fracturing and the Democrats having historically low popularity, shows the vacuum that exists. While the Democrats may pick up some electoral support as the 'lesser evil' to Trump, they have no answer. What is needed for the US working class and youth, a mass party, with labor union power central, that fights for their interests locally and nationally. A party that, unlike the Democrat machine, is fully democratic, membership-based and with leaders who are regularly elected, have no privileges and are paid, as a maximum, the average of a skilled worker.

Such a mass workers' party would, if it adopted a socialist programme, raise the idea of an end not just to Wall Street's power in New York but across the US. This means a fight for real socialist change bringing vast resources into public ownership and working-class control.



'No Kings' protest against Donald Trump in New York, October 2025
PHOTO: RHODOENDRITES/CC

Come and discuss
The Mamdani moment - will New York City turn socialist?
SOCIALISM 2025
15 and 16 November
A weekend of socialist ideas in London

Far right seen off in Southampton again



PHOTO: SOUTHAMPTON SOCIALIST PARTY

NICK CHAFFEY SOUTHAMPTON SOCIALIST PARTY

500 joined Southampton's 'Unity Demonstration' to oppose the far right marching on 25 October. Once again the far right were outnumbered.

Anger has grown at the weekly far-right protests at a local asylum hostel and the rise in racism. Recently, a flare was thrown through an open window in the hostel, and dozens of taxis were vandalised in Bevois, where there is a large Asian and Muslim population.

The far right threatened to march through Bevois. But the police were forced to change their route due to counter-protests from anti-racism campaigners, the community, and trade unions. Therefore, we marched from near the asylum hostel through Bevois to the town centre.

Many taxi drivers joined the protest, alongside other trade unionists. Socialist Party members helped Southampton Trades Union Council send out an appeal to back the anti-racist demonstration. On the day, there were activists from CWU, Napo, Unite, Unison, GMB and PCS union.

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) campaign for "jobs and homes, not racism" has to be built to unite workers against the scapegoating rhetoric of the right. We must build wider trade union support for the taxi drivers, whose vehicles have been vandalised. Many of the drivers are in the GMB union.

Many students joined the march. Socialist Students had called on the Southampton University Student Union to back the march.

Local taxi driver, trade union rep, and Socialist Party member Ali

Haydor said at the rally: "The far right seek to terrorise asylum seekers and Muslims. We need to stand together. And we need to do the politics. Because if we don't, the politics will do us."

"That means we call on our Labour councillors to ditch Starmer, or we will ditch you. We need to unite for jobs and homes, not racism." Ali's words received loud cheers and applause from all who were there.

100 attended a Your Party meeting the next day. Many there had been at the demonstration.

Nadia Ditta - Bevois candidate for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) in 2024, who got 32% of the vote for her anti-cuts, anti-war message - spoke, as did Southampton Trades Council president and NHS worker Maggie Fricker.

Both spoke on the need for a clear anti-cuts alternative that fights for the funding we need to deliver a people's budget to restore jobs and services in the city. The meeting agreed to lobby the council pre-budget meeting in November.

Come and discuss
After the 'Unite the Kingdom' protests - how can workers and youth fight back against racist division and capitalism?

SOCIALISM 2025
 15 and 16 November
 A weekend of socialist ideas in London

Far right flees in face of mass Whitechapel rally

What next to win the fight against racism?

MIHAELA IVANOVA TOWER HAMLETS SOCIALIST PARTY

Thousands flooded Whitechapel chanting "whose streets? Our streets!" on Saturday 25 October.

Socialist Party members from across London joined local community groups, young people and trade unionists in a counter-protest against the now-far-right Ukip's "mass deportations tour", originally planned to march through the multiethnic east London borough of Tower Hamlets.

Days beforehand, under pressure from the obvious scale of the coming counter-protest and from Tower Hamlets mayor Lutfur Rahman, the police were forced to ban Ukip's hate march from entering the borough. Ukip were too terrified to enter east London at all, instead choosing to march through Knightsbridge, one of the poshest parts of the capital - what a victory for the working class!

Working-class anger against racism was reflected in the 5,000 who came out. There were big numbers from the local Asian community, with some groups clearly organised to defend their area if needed. Importantly, there were also some

groups of trade unionists with their banners. And it's very positive that Rahman - and his 'Aspire' party, linked to Jeremy Corbyn's 'Your Party' and which leads the council - put their authority behind this rally.

But there are lessons to consider too. A bigger, bolder mobilisation by London union leaders would have sent an even stronger message of unity of the whole working class against racist division.

Council workers in Tower Hamlets Unison, one of the largest union branches in the borough, had brought together other trade unionists to build for the counter-protest in workplaces, and plan longer-term community campaigning.

The main organisers, however, were the mayor, and the 'Stand Up to Racism' group. Unfortunately, local trade unionists struggled to get their democratic weight recognised in discussions with them.

The market and road were kept open as usual on the day, contrary to reported plans. Even ambulances - supposed to be diverted - had to navigate through the crowds until police accepted reality.

Stewards reported they were given no leadership on the day. Had local trade unionists - better organised, accountable, knowing the area

- been granted control instead, this and other problems could have been avoided.

The majority of the crowd never got near the platform. Its main speakers were Jeremy Corbyn and Lutfur Rahman, alongside faith groups and 'Stand Up to Racism'. Tower Hamlets Unison had argued to include trade union and community campaign speakers, but organisers opposed this.

However, they had at least agreed that Tower Hamlets Unison could speak - then on the day, even that didn't happen. Len Hockey, secretary of the fighting Unite union branch at the hospital next to the rally, also asked to speak - and was turned away. Unfortunately, all this meant a big, energetic rally - which had already scored a victory - didn't get to hear a trade union voice proposing next steps.

Tower Hamlets Socialist Party will continue working with local trade unionists towards that planned community campaigning against racism and the austerity conditions it breeds in. And with more funding cuts looming, workers' candidates standing against all austerity and for building a fight for the funds Tower Hamlets needs will be essential in May's council elections.



Socialist Party members on the protest PHOTO: LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

Socialism is on the agenda - fund the struggle for a new society



Socialism 2024 PHOTO: JASPER CHAPLIN

This coming year is going to be filled with struggle. We want to be ready and prepared

This year, we have set a target to raise £30,000 in the Socialism 2025 fighting fund appeal

ISAI MARIJERLA SOCIALIST PARTY TREASURER

Every year, the Socialist Party organises the largest gathering of socialists, campaigners, and activists who are serious about fighting for socialism. Socialism 2025 is filled with discussions and debates about socialist ideas that can change the world.

A growing number of people are looking for alternatives, and socialism is an idea that is resonating with many. Polls show that support for socialism - particularly among Gen Z - is high.

In the pages of the Socialist, you will read about the mass movements and uprisings against capitalism by Gen Z, including Nepal, Indonesia, South Korea, Morocco, Philippines, and Madagascar.

In the US, a YouGov poll indicated that nearly two-thirds of Gen Z Americans are likely to vote for a socialist candidate. The support for Zohran Mamdani, who is seen as a socialist, and says that there shouldn't be billionaires, is putting him on track to be elected New York mayor.

18 October saw the largest single-day protest in US history, with nearly seven million people out protesting against Donald Trump.

Across Europe, left-wing forces like France Insoumise or Die Linke in Germany are gaining support. In the UK, the support for Your Party shows the appetite for a left-wing alternative.

Working-class and young people want their own political party. The Socialist Party is fighting to put the

working class at the centre of the new party, so that workers and young people have a genuinely democratic voice - a party of our own.

Socialist Party members have been busy, participating in anti-war demonstrations, organising school student walkouts against Donald Trump's visit, supporting workers on strike, and organising local campaigns against cuts.

And this coming year is going to be filled with struggle. We want to be ready and prepared.

The Socialist Party has its own printshop, so we can get leaflets, posters, and more out when we need them. We have also recently bought a two-colour printer to run leaflets for the many protests we take part in.

One of the highlights of Socialism 2025 is the Saturday night rally. This year, the theme is on 'How Your Party can be a party of working-class struggle and socialism'. On Sunday, there will be an international solidarity rally, discussing the mass movements and why they are happening - to learn the lessons, and to prepare for the next ones.

A part of the rally on Saturday will be the financial appeal. This year, we set a target of £30,000.

All the donations we receive will be used to fund and promote socialist ideas. £10,000 of the money raised is going towards the international organisation that the Socialist Party is part of - the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI).

You can donate today, or make a pledge to be redeemed by the end of the year.

Fund the fightback DONATE TODAY
 Visit socialistparty.org.uk/donations/socialism25/ or call 020 8988 8777

Walthamstow Your Party public meeting

NANCY TAAFFE WALTHAM FOREST SOCIALIST PARTY

Waltham Forest Socialist Party members attended the latest event organised by Your Party supporters in the Walthamstow constituency on 23 October. The first meeting had 90 people packed into a small room, showing the initial enthusiasm for the founding of a new party.

The latest public meeting was held on Priory Court, a big council estate which, regardless of the gentrification of Walthamstow, is still home to many working-class people. This meeting was a lot smaller than the inaugural one, comprising mostly known activists. Unfortunately, no one attended from the estate.

Socialist Party members proposed and got agreed a no-cuts motion for the May elections. This motion, moved by Linda Taaffe, and backed by the local organising group of Your Party, recognised the huge opportunity for Your Party supporters to be elected as councillors, given the discontent in the borough over the council making £23 million of cuts

in this financial year. The motion included a call for an open People's Budget conference in the new year to put forward policies based on the needs of our communities, not austerity.

In the discussion, a former defender of the local Labour leadership moved an amendment. This would have subordinated the Your Party campaign to the demands of the 'Coalition for a Fairer Waltham Forest', a group of local charities and activist organisations.

While we welcome the demands of those campaigners as part of a discussion about a People's Budget, we felt that Your Party had to come forward with its proposals to stand on a no-cuts programme, drawing in those from other political forces that agree with a no-cuts approach in deeds as well as words.

In the end it was agreed to take the amendment as a separate motion, and both were carried, but socialists and workers in and around Your Party will need to struggle for a fighting, no-cuts slate in the council elections next May.



GREAT REVOLUTIONARIES
 BY PETER TAAFFE

NEW PUBLICATION: GREAT REVOLUTIONARIES

Great Revolutionaries is an introduction to the thoughts of six great revolutionaries, and explains how they sought to apply their ideas in action: Marx & Engels, the founders of 'scientific socialism'; Lenin & Trotsky, the leaders of the 1917 Russian Revolution, and Babeuf & Luxemburg, both killed for their socialist ideals.

Their history is told through a compilation of twelve articles written by Peter Taaffe, who devoted his life to helping build struggle, in Britain and globally, first as editor of the Militant newspaper, then as general secretary of the Socialist Party.

Special offer at the Socialism 2025 weekend for just £8! RRP £9.99

Mentmore Press



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.

- For a socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs, including dental and eye care – free at the point of use and 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.

- For local councillors who are committed to opposing austerity and all cuts to local services, jobs, pay and conditions.
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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.

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Maccabi Tel Aviv fans banned from Villa



KEVIN CARNALL
BLACK COUNTRY SOCIALIST PARTY

‘Always the Villains’. We’re used to being on the back pages, but the front pages is rarer. Football fans misbehaving isn’t new. Football fans being banned from venues isn’t new. But the whole debacle and media discourse around the Aston Villa vs Maccabi Tel Aviv Europa League match is new.

The Birmingham Safety Advisory Group and West Midlands Police agreed that, after the rampage and Islamophobic behaviour by the Maccabi fans in Amsterdam last season, they couldn’t guarantee the safety of fans for the match.

If the Maccabi fans sang about “no schools in left in Gaza” or “fck the Arabs” like they have previously, the local community around Villa Park would take offence and rightly so. It

Player and fan protest stops profiteering football game

IAN PATTISON
ENFIELD AND LEA VALLEY SOCIALIST PARTY

A profiteering football match in the USA has been cancelled. Spanish teams, Villarreal and Barcelona, were due to play their regular league match in Miami.

But player and fan protest has stopped this. Football writer Matt Slater said: “Football keeps forgetting to run it past the players.”

Players organised visually effective protests in every La Liga match on the weekend of 18-19 October, refusing to move for the first 15 seconds.

But La Liga and TV broadcasters refused to televise the player protest, further angering players. Players are also angry that the US match ignored their ‘convenios colectivos’, supposed to guarantee workers’ rights.

And fan protest helped this win too. Just like when we beat the break-away Super League in 2021. Then, thousands of fans protested, reflecting millions of fans across England.

Like the Miami match, a similar ‘39th game’ for English Premier

League teams to play in another country was stopped before it started, because of fan backlash. And it hasn’t resurfaced.

Why is this happening? Lots of different people have the right to access football. Barcelona is the most popular football team in the US. Almost 200,000 people came to see them play during the team’s summer pre-season US tour, two years ago.

But the capitalists that run football think about ordinary people last. Free-market madness in the US – who are co-hosting next year’s World Cup – means that the cheapest ticket for the opening match there is £41!

There are a handful of ‘cheap’ £44 tickets. But so few of those are available that you have to zoom in to see that section of the stadiums on ticket websites. And they’re already sold out!

Football fans, staff, including players, and local communities, should come together to democratically decide how everyone can access football – not the billionaire owners or undemocratic governing bodies.

wouldn’t be two sets of rival football fans having a ding dong. It would be a violent, unrepentant mob looking for trouble with a whole community. Even the Tel Aviv derby in Israel on 19 October was called off by police after ‘violent riots’.

Despite Keir Starmer branding West Midlands Police anti-Semitic and Lisa Nandy spreading disinformation in Parliament, there are numerous clubs who have banned away fans. When Legia Warsaw rocked up at Villa in 2023 they demanded an extra thousand tickets and kicked off with police in the coach park to the point where the whole allocation was denied entry.

Last year, Turkish club Besiktas refused to give Maccabi an away allocation and the game was played behind closed doors in Hungary. When Russia invaded Ukraine, its clubs were removed from all Uefa competitions but apparently if they had done the same to an Israeli team following the invasion of Gaza it would be antisemitic.

So come 6 November, I’ll be sat in the North stand lower opposite an empty away end – as it should be. Although it would be a nice gesture from the club if they allow the two biggest Maccabi fans I know of to sit there, Arsenal corporate box regular Keir Starmer and Luton Town hooligan Tommy Ten Names.

The police would probably ban away fans full stop if they could. Ultimately, the safety advisory group has actively engaged with a wide range of local partners and community representatives in preparation for this fixture and deemed it not worth the trouble.

‘Political symbols’

Aston Villa doesn’t come out of this whole situation in a great light either. When I’m seeing other giants of European football like Paris

Saint-Germain and Galatasaray unfurling giant tifos in support of Palestine I don’t expect Villa to be threatening me with expulsion from the ground for wearing a Free Palestine shirt. It seems most English clubs are a few steps behind our European neighbours, with Villa warning fans against “displaying political symbols, messages, or flags during the upcoming Europa League match”.

It will be interesting to see if anyone gets thrown out for wearing poppies at Villa vs Bournemouth three days after the Maccabi match. Common sense tells me we should be allowed to wear both or neither. Football is nothing without the fans and we shouldn’t be threatened with expulsion for supporting what we believe in as well as our team.

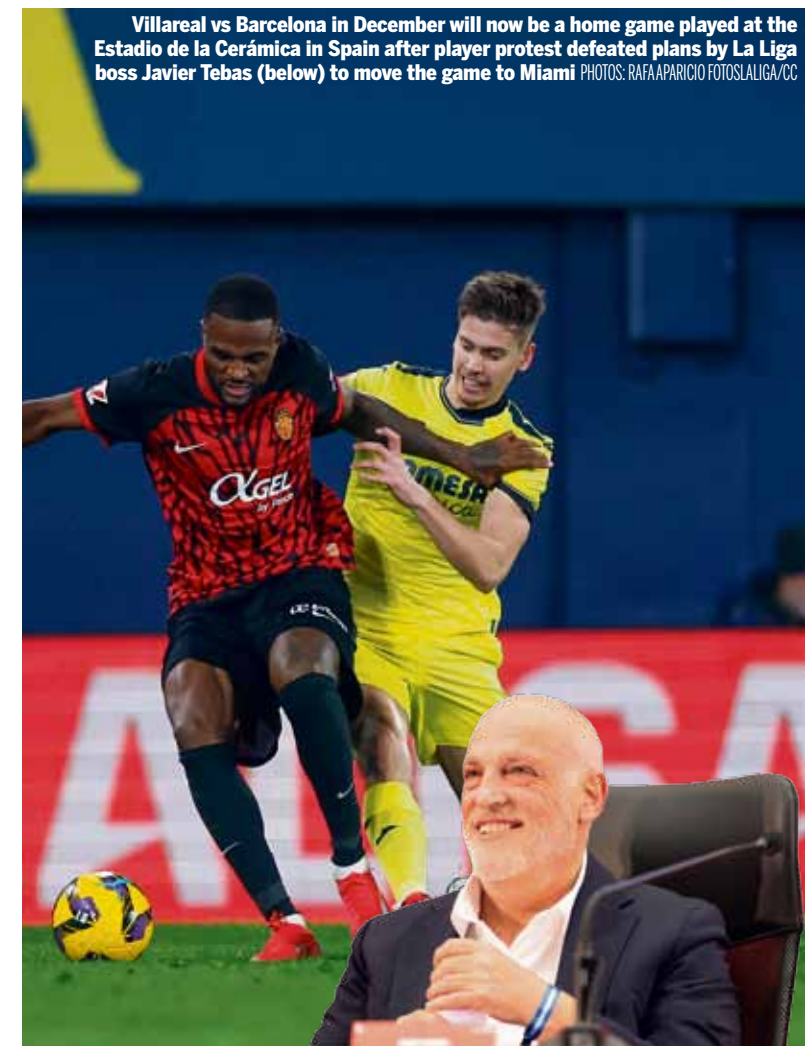
Aston Villa have always had a proud history of standing up to racism of all kinds. During a summer tour of Germany in 1938 it was Aston Villa who ignored advice from the home office and refused to give the nazi salute, a day after the England national team had done so.

Pressure from the English and German government didn’t work then same as it won’t work with our fans now.

Come and discuss

How can the wars against the Palestinians be stopped and a genuine and free Palestinian state be achieved?

SOCIALISM 2025
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Villarreal vs Barcelona in December will now be a home game played at the Estadio de la Cerámica in Spain after player protest defeated plans by La Liga boss Javier Tebas (below) to move the game to Miami. PHOTOS: RAFA APARICIO/FOTOSALIGA/CC

LEFT-BACKED CATHERINE CONNOLLY ELECTED IRISH PRESIDENT



Catherine Connolly has won the 2025 Irish presidential election by a landslide. Her candidacy was supported by left and social democratic parties, the Greens and Sinn Féin.

Connolly secured over 64% of the vote. Her conservative establishment opponent, Heather Humphreys (Fine Gael), received around 28–29%. A third candidate, Jim Gavin (Fianna Fáil), who had withdrawn but too late to be removed from the ballots, received 7%. A record 13% of votes were spoiled. Turnout was at 46.3%.

Militant Left (CWI Ireland) looks at the election results and what is needed to build a viable socialist and working-class opposition.

Catherine Connolly has won the presidential election by a landslide. Fine Gael’s Heather Humphreys garnered scarcely a third of the vote.

Also, in an unprecedented development in presidential elections, hundreds of thousands of spoiled votes were cast.

Three immediate conclusions can be drawn from this result. The first is that the ongoing degeneration of electoral support for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael continues. It is hard to see how this trend can be reversed.

Secondly, there is a clear hunger for an alternative to endless government by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. The emergence of a ‘left’ alternative is now posed by Connolly’s victory. Can parties as different as Sinn Féin, Labour, the Social Democrats, Greens and People Before Profit-Solidarity continue to work together in a coherent manner over the coming years? That is an open question.

Thirdly, the ‘Spoil your Vote’ campaign indicates that social

media-based far-right campaigns are beginning to have a resonance well beyond YouTube and X. This is a dangerous development. It is clear a significant section of the working class are permanently alienated from and antagonistic towards the political mainstream. This cannot be wished away.

A ‘left alternative’ that includes class warfare against the working class, such as Labour and the Greens, would be a political disaster in the making. That these parties’ close involvement in creating the conditions that drive this alienation, such as the housing crisis, must be honestly reckoned with.

Given the social forces contesting the presidential election, Militant Left outlined conditional support for the Connolly campaign. The Connolly victory is a very positive development. If it represents a substantial political shift leftwards that is also hugely positive. And, of course, thousands of people, particularly young people, will have been politically activated by the Connolly campaign and her victory.

However, there are a few hard class questions posed in a presidential election. How sustainable and coherent can a ‘left alternative’ be when it includes hardened and absolutely unapologetic parties of austerity like Labour and the Greens? Sinn Féin also has a record of passing on the Westminster governments’ austerity cuts in the North, in coalition with the Democratic Unionist Party. Left and socialist organisations that took part in Connolly’s campaign might want to wish that away.

It remains to be seen how much Catherine Connolly will use the

presidential role to comment on acute social and economic issues, for example on the housing crisis and on international issues like Gaza. The presidential office is limited but could be used as a platform to speak out on behalf of the oppressed and marginalised, and to encourage working-class movements to organise and resist. However, Connolly will come under immense pressure to speak for ‘all the nation’, to tone down or stop taking stances, and to stick to ‘neutral’ ceremonial roles.

It is a positive that the establishment has been given a massive kicking by the electorate. We repeat our position that a mass party of the working class, based on the trade unions, community groups, wider layers of the working class and the socialist left, is an imperative. This would not be a party aiming for a ‘left government’, which some on the left believe can include pro-capitalist parties, but for building working-class power, based on a socialist programme, in our communities and workplaces.

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

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the Socialist

Issue 1342

30 October - 5 November 2025

formerly **Militant**

FIGHT LABOUR'S UNI FEES HIKE

FUND OUR EDUCATION

- TAKE THE WEALTH OFF THE 1%



SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Starmer's Labour government has confirmed its plans for university tuition fees to go up every year. Left up to Labour, our fees will rise to well over £10,000 by 2029. That's after fees have already gone up this term – the first rise in almost a decade.

Meanwhile, cuts to our education keep coming. Over half of universities are set to record 'deficit budgets' this year. Uni bosses have announced 15,000 job cuts in the last year, destroying thousands of courses and even entire departments in dozens of universities.

Why should we pay the price, at a time when the rich have never been

richer? The FTSE 100 biggest corporations in Britain have been paying out around £85 billion annually to their shareholders. Students and staff need to unite in a movement that could put that wealth in our hands in order to fully fund education. That would include making education free for all, by abolishing tuition fees and providing maintenance grants that actually cover students' living costs.

Socialist Students initiated the Funding Not Fees campaign as a means to get students organised alongside staff in a movement for fully funded, free education. As well as holding protests on dozens of campuses, and supporting workers striking back, a key part of the

campaign has been lobbying MPs – fighting for our movement to have a political voice.

That fight could be massively boosted by the existence of Your Party, launched by Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana. Over 800,000 signed up to find out more within a week of its announcement.

When Corbyn was leader of the Labour Party, his anti-austerity, anti-war policies enthused hundreds of thousands of young people. A major reason for that was his policy for free education in the 2017 and 2019 general elections.

Now students have the chance for there to be a mass party that will fight fees and cuts, and fund education by making the super-rich pay.

Just the prospect of a new party fighting 'for the many, not the few' has Labour under pressure. At the same time as raising fees, the government has been forced to announce the reintroduction of maintenance grants for tens of thousands of students. While this is far from adequate, it is nonetheless a concession to the anger of millions of working-class and young people, who are desperately looking for a political alternative to Starmer's war and austerity agenda.

Socialist Students members are joining Your Party and will do all we can for it to fight for free education, and a real socialist alternative to the misery that capitalism means for working-class and young people.

Come and discuss
'Fight for free education – can student struggle ignite the fightback?' discussion hosted by Socialist Students at
SOCIALISM 2025
15 and 16 November
A weekend of socialist ideas in London

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

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

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