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the Socialist

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MAKE THE RICH PAY, NOT THE WORKING CLASS!

Fight for socialist change

Young people across Europe are taking to the streets. Education, housing, war, corruption… the specific ignition varies. But all are fuelled by resentment that we are constantly asked to pay for crisis with public service cuts and rising prices. Meanwhile the super-rich capitalist bosses get richer.

Andy Burnham says he wants to give us 'breathing room' in the Autumn Budget, but this parliament is set to see the worst fall in living standards for more than 60 years.

Cuts to pensions, planned attacks on benefits, continued underfunding of public services – it might be delivered with different vibes, but Burnham's government isn't proving itself to be much different in substance to the wretched status quo.

The rich continue to get rich at our expense. HSBC has made $29.2 billion in profits so far this year, up 26% on last year. The eight biggest oil companies made £67 billion in the three months after the start of the war in Iran, while our prices climb and the planet burns.

Events in Europe prove that workers and young people won't accept more of the same. In Britain, the Socialist Party is fighting for the biggest-possible youth strikes on 20 November – and demanding the trade unions bring their force behind an anti-austerity fightback, starting by naming the date for a mass union-led demo.

Chancellor John Healey says he wants to give us 'cost of living breathing space', but he also admits of his Budget: "None of this is going to change the world. But if it helps around the margins…" We need more than 'marginal' tweaks around the edges. We need to turn the tables so the starting point is not profit, but what is needed to give young people a future and everyone a decent standard of life.

To achieve that, wealth and power needs to be taken out of the hands of the capitalist elite. Water, energy, the banks and big business should be nationalised to develop a democratic plan of investment to meet the needs of all.

Join the fight for socialist change, join the Socialist Party!



NICK CLAIRE

International Youth Strike 20 November

- List of walkout demos, p2
- Teachers' union vote to support, p3
- Campaign updates, p4
- Struggles across Europe, p7



Capitalism is burning.

Time for SOCIALISM 2026

Hosted by the Socialist Party

14 & 15 NOVEMBER

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BRAZIL ELECTION: LULA BEATS BOLSONARO ▸▸▸ p15

EDITORIAL: BURNHAM'S BUDGET BETWEEN THE BOND MARKETS AND THE BARRICADES ▸▸▸ p5

MAMDANI'S NEW YORK VICTORY ONE YEAR ON ▸▸▸ p8-9

Socialist Students, hosted by the Socialist

To assist with its drive to build the biggest possible youth walkouts on 20 November, the Socialist has invited Socialist Students to have regular space in its pages.

The invitation is initially open until the Socialist Students national conference on 5 December.

Reject Labour's 'generation wars' division – unite to defend the pensions triple lock!



MOLLIE NIXON
CARLISLE SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Earlier this month, Andy Burnham revealed Labour's plan to axe the pensions triple lock in 2030, aiming to reduce state spending. Their proposal is to weaken the state pension, meaning that, by 2050, retirees will have had an estimated £50 billion pinched off of them.

The triple lock was introduced in 2011 off the back of disgracefully high rates of pensioner poverty in the UK. It was a government commitment, which went above their legal requirement, to increase the state pension each year by whichever of the following three percentages was the highest: average wage growth, inflation, or 2.5%.

The Triple Lock has typically been seen as untouchable, as pensioners are such an important voter base. However, amid global crises and the weakening of traditional capitalist parties, governments are increasingly willing to roll back longstanding concessions to cut costs and protect profits.

Despite what the media may suggest, the average pensioner is not wealthy. Although the Triple Lock has helped reduce pensioner poverty, rates have begun to rise again. With the current state pensions amongst the lowest in the G7 countries, Burnham's proposal risks pushing more pensioners into serious financial hardship.

We reject the cynical argument that cutting pensions is beneficial for young people or could fund support for NEETS (young people Not in Employment Education or Training). Even if it did, what happens to us when we retire? Already, 43% of working-age people cannot afford to save enough for retirement. Cutting pensions today risks leaving tomorrow's retirees in even greater poverty. Instead of blaming each other, workers of all ages must unite and realise that there is a group of people in society hoarding the wealth that could finance Gen Z, and it's not the pensioners!

Defending the Triple Lock will require trade unions to organise workers and pensioners in mass protest and strikes. Students must also play a role, and mobilise for the international youth strikes on 20 November, emphasising that fighting for our future also means fighting for our pensions!

Burnham has outlined a plan to use the money saved on pensions to fund a National Care Service - but why should it be one or the other?

Only through a socialist transformation of society could the constant fight for scraps of welfare truly end. A system based on collective, democratic ownership would put human needs before profit, ensuring everyone gets to enjoy a secure future and a dignified retirement.

Protests confirmed so far for Friday 20 November:

- **London: noon, Parliament Square**
- **Birmingham: noon, University of Birmingham, Green Heart; city demo 2:30pm, High Street (outside Waterstones)**
- **Leeds: 1:30pm, Parkinson Steps**
- **Sheffield: 1pm, Barker's Pool**
- **Manchester and Salford: 12pm, Whitworth Arch, then march to No10 North**
- **Liverpool: 1pm, University Square**
- **Bristol: 1pm, College Green**
- **Leicester: 1:30pm, the Clock Tower**
- **Cardiff: 11am, Cardiff University Students' Union, Park Place**
- **Coventry: noon, Broadgate**
- **Nottingham: 12:30pm, Nottingham Trent Students' Union**
- **Brighton: 12:30pm, St Peter's Square, Richmond Place**
- **Hull: 12:30pm, Queen's Gardens**
- **Northampton: 12:30pm, Angel Square**
- **Southampton: noon, Guildhall Square**
- **Swansea: noon, Swansea University (Fulton House Green) and Gower College Gorseinon (College Gates)**
- **York: 2pm, St Helen's Square**
- **Reading: noon, Forbury Gardens**
- **Preston: noon, University of Lancashire Student Centre**
- **Cambridge: 4pm, King's Parade**
- **Guildford: 12:30pm, University of Surrey, Philip Marchant Building**
- **Cheltenham: noon, Imperial Gardens**
- **Carlisle: noon, Market Cross**
- **Worcester: 3pm, Sabrina Bridge**



Socialist Students enthusiastically welcomes NEU support

As students, we stand united with workers organising against attacks on our education. From Albania to France, India to Argentina, the fight for high-quality, free education has been a central part of the international youth movements that have spread globally this year.

For us, a major aspect of the International Youth Strike slogan - 'fight for our future, not their wars' – is the fight against education cuts, student debt, tuition fees, and for fully funded public services.

We also warmly welcome the initiative of the NEU to offer practical solidarity to students choosing to protest on November 20, such as stewarding peaceful protests on the day, and backing any campaigns against disciplinary action that students might face.

Join the student fightback: join....

- Visit **socialiststudents.org.uk/join**
- or text **07403 057 140**

socialist students

National Education Union backs N20 youth strike

PHOTO: PAUL MATTSSON



SHEILA CAFFREY
NEU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER, PERSONAL CAPACITY

The National Executive of the National Education Union (NEU) has unanimously passed a motion to "Support the International Youth Strike: 'Fight for our future, not their wars'".

In moving the motion, I was able to report that Socialist Students, the founding organisation initiating the N20 youth strikes in Britain, was already reporting dozens of local rallies around the country.

As well as expressing support, the Executive agreed to "provide advice, in line with safeguarding requirements, professional responsibilities and legal obligations, to NEU members who wish to volunteer as stewards at local student demonstrations".

The union also pledged to "oppose disciplinary action against students participating in peaceful protest activity, including detentions or other sanctions, and to support campaigns defending students' rights where required".

I would encourage all NEU districts to discuss how they can support students as soon as possible, and make contact with Socialist Students in order to back the local action and offer assistance. The motion passed in my own NEU district is below. And I look forward to students getting in touch with our members all over the country!

This motion has been passed at Bristol NEU, and can be adapted for use at any NEU branch or district:

Support the International Youth Strike: 'Fight for our future, not their wars'

Bristol NEU notes:

1. The International Youth Strike taking place on Friday 20 November, under the slogan "Fight for our future, not their wars". The coalition, including Socialist Students in Britain, is calling for demonstrations and walkouts against war, re-armament and the erosion of young people's prospects for a dignified future.

2. Young people across Europe are increasingly organising around the impact of militarisation, war and their future. In Germany, thousands of school students have protested against proposed changes to military service and thousands of school and university students have mobilised across France, raising concerns about staff shortages, overcrowded classrooms, deteriorating school buildings and anxiety about their future: all issues we recognise here.

3. The CGT (French TUC) has expressed solidarity with these student mobilisations, calling on its structures to protect students' right to organise and protest, and providing practical support. It has also supported the safe stewarding of young people on the demonstrations.

4. The NEU has a proud tradition of defending the rights to protest, organise and campaign. As an education union, it also has a particular responsibility to ensure that support provided by members to young people is safe and consistent with safeguarding obligations.

Bristol NEU resolves:

1. To express the NEU's solidarity with young people participating in the N20 Youth Strike, supporting their right to peacefully organise, protest and make their voices heard.

2. To offer practical support such as hi-viz jackets or to cover the cost of hiring a sound system.

3. To support NEU members who wish to volunteer as stewards at the demonstration on College Green at 1pm, if requested by organisers and appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. This could include staff organising delegations as 'trips' from schools and colleges.

4. To oppose disciplinary action against students participating in the N20 mobilisation, including detentions or other sanctions, and to support campaigns defending students' rights where required.

5. To publicise the N20 International Youth Strike and the 1pm protest on College Green through Bristol NEU comms, providing members with information about how they can safely and responsibly support participating students.

Fight for funding not fees!

BEN MATTHEWS

Students are scrimping to cover their sky-high rents. Universities are full of overcrowded lecture theatres, many of which are teetering on the financial edge. University workers have had over a decade of attacks on their pay and conditions – demanded by governments of austerity. And when you leave university and enter the graduate job market apocalypse, you are saddled with a lifetime of student debt.

Will Chancellor John Healey's Budget contain measures that will actually live up to what is needed to deal with the situation at universities? Well, maybe. But a meteorite could also hit the Houses of Parliament before he can present it – it doesn't mean it's likely!

The Higher Education sector is in crisis, and the root of that is the broken tuition fees model. Universities don't get the resources they need which leads to attacks on staff and course closures. Students' maintenance loans aren't enough to survive, so students are forced to work all hours if they can't get help from their parents. And debt is built up over a lifetime.

We need funding, not fees! Education should be free for all, at all stages of our life. The resources are there in society to provide high-quality, free education, with grants that students can live on. The resources needed to provide this are locked up in the bank vaults of the super-rich, who make massive profits at the expense of our labour. Instead of gathering dust, or being wasted on rich people's follies, the wealth could be directed for all our good. But you can't control what you don't own! We need the wealth and resources of society under democratic public ownership.

20 November UCU day of action

University and College Union (UCU) members will be taking part in a day of action on 20 November in defence of their pay and conditions – linked to building support for a national strike ballot. That's the same day as the International Youth Strike that Socialist Party members are building action for alongside others in Socialist Students.

Those strikes and walkouts have the banner 'Fight for our futures, not their wars.' We want a future that includes an education accessible to all, and with staff paid what they deserve. That's why those walkouts will demand free education, with funding not fees, and show our solidarity with UCU members. We appeal to UCU branches to get in touch with Socialist Students groups to coordinate on the day. Students and workers unite and fight!

PHOTO: DAVE MURRAY



400 leaflets in 20 minutes at Manchester school

TEDDY SHEPERIA
MANCHESTER AND SALFORD SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Socialist Students went to a high school in south Manchester to leaflet regarding the 20 November walkouts. This followed a young student getting in touch with us about wanting to stage a walkout among their peers.

The interest we saw among these students was astounding. We handed out 400 leaflets in just 20 minutes!

Many students expressed that their friends at other schools would also be interested in staging walkouts. Even parents stopped in their cars to take leaflets for their kids and for other parents.

This illustrates the massive importance of what Socialist Students does – building a movement at one school in 20 minutes, and building the potential to organise walkouts at high schools all around Manchester.

Students are aware that there is no place for us when we become workers, particularly with the policies of the current capitalist establishment. Uniting us under the banner of 'Fight for our futures, not their wars' harnesses this anger at the establishment into real change, and builds the confidence of workers and young people to fight back against austerity.

Latymer School... building on Trump walkout success

IAN PATTISON
ENFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

Latymer School had a walkout in September 2025, when Trump visited the UK. Socialist Party members are supporting Socialist Students to pull off even more on 20 November.

Hundreds of students have taken Socialist Students leaflets for the walkout outside Latymer. One student initially took a leaflet, then came back out later to ask for more. "Everyone is talking about it inside."

Students that supported the Trump walkout at Latymer have been building for 20 November. Either getting leaflets off campaigners outside the gates, or getting their hands on leaflets any way they can.

We've met students at six different schools and colleges in Enfield, interested in the 20 November walkout.

Some Latymer staff put pressure on some students not to walk out in 2025. But they did say: "Sixth-form students have the right to come and go as you please".

Latymer School leaders questioned Socialist Party members when we were campaigning this time. Although another staff member said: "Good, good", when they saw us campaigning.

We explained that we've organised student strikes like this before, that the National Education Union (NEU) is backing the student action, and that we'd be happy to speak to staff and students directly at a school assembly.

In 2025, Latymer students striking against Trump gathered in the park next door, before getting the train to the central London protest. NEU members and other Enfield school staff could come with us this time.

But if lots walk out, we won't all be able to fit on the trains. So we may be marching around other schools and colleges in Enfield, getting them to join the strike.

Muswell Hill, north London

School students getting organised

HELEN PATTISON
LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

We met with three school students in Muswell Hill to discuss how to organise a walkout. They were worried because a student had joined the anti-Trump protest in 2025, but had been put in isolation for it. This time they want to do it in an organised way.

They are planning an after-school street meeting at a place nearby that students know. This is to meet other students who want to join the walkout, but also to help organise it.

Local London Met university students are going to help leaflet for the meeting, and are planning to help the students on the day of the 20 November youth strike too.

How can we halt rearmament, conscription, & war? Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

4,000 sign up in Britain





Kimberley Online has backed the 20 November youth strike. Her video, which features Socialist Students (left), has been viewed more than two million times online.

20 November walkout is scaring right-wing media

GBN BRITAIN'S NEWS CHANNEL

CLASS WAR Left-wing activists who joined French riots publish guide for Brit students to copy walkouts – amid fears of chaos in UK

The buzz around 20 November is ramping up. Just two posts across TikTok and Instagram have been viewed more than two million times.

Our campaign is scaring the right-wing media. Articles about Socialist Students and the 20 November walkouts have been published by the Telegraph, Times, GB News, Daily Mail, Daily Express, Independent, and others.



ALEX BROWN

Socialist Students campaign pack for N20

Socialist Students says:
On Friday 20 November, students across Europe will walk out of class to fight for our future, not their wars. Our campaign pack shows you, step by step, how to organise a walkout where you study. You don't need any experience: Socialist Students will help you at every stage.

- **socialiststudents.org.uk**

Labour's Budget between the bond markets and the barricades

Socialist Party

WHAT WE THINK


PRIME IMAGES



HUGO PIERRE

On 20 November, hundreds of thousands of school, college and university students, across Europe and beyond, will strike or walk out of lessons under the slogan 'fight for our futures, not their wars.' In Britain, Socialist Students is playing a leading role.

On the same day, Andy Burnham will be buddying up with the bosses' politicians in Brussels, discussing how Britain can develop a closer relationship with the EU. He will meet with EU leaders who are trying to force through continuing grinding austerity while increasing military spending, and many of whom are facing mass protests and strikes - meting out state repression in response.

Europe coming to Britain

Reporting on the plans of Socialist Students, a founding organisation of the international network of youth organisations coordinating the walkouts across Europe, the Sunday Times refers to British establishment politicians' concerns about events like those in France coming to Britain. There, hundreds of thousands are protesting, students are blockading their schools, workers are striking in solidarity and defending students from the police. "Hard left brings French protest lessons to British schoolchildren". They are right to be worried!

In Serbia, the two-year-long mass student protest movement has now defeated the authoritarian Vucic government in elections. The 'student plan' they have put forward includes, among other reforms, the demand for free education.

Like Serbia, Britain might not currently be in the EU, but young people and workers are no more or less likely to accept the austerity status quo continuing. And that is exactly what Chancellor John Healey is lining up to deliver in his 28 October Budget, published after the Socialist has gone to press.

Healey will attempt to use the Budget to talk up confidence in the UK economy. He will boast about its 'resilience' and point to the fact that it has had the highest growth in the G7 over the first half of 2026. At 0.5% in Q2, Britain's economic growth is pitiful by historic standards, and in big part inflated by the AI boom - itself a bubble waiting to burst.

Capitalist commentators have described France as being trapped between the bond markets and the barricades. Essentially the same pressures apply to Britain too. It's why, despite Burnham's vibes for change, the omnicrisis facing British capitalism will continue - crumbling schools, NHS facing annual winter breaking point, universities on the brink of collapse, the highest industrial energy costs of any advanced economy, the lowest investment-to-GDP ratio in the G7, and more. None of which will be fundamentally addressed in the Budget.

Austerity reversal ruled out

Investment on the scale needed to start to reverse decades of austerity and underfunding is ruled out by the threat of rising interest rates on UK government debt and the threat of bondholders selling up. Without Healey even lifting a finger, the cost of government borrowing grew to £24.5 billion in September, £1.9 billion more than predicted. Government debt repayments reached their highest level on record in September too. Add to that the other inflationary effects of Trump's war on Iran and Healey's 'fiscal headroom', in order to stick to his self-imposed 'fiscal rules', has shrunk by about 40% since March.

Of course for those who make them, 'rules' are always flexible. The capitalist investors operating in the bond markets can accept an extra £20 billion for the government's investment bank - intended for use as cheap loans and grants to big business to entice investment. They will accept small increases to limited taxes levied on banks or gambling companies too, maybe with some grumbles. Unacceptable to them is repairing our crumbling public services or taking any substantial wealth or power from the big business bosses.

'Bond vigilantes'

Commentators talk of Healey's intention to keep his head below the parapet, and point to the fact that France has currently taken Britain's spot as the primary G7 nation in the crosshairs of the 'bond vigilantes'. Healey has deferred big decisions until his Spring statement, hoping despite everything that things will be more stable and favourable then.

Average households will have incomes between £400 and £770 lower in real terms by 2029-30 compared to when Labour took office, according to October research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. We already feel poorer - consumer confidence is falling. Interest rates are set to rise, driving up mortgage payments. The cost-of-living 'breathing room' measures that will be announced, while welcome for those of us anxiously watching prices rise, really will amount to crumbs.

'Chainsaw austerity'

"The political appetite for a broad overhaul seems to be growing as living standards stagnate", the Financial Times columnist Tej Parikh says. His piece calls for "chainsaw economics", evoking the brutal austerity agenda of Argentina's Javier Milei.

Burnham has already thrown a big chunk of meat to the capitalists braying for more austerity - the end of the pensions' triple lock, worth up to £50 billion a year by 2050. They are demanding more, including cuts to benefits, which the Labour government is also set to oblige, albeit with a cynical veneer claiming to 'save' young people from benefits.

Keir Starmer failed to successfully complete his attack on pensioners' winter fuel payments and disability benefits. The majority of the big-business bosses are currently backing Burnham to succeed. They are being assisted, in part, by trade union leaders who - in different ways and on different scales - are acting to shield Burnham from workers' anger. Part of that has been to try to frustrate nationwide strike action developing.

It is a sign of the pressure from members that they have not succeeded. National ballots for action in three unions are taking place or set to start - for PCS members in the civil service, further education workers in UCU, and probation workers in Napo. Strike dates have been announced by consultant doctors in the BMA.

Trade union demo

September's Trades Union Congress (TUC) voted for a PCS motion to organise a union-led weekend anti-austerity demonstration. The first post-Congress TUC General Council meeting on 21 October, responding to a question raised by the Unite delegation, referred the issue for discussion to the General Council's Executive Committee, which includes the general secretaries of the major unions and others, on 2-3 November.

Members' pressure should be brought to bear on those union leaders to name the date for a demo. And if necessary, leaders of individual unions should be prepared to build a coalition of the unions willing to take the lead defending the working class from attacks under Labour.

Struggles are inherent in the situation, especially as workers and youth watch and are inspired by events on the continent and globally. In both France and Spain it has been the struggles of young people and of mass protests which have compelled the trade unions to call strikes and general strike action.

Socialist Students, in building for the 20 November youth strikes, has consistently pointed to the crucial role the organised working class can play. It is a boost that the National Education Union has voted to back the action. The University and College Union is staging a day of protest over university cuts and underfunding too. Momentum is building towards a huge day of protests Europe-wide including in Britain, preceded by general strikes in France and Spain.

The bond market pressures on Burnham's Labour remain. As for the barricades defending working-class and young people from further austerity attacks, they need to be built and strengthened. Building for the 20 November youth strikes, and maintaining pressure on the union leaders for action are key.

Coming cost of living storm & lessons from strike wave Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

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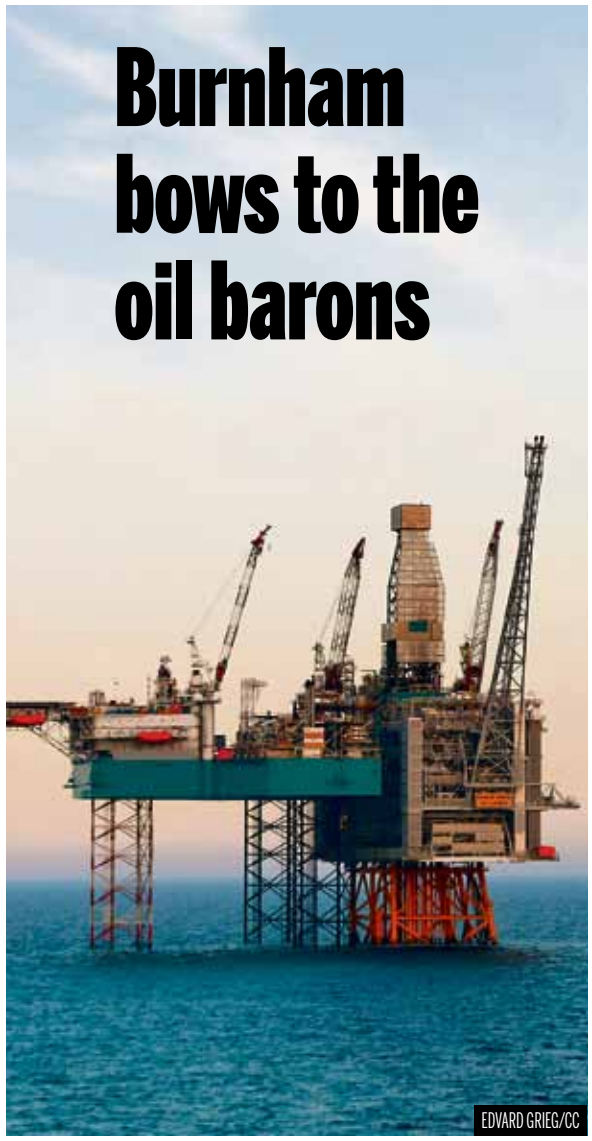
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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."
Karl Marx


EDVARD GRIEG/CC

Burnham bows to the oil barons

DAMIEN COSGROVE
KENT AND EAST SUSSEX SOCIALIST PARTY

Andy Burnham's new Labour government has announced a complete U-turn on the 2024 manifesto pledge to not approve any new licensing to drill for oil and gas in Britain by giving approval to the Adura-owned Rosebank oilfield.

Burnham has consistently underpinned his more popular policies, such as the national care service or reversing the decades of attacks by neoliberalism, with the caveat that he cannot go beyond the mandate set by the 2024 general election. This means sticking to the 'fiscal rules' which necessitate cuts to keep the bond markets and bosses happy. The popular things he says he's in favour of must wait until 2029.

Labour has broken with its manifesto pledges not to rise to the challenge of the energy crisis, social care crisis or the major attacks on working-class living standards but instead to grant new drilling licences to oil giants. The justification for this licence, which the government's own analysis states will cause £16.1 billion in global damage and over 8,000 heat-related deaths, is on the basis of improving our energy security and creating new jobs.

Of course for us it is crucial that we defend and fight for all jobs, but Adura's own estimates predict just 27 new full-time jobs will be created from drilling at Rosebank.

And for the claims new drilling will improve our lives, there is not a single piece of evidence suggesting the expansion of drilling into Rosebank will cut a single penny off of the steeply rising cost for electricity and gas. The main beneficiaries of this arrangement are the oil barons Shell and Equinor who own Adura and made a combined £23 billion in profit last year.

Capitalist catastrophe

The energy crisis we find ourselves in is a result of the multiple crises of capitalism: the climate crisis and the overdependence on fossil fuels, distribution of essentials being driven by profit and not need, and the need for capitalist companies to maximise profits.

An act that would improve energy security and create stable well-paid jobs would be nationalising the energy companies without compensation to the wealthy, only to those with proven need. And democratically run the system based on need and not endless profit. In public ownership, planned investment could be used to transition our grid from polluting fossil fuels to green energy, in the process creating sustainable jobs for workers. Crucially every worker currently working in the fossil fuel industry should be offered retraining, with wages and conditions guaranteed to be better than they are now.

WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?
editors@socialistparty.org.uk

Floods: Burnham's advice carries little water

BECCA BAYMAN
LIVERPOOL NORTH SOCIALIST PARTY

As storms Austen and Boelo leave communities flooded, transport networks disrupted and, at the time of writing, more than 160,000 people without power, households are told to prepare for future emergencies by stockpiling bottled water and tinned food.

Andy Burnham has said that "unexpected events seem to be becoming more and more common". Scientists have warned for decades that climate change would increase the risks of extreme weather. Governments have had years to prepare for these threats, but essential infrastructure remains inadequate and working-class people are forced to pay for the consequences.

The advice to stockpile supplies places another responsibility on families already struggling with the cost of living. It falls short of essential measures, such as infrastructure to preventing homes from flooding, keeping electricity running, and ensuring food is available and affordable for all.

The National Audit Office has warned that Britain's food supply chain is at risk, particularly in the face of the climate crisis, and that the Labour government has failed to act to improve its resilience.

Cuts to flood prevention infrastructure over recent years have also exposed the consequences of short-term saving when long-term investment is needed. Properly funded flood defences, resilient transport systems, and reliable and affordable energy supplies would reduce the damage caused by extreme weather.

Energy should be brought into public ownership under democratic workers' control, allowing investment to be directed towards reliable supply, to the needs of communities rather than private profit. A democratically planned economy could invest across essential services and prepare for the effects of climate change before further extreme weather hits, not as a reactive measure after the fact.


Storm Boelo PUBLIC DOMAIN

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Dock workers in 17 countries strike against militarisation

Socialist Party members to take part in walkouts in Italy

Dock workers' unions have announced an international day of action for 30 October, with organisers reporting support across more than 100 ports in 17 countries opposing arms shipments through ports and the militarisation of waterfronts. Some of the biggest strikes will be in Italy where dockworkers have taken strike action previously over arms shipments to Israel. Socialist Party members will be travelling to Italy and taking part on 30 October. Below are extracts from the leaflet being given out on the day.



Italian strike in solidarity with the Gaza flotilla in 2025 PHOTO: HUGO PIERRE

Last year's 4 October general strike showed what united action between the trade union federations could achieve. The action involving millions of workers across Italy in COBAS, USB and CGIL, was declared Illegal but Meloni and her capitalist politicians were powerless to stop it.

Now port workers in Italy and across Spain, Greece, Morocco and elsewhere have taken the bold step for strike action on 30 October

Even in Southern Ireland, where national union action has not taken place for many years, over 20 public sector unions came together for a general strike over pay on 14 October.

It's still possible for workers across all sectors in Italy to co-ordinate action across the country to win inflation-busting pay rises. This would require bringing together workplace representatives from the major employers both regionally and nationally to plan a strategy of united action.

It's welcome that the CGIL has called a general strike on the cost of living for 20 November. But we need trade union unity to force the bosses and the Meloni government to pay up.

As a first step, all the other trade union federations should call a general strike for 20 November!

It is urgent that the campaign to defeat Meloni involves building a working-class political voice. Next year's election is the ideal opportunity to put the programme for working-class unity and action to the whole of Italy. To prepare for this, workers' representatives from the trade unions and students and young people taking to the streets could meet and prepare a workers' list for that election. They could stand on the basis of:

- A living minimum wage with an automatic pay rise each year to meet the cost-of-living crisis
- An end to all public sector cuts to restore funding to pre-pandemic levels
- Money for education not war. End the arms trade and the use of Italian ports for military transport especially to the Israeli state
- The nationalisation under democratic workers' control of the key sections of industry, the banks and finance institutions

French protests continue – Make 5 November a 24-hour general strike!

Read the latest on where next for the movement in France from Gauche Révolutionnaire (CWI France), published 21 October ahead of the latest mass trade union demos that took place on 24 October involving an estimate 800,000 nationwide.

- **'France: Make 5 November a 24-hour general strike!' at socialistworld.net**



PHOTO: STEFAN MILJUŠ



PHOTO: MARTIN POWELL-DAVIES

Students defeat right-wing authoritarian Vucic in Serbian elections

Mass protests have swept Serbia for two years, led by students and sparked by the fatal collapse of the train station in the capital Belgrade. With the 'Student List' election win, right-wing authoritarian president Vučić has been swept from power. The students' demands include free education and affordable housing. There will now be a presidential election before the end of the year. A full article will follow in next week's Socialist.

Austria: 50,000 demonstrate in Vienna against budget cuts at universities

SOZIALISTISCHE OFFENSIVE (CWI AUSTRIA)

For the third time in the space of a few months, there has been a massive mobilisation in Vienna by university students and staff against the budget cuts planned by the government.

The government is a coalition of the conservatives, social democrats and the liberals, originally formed in 2024 with the aim of keeping out the far-right Freedom Party. The government is increasingly unpopular due to the cuts it is implementing.

In Spring 2026, 30,000 students and university staff had demonstrated, when the budget cuts for 2028-2030 were first announced.

On 13 October we saw a first protest this autumn and now the massive 50,000-strong demonstration on 22 October, marching from the Technical University to the University of Vienna. Uni staff from other university cities such as Graz, Innsbruck and Salzburg had been mobilised via buses to attend the demonstration by their shop stewards.

The mobilisation shows that young people are not simply going to let their future be taken away from them. Many placards clearly expressed this discontent, linking the cuts, for example, to the issue of military spending. The call to join forces with other sections of the population, such as workers, was also clearly evident. Time and again, references were made in a spirit of solidarity to the protests in France and other European countries.

Sozialistische Offensive (CWI in Austria) was part of these demonstrations, and we took part with various slogans, such as 'Universities, schools, IT, retail, ÖBB (rail) – fight together – 20 November: youth strike' or 'Demonstration today – strike tomorrow', which were well received.

The demonstrations were a good first step, but there is no plan for organisation given by the leadership and no clear direction for the next stages of the struggle. We propose setting up action committees at universities, where the programme, demands and next steps can be discussed within democratic structures and decided upon democratically.

20 November could mark a step towards further mobilisation. The international protests – the protests by school students and students in France or the strikes in Ireland – show that students and university staff in Austria are not alone. Capitalism offers us no future! We won't pay for the capitalists' crisis! Join us in taking action and become part of the struggle for a better, socialist future!

CWI CIT

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

socialistworld.net

MAMDANI'S NEW YORK WIN ONE YEAR ON

A SELF-DESCRIBED 'DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST' IN OFFICE

On 4 November it will be one year since self-described 'democratic socialist' Zohran Mamdani won election as New York Mayor. A year on, voters will head to the polls across the US for the mid-terms. **Tessa Warrington**, Socialist Party membership organiser, looks at Mamdani's time in office so far.

On 1 January this year, Zohran Mamdani was sworn in as mayor of New York City (NYC). A member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Mamdani's landmark election victory was heard by workers and youth around the world looking for an alternative to the grinding conditions of capitalism. Running on a platform pledging rent freezes, universal free childcare and a free public bus system, his 'affordability agenda' aimed at tackling the deep cost-of-living crisis faced by workers in NYC. Now, over nine months on, and with the DSA winning a wave of election victories in the Democratic Party primaries, what can socialists learn from Mamdani's mayorship?

NYC may not be the capital, but it is the financial heart of the US. With a whopping 164 billionaires, the city boasts not just the largest number for one city, but more than any country in the world, other than China and Germany. The wealth gap is staggering - and it's growing. Between 2019 and 2024, the top 50 ultra-wealthy families saw their average annual income swell from $315 million to nearly $600 million. The remaining 90% of the population saw median household income drop by 3.2%, as it failed to match inflation. 1 in 4 New Yorkers now live below the federal poverty line, with 69% of children living in financially insecure environments.

Public services have been systematically hollowed out and underfunded over decades and are at breaking point, heaping further insecurity and instability on working families and communities. The average renter is forced to spend 70% of their annual income purely on housing. All of this formed the backdrop to the success of Mamdani's call for 'A New York You Can Afford.'

Popular programme

Over 100,000 New Yorkers volunteered to go out and campaign for a self-described socialist mayor, knocking on 3.1 million doors and making 4.6 million phone calls. They raised $3 million in donations, with the average amount being $77, from primarily working and middle-class households. At the same time, over 26 billionaires poured more than $22 million into anti-Mamdani groups, propping up his opponents whilst giving the appearance of them lagging behind in direct donations.

Mamdani's election showed two things; the unifying popularity of a programme of working-class reforms, and the pole of attraction such a campaign can provide workers and youth to organise around. 60,000 voters who previously backed Donald Trump in 2024 and 70,000 who skipped the 2024 presidential election voted for Mamdani. He also won 78% of the votes from among people under 30. Working-class New Yorkers wanted change and were willing to fight for it.

Since becoming mayor, Mamdani has delivered on a number of his promises. He's brought in a two-year rent freeze on 40% of NYC apartments and introduced a 'pied-à-terre' tax on second homes valued above $5 million of those living outside New York. He's launched his 2K expansion of free childcare as well as starting the process of setting up a number of city-owned grocery stores, and introduced the Mayor's office of 'Worker Power,' a department aimed at encouraging union organising and pursuing resolutions to the violation of labor laws.

However, this has not been met without resistance from New York's elite. A coalition of prominent New York homeowners has filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the second-home tax, and a coalition of real estate and landlord associations has filed a suit trying to block the rent freeze. The Multicultural Business Coalition, representing small, independent, and minority-owned supermarkets, has filed two lawsuits attempting to squash the existence of a single affordable public grocery store on the basis of unfair competition!

The roll-out of universal free childcare has also been plagued with an ongoing payment crisis. Some providers are owed months of funding and others are on the brink of closing. Educators have resorted to taking out personal loans or dipping into their savings to prepare for the new intake of children. This is a result of expanding the programme without addressing the underlying problems of chronic staffing shortages in public departments, a hangover from decades of underfunding.

While Mamdani's rent freeze has been attacked by landlords, a layer of real estate developers welcome his moves to allow private housing developments on public land. Including for Sunnyside Yard in Queens – a development long opposed by tenant organisations and community activists.

The pledge to abolish bus fares on city transport has been dramatically scaled back, and Mamdani has resorted to cutting $30 million from public libraries, to which he had committed increased funding. The reality is that, even to meet the basic needs of New Yorkers, Mamdani's programme would have to go much further.

Whereas Mamdani and the DSA turned outwards and mobilised working-class communities at election time, their approach when it comes to delivering their policies has been rooted in the backroom deal-making of establishment politics. This includes having a public buddy-buddy meeting with Donald Trump and conceding on keeping in position billionaire heiress and establishment darling NYPD commissioner Jessica Tisch.

Role of the working class

Identifying the role of the working class organised in mass campaigns, particularly through the trade unions, as being the pressure that forces the ruling class to make concessions, offers the working class a way to see itself as the agent of societal change.



PHOTO: METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY/CC

> **Whereas Mamdani and the DSA turned outwards and mobilised working-class communities at election time, their approach when it comes to delivering their policies has been rooted in the backroom deal-making of establishment politics**

But that kind of struggle is also what is needed to win and defend immediate gains in the first place. How does Mamdani propose to fight the bosses' litigious counteroffensive? The courts and legal system have evolved primarily to defend the rights of property owners and as such guarantee no protection for working-class reforms. The new office of 'Worker Power' doesn't unionise workers in the public sector because, according to the mayor's office, it presents a 'conflict of interests.' This approach is shown by Mamdani's office suing against the unionised paraprofessionals in education's pay rise. Organised, combative public sector unions coming out on strike in defence of the progressive aspects of Mamdani's programme would be a hugely powerful tool to back a socialist mayor under attack.

At the same time, workers can see the blatant attacks to overrule a democratically mandated programme, and it is possible workers can mobilise in defence of Mamdani in the future. The affordability agenda has raised hopes and set people's sights on what they actually need, not what crumbs the super-rich will allow them to have. But the platform and reach of an elected socialist mayor in NYC offers a massive opportunity to organise and lead the working class in struggle - not just in New York but across the United States.

In Liverpool in the 1980s, the Militant-led (forerunner to the Socialist Party) Labour city council did just that. It led the city's working class, including council workers, in a battle against Margaret Thatcher, bringing hundreds of thousands of people out onto the streets in support of the council's programme of demands. 5,000 council homes were built, thousands of jobs and apprenticeships created and £30 million clawed back from the Iron Lady - the equivalent of over £90 million in today's money. It also called on other Labour councils to follow suit and build a united struggle against the Thatcher government.

This victory wasn't achieved on behalf of the working class but through it. Militant members fought and won support for a programme of fighting cuts through the democratic structures of Liverpool's District Labour Party (DLP). This body had over 400 delegates elected from the city's trade unions and Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs), providing a forum for workers to debate and decide on strategy and policy, directing the Council on what to do. The deep democratic roots in the labour movement allowed pressure to be exerted on councillors from below to act in working class interests but also meant the Council could call on organised workers to mobilise and back the Council in defence of its programme. In NYC Mamdani should call a conference of trade unionists, activists and youth to discuss the way forward, including the setting up of branches across New York with delegate structures from unions and communities to allow the working class a means to make decisions and take action collectively.

> **Ultimately, operating within the constraints of a capitalist party is bound to hinder the efforts of socialists to organise effectively. There is a need for the trade unions, for fighting workers and young people in the US to build an independent genuinely democratic mass party**

The question of Mamdani implementing his programme immediately raises the need for the fight to spread beyond New York. The mobilisation of mass struggles to fight to defend and implement reforms in NYC would inspire struggles nationwide, and would even more sharply pose the need for a party of the working class, one which presents an alternative to the continued rule of the capitalists – not just in NYC but across the US.

USA's 'left surge'

The mood to fight is clearly present in NYC and more broadly throughout America. The success of Mamdani's election campaign has been influential in the 'left surge' of hundreds of thousands attending Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders' 'Fighting Oligarchy' rallies. This is also a direct response to the situation in the US; of ailing US imperialism and its expression in the form of Donald Trump. His arrogance in the ongoing conflict with Iran, killing thousands and triggering a global rise in oil prices. Attacks on democracy with the banning of media from the White House and installation of propaganda machine 'Trump TV'. The vicious state attacks on migrants through ICE agents, murdering civilians and meeting fierce working-class opposition in Minneapolis. Most recently this includes the shooting of a man in NYC as his five-year-old son sat in the car beside him, causing hundreds to take to the streets in protest chanting "ICE off our streets" and "No justice, no peace". Mamdani backed the protests, and among them was Mamdani-backed DSA member Darializa Avila Chevalier, who won the Democratic primary to stand for New York's 13th Congressional District in the mid-terms. Demonstrators were attacked by NYPD, part of the city administration, showing the contradictions

A significant factor in Mamdani's election was his open opposition to the genocide of the Palestinian people. Media coverage reports him being asked more questions during the election campaign about Israel's right to exist than about taxation. The corporate media had no confidence to debate Mamdani's economic programme given the dire conditions workers face, instead weaponising fears of antisemitism in an attempt to stir up division.

They grossly misjudged the mood. The savagery of the attacks on Gaza – supported by Trump, the same capitalist politician attacking workers in the US – has seen a mood of mass opposition develop from below. During his election campaign, Mamdani made noises about arresting Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu should he visit New York. However, when Netanyahu addressed the UN General Assembly in NYC, Mamdani's office missed the opportunity to itself mobilise protests. In the event, it was over 100 demonstrators who were the ones arrested by Tisch's NYPD.

The DSA and the Democrats

The urgent need for a far-reaching, systemic, socialist alternative to decaying capitalism will be plain to many and the search for that alternative is shown in the wave of people looking towards the DSA. However, the Democratic Party, within which the DSA organises, is an out-and-out pro-capitalist party, with a legacy of attacking workers and using undemocratic means to block candidates which can act as a conduit for workers' anger.

Bernie Sanders lost out on the 2016 Democratic Party presidential nomination to Hilary Clinton due to a rigged selection process, for example. Then, activists in the CWI called on Sanders to stand as an independent. It is vital that we fight for independent working-class political representation, for a socialist alternative to the representatives of capitalism at the ballot box. Without an alternative on offer in 2016, anger at establishment politicians was articulated through over 1.5 million people transferring their vote from Sanders to Trump.

Ultimately, operating within the constraints of a capitalist party is bound to hinder the efforts of socialists to organise effectively. There is a need for the trade unions, for fighting workers and young people in the US to build an independent genuinely democratic mass party. Such a party, rooted in the organised labor movement, would provide a vehicle through which workers in the US could discuss and debate out a programme that meets their needs and the collective action required to achieve it. In that process, socialists would energetically intervene, fighting for a programme based on nationalising the commanding heights of the US economy, including the banks, under democratic workers' control and management. On that basis, a socialist plan could be developed to use the country's wealth and resources to meet the needs of the people, not the profiteers.

This is a step that workers the world over are reaching towards and would form the basis for an international struggle for socialism. Developments in the US along these lines would play an inspirational role, concretising this task in the minds of workers everywhere.

One year since Mamdani's victory - what does the DSA represent? plus other sessions on the US
Come and discuss at SOCIALISM
14 & 15 NOVEMBER 2026

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Forest School strikers: 'All relying on each other – that's how it should always be'



PHOTO: ISAI MARIJERLA

Caterers and cleaners at Forest School in Waltham Forest, north east London, members of Unite the Union, will be striking for two weeks from 2-13 November. Unite rep **Luisa Perez Amaya** *spoke to the Socialist during the previous week-long strike from 28 September – 2 October*

How is your campaign going?

One of the parents joined the picket line this morning. She said: 'I've seen your videos. I agree with you, it's disgusting.' We've been told that parents and students in the school have started a petition in our support. And the school student council has voted to support us!

It is brilliant to know that they appreciate our job in the school and how important we are. Teachers say hi to us as they go in.

What is the strike about?

We are not greedy. We don't want more, we just want to keep what we've got.

A 13.5% pay reduction is proposed. They want to reduce us from 52-week pay to 44 weeks for catering staff and 45 weeks for cleaners. That's £400 a month less for some of us, that's a big gap. Even £200 or £100 a month is a big gap for a single parent.

We have more work to do because there's fewer staff, and now on less money. It's very unfair and it shouldn't be legal! How can a company say you were on £13.80 an hour, now you're going to be on £10 or £11. It's not right.

They say we don't work in the school holidays, but we do. We spring clean. We work a week in the summer. When there is a school holiday for two weeks, we might have just three or four days when we don't work. The school is never closed, there's always someone in there cleaning or working. We're meant to have 28 days' holiday on full pay. It's not there.

According to the Charity Commission, the Head gets £300,000. The company that employs us, Compass, has a recorded profit of $1.8 billion. It's only cleaners and caterers that are affected, they're not cutting the managers' pay.

How did you go from one union member to a fantastic picket line?

This started before the summer holiday when we all got a letter to go to a meeting. We were told they want to cut the school fees, so they're not going to feed teachers when they work in the holidays. They didn't say about the impact on us. After that, we started hearing they were going to pay us for ten months, not twelve.

People were getting scared, they were in tears. We have single parents, people are from Poland, Portugal, some from Spain – they didn't know what to do. There's the mental health issue too – how horrible life is now. People can become depressed and even suicidal. It's so sad, because this affects our kids and our grandkids. It even affects the kids in the school. They should be going to learn and be happy. It needs to stop.

I was the only union member. I said, join the union, let's fight together. Then the union organiser came in for a meeting and more joined.

So in this strike, we're all taking action for the first time. Some members are scared. But on the picket lines it's been great.

We've had support from Unite, from the Trades Council, the Socialist Party, our families. It shows us that humanity is there still, all relying on each other. That's how it should always be.

The school needs to stop thinking about their pockets and start thinking about the kids, and the parents, and the employees. The school won't work without us doing our jobs. We need to do this for the future.

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

- Visit **socialistparty.org.uk/join**
- or call **020 8988 8777**
- or text your name and postcode to **07958 032 071**

to find out more today!

Seven strike days to stop academisation

IAN PATTISON
ENFIELD AND LEA VALLEY SOCIALIST PARTY

National Education Union (NEU) members at St Ignatius School took their seventh day of strike action on 22 October. They were on strike for six days last term.

The NEU opposes the Enfield school in north London becoming part of an academy chain. The workers are defending union-agreed terms and conditions.

The school has already changed its negotiating position, now saying it's possible to have no compulsory redundancies. But the campaign continues.

Unfortunately, school leaders have tried to intimidate striking workers. But it hasn't worked.

The school leadership team watches the pickets from the front gate. On 22 October, one of these school leaders crossed the road to ostentatiously write down the name of every striking worker.

He then asked me my name and who I was, over and over again, in a way that felt aggressive. I was happy to say - we're not secret in our support for striking workers! He eventually backed off and apologised.



UCU ballot in further education to begin in December

All out together!

DUNCAN MOORE
UCU NEC, PERSONAL CAPACITY

The University and College Union's Further Education Committee (UCU FEC) met on 23 October.

Six months after UCU's FE sector conference agreed to pursue an aggregate ballot, after I moved motion FE5 from my branch, the union's officials have finally come through with a plan for the industrial action urgently needed to pressurise employers and government to address the crisis in further education.

Wishing to avoid a clash with the Labour government, and with no confidence in UCU members' willingness to fight back against intensifying workload, falling real-terms pay and worsening conditions, both the officials and elected FEC members who are supporters of general secretary Jo Grady have used any and every excuse to delay preparations.

Branches in three ballot pools

Following legal advice from a KC (not shared with the FEC), the ballot is now to be split into three.

'Pool 1' will be branches that have yet to settle local pay negotiations. They will be balloted on the 'New Deal for FE' claim: a 10% or £3,000 pay increase, meaningful action on workload, steps towards pay parity with school teachers, and steps towards national pay bargaining, critical to ending the wide disparities in pay and conditions.

'Pool 2' will be branches that have settled local pay negotiations. They will ballot for a contractual change demanding that their employer gives pay awards at a minimum of the employers' Association of Colleges (AoC) recommendations each year.

'Pool 3', adult education branches, are to be excluded from the aggregate ballot and will be balloted on a disaggregated branch-by-branch basis. The reason given for this was the complexity of funding arrangements for the sector. They will only be balloted on pay.

This plan potentially keeps most branches in the campaign (whereas previously it looked like branches would be left to drop out as local pay offers were made). There are still obvious weaknesses.

Branches that have settled pay locally will be invited to strike without the chance of getting a better pay rise this year – that will take a serious campaign to achieve.

Adult education

The exclusion of adult education from the aggregate ballot is not something we agree with. Adult education delegates at May's FE conference, including Socialist Party member David Kaplan, argued passionately in favour of an aggregate ballot, in order to maximise the number of branches that can take action. Socialist Party members support adult education branches asking that the other New Deal for FE demands be included on their local ballots, including demanding that pay rises align with the AoC recommendation.

Nevertheless, while pointing out our concerns, the pressing need for the union to move to action without more delays meant that all members of the FEC approved the proposals.

The ballot will begin in the second week of December and conclude in the final week of January, and will be both online and by post.

This can still be the biggest national strike action in FE colleges in decades, sending a clear signal to the employers, to Burnham's Labour government, and to our own union leadership, that staff in colleges are prepared to fight for the change we need.

Build a strong campaign to smash the turnout thresholds

All branches must hold off on making inadequate local pay deals to make this campaign as strong and effective as it can be.

Socialist Party members in UCU have been distributing a bulletin setting out what needs to happen to deliver a resounding turnout. We need UCU to do the same, including producing material which calls on the government to increase funding.

Nominations are now open for the National Executive Committee elections which will take place at the start of 2027. Socialist Party member Marco Tesei is standing for re-election to a UK-elected FE seat. We want to work alongside others who take a more fighting stance, including ensuring that candidates from one left grouping do not stand against incumbents from another, to maximise the votes for those who want a serious fight in UCU.



UCU FE members on strike in 2023 - here in Leeds YORKSHIRE SOCIALIST PARTY

BUILDING FOR COORDINATED PUBLIC SECTOR STRIKE ACTION AND A NATIONAL TRADE UNION DEMO



Vote yes in the PCS national ballot

DWP members say: interim pay offer is a kick in the teeth

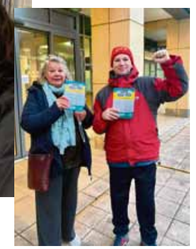
Members are angry! The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has announced it will give an interim pay increase of just 1.75% for grades AO (administration officer) and above at the end of November.

Disgracefully, our lowest-paid members will have this as a non-consolidated payment, as the government has decided our AA members (administration assistants) should remain on the minimum wage.

There will be nothing for members who are not on DWP terms and conditions. There will also be a non-consolidated performance bonus of £178.

This is why the left majority on the civil service union PCS National Executive Committee has fought for a national ballot for action. The left majority includes the Broad Left Network (BLN) and Socialist Party members.




PCS members campaigning for a 'yes' vote in the ballot BROAD LEFT NETWORK

The DWP group in PCS is led by the misnamed 'Left Unity' grouping, supporters of the PCS general secretary Fran Heathcote, who want to avoid action.

The BLN opposes the divisions that Left Unity is trying to create, with the false hope that pay problems in DWP can be addressed within the overall pay remit of 3.5%.

Things will only keep getting worse if we do not stand up and fight now, and we will be much stronger if the different groups across PCS fight together.

- The ballot runs 20 October – 1 December

British Library: Workers expected to bail out government failure

No to privatisation: Demand full funding

The British Library faces a funding crisis and privatisation – and it is workers and the public who will pay.

The British Library is a national legal deposit library for the UK and a legal deposit library for the Republic of Ireland. This means it is legally mandated to collect, preserve and give access to every book published in those jurisdictions.

In April 2013, this mandate was expanded to include digital publications like electronic books, journals, newsletters and papers, as well as content published on the web.

This massive expansion required more resources, infrastructure and people. However, it came with no additional funding!

The British Library is an arms-length body and a large percentage of its funding comes from Grant-in-Aid. But, due to inflation, this has been cut by successive governments. The Library has had to work with less funding year-on-year.

These cuts left the Library in a vulnerable position when it was changing its HR platform, and personal data was left in non-secure storage during the transfer.

In October 2023, the British Library went offline when a Russian-associated ransomware group demanded £600,000. As a publicly funded organisation the Library wasn't able to pay the ransom, but was equally unable to have insurance to cover this type of attack as the government is its guarantor.

This meant that all staff and some customers had personal data published on the dark web. Three years on, staff are still paying the personal cost of this attack. During the summer, a large number had money successfully taken from their bank accounts by fraudulent direct debits.

Funding

The government has failed to cover the cost of the rebuild, which is estimated at £7 million, approximately 40% of reserves. Since the cyberattack, the government hasn't increased funding to the Library, despite it generating revenue for the economy through the research and business activities it supports. Instead, the British Library has had to dig deep into its reserves to cover running costs.

But instead of launching a public campaign to demand the funding from the government, senior management and the British Library Board have decided to start the privatisation of this national institution.

It was announced to readers on Wednesday 21 October that three of the science reading rooms will close to make way for a third party to run the reading rooms as a flex office space.

Using the Victoria and Albert Museum as a model, the Board is transferring sections of the service to third-party operators, without proper consultation – starting with security staff, with very little notice. Although the staff will be TUPE-protected (meaning they keep the same pay and conditions when their employer changes), as they move on they will be replaced by cheaper labour. Staff have expert knowledge of preserving and making the national collection accessible to the public. A two-tier system will put that at risk.

This strategy is in direct conflict with the Labour government's claim to want insourcing. Privatisation will cost more in the long term, and increase the risk to the security of the national collection.

The British Library is legally mandated to preserve the nation's memory through print and digital publications. It's about time that the government properly funded this activity and bring it back to being a world-leading library. For far too long the goodwill of staff who have dedicated their lives to the British Library has been exploited.

Unions in the library must put up a united fight!

- PCS, which alongside Prospect organises workers in the British Library, has triggered a dispute

The 42 workshops at Socialism 2026 include:

The 100th anniversary of the General Strike - when workers tasted power

The early Communist Party and the Minority Movement

The coming cost-of-living storm of struggle and lessons from the 2022-23 strike wave

Does the working class still matter in the struggle for socialism?

Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

Unison: After the Certification Officer decision, defend our union's democracy!

For a united campaign against attacks on trans rights, women's rights and all workers' rights

STATEMENT FROM SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS IN UNISON

On 5 August 2026, the unelected Certification Officer published a decision on a complaint about the democratic nomination process for Unison's 2025 National Executive Council (NEC) elections. This raises the question of who decides how a trade union organises – the members acting through democratic structures, or an unelected state official?

Unison has an opportunity to blaze a trail, showing how unions can lead the united fight for LGBTQ+ rights and women's rights, as part of the struggle to defend all jobs, pay, services, and conditions from employers threatening the gains won by workers. A strong and united union campaigning to defend all its members must resist pressure to roll back equality gains.



MARK BEST

We call on members to take action in defence of our union:

- Call on general secretary Andrea Egan to stand firm against interference in our union democracy and challenge the Certification Officer decision. Sign to add your name
- Share this statement and ask your branch to circulate it to all members
- Schedule a branch discussion on the campaign for Unison to be a fighting union on behalf of all members

Members decide our policy

In investigating a member's complaint, the Certification Officer did not take Unison's democratically established approach into account. The complaint concerned a disabled trans woman member, a young activist, who was nominated by at least seven branches for a disabled women's seat.

The Officer concluded that Unison had breached Rule D 2.6. They said that for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, a person's sex remains their biological sex. But Unison's Rule D 2.6 does not refer to the Equality Act. The union's reserved women's seats date from its formation in 1993, 17 years before the Act. Even in 2010, the Equality Act made no reference to 'biological' sex.

The Certification Officer's decision explicitly acknowledges that "it is not to be assumed that all the terms of the contract will be found in the Rulebook alone and as such some terms may be informed by the trade union's custom and practice". Yet Unison's established practice was disregarded in the Officer's decision. Trans women have long participated in Unison women's conferences and self-organised events and have stood for reserved seats. This reflected equality policy debated, tested and reaffirmed across the union's democratic bodies, which should continue to be implemented.

Unison must appeal the Certification Officer's decision and reject attempts to override the members' democratic decisions.

Resist division

In 2026, Unison boycotted Labour Women's Conference after restrictions on trans women were introduced, with a Unison spokesperson saying: "The union has decided against sending a delegation to Labour women's conference this year… because the party's restrictions on access run counter to Unison's policy on trans equality."

The Certification Officer is appointed by the Secretary of State on a salary of £125,000, not elected by trade union members. Its role is a product of decades of anti-union laws, including the Tories' Trade Union Act 2016, which also introduced turnout thresholds designed to make strike action harder, as shown in the recent local government ballot.

Trade unions have never accepted that every law or court ruling is fair. Workers have at times defied legal restrictions when basic rights were at stake. Unison is proud that its union branding colours, green and purple, refer to the struggle of the suffragettes, which famously included civil disobedience in the fight for women's rights.

The Equality Act has not ended women's inequality. The Act has specifically not prevented austerity from disproportionately impacting women, both as low-paid workers and as users of public services. By contrast, collective trade union organisation has delivered concrete victories.

Defending women and defending trans and gender-diverse people are not separate struggles. Trade unions can unite members. Unison's 2025 women's conference reflected this approach, backing campaigns on the gender pay gap, women's health, childcare and trans solidarity, while affirming that women's rights are not diminished by trans people gaining rights.

Struggle needed to defend union approach

There must be no stepping back from this position. The immediate challenge is to campaign to defend democratically agreed policies. The danger is that if unions retreat on their own equality policy in the face of unfair decisions and guidance, they will be less prepared to resist employers seeking to use the Supreme Court ruling to override existing equality gains which unions have made in the workplace. A struggle is needed.

The union must defend its established approach and preserve unity in the face of these attacks. In Unison, for example, 'Black' is an agreed political term. This may also need to be defended against interfering state representatives likely to seek further division – especially if they are not resisted now.

Accepting the Certification Officer's decision transgresses the union's own rules, which are explicit in opposition to discrimination and inequality, including on grounds of gender and gender identity.

Unison should not change the way it organises women's conferences and elections. The union must see this challenge as an attempt to weaken our power in preparation for situations where employers attempt to impose divisive or discriminatory practices. Defending union unity is vital.

Union reps need support to challenge transphobic and homophobic behaviour, while also fighting sexism, pregnancy discrimination, unequal pay, unsafe conditions, and cuts to services supporting women. Union organisation can allow for negotiated solutions based on the different needs of workers and service users rather than leaving decisions to management.

They will seek to use division to weaken us. We must strengthen our unity to resist all the attacks on our rights and conditions.

What is the role of unions in fighting for trans rights?
Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

Add your name to the statement

Fund youth fightback

THOMAS BUTLER
LIVERPOOL NORTH SOCIALIST PARTY

The Socialist Party aims to best spread the ideas of socialism far and wide. The wretched system of capitalism means we live in a world of increasing polarisation, instability, and war.

Capitalism day by day fails to provide the working class worldwide with a dignified standard of living. With its inherent 'profit over need' philosophy, capitalism can only embark on a destructive and bleak path.

For young people today, our living standards are unprecedently lower than our parents. Capitalism is tearing our world down into more severe climate disaster.

Young members of the Socialist Party put forward an alternative to what capitalism has to offer. While we live under the financial realities and constraints of capitalism, the ability to lift the torch of socialism requires funds. Funds used to produce placards, book meeting rooms, leaflets, and organise within the broader movement.

For example, Socialist Students, which many young Socialist Party members participate in, has attended and will attend organising meetings of the international youth strike – so far 25 different youth organisations across 12 countries.

Socialist Students won support for the slogan 'Fight for our futures, not their wars' at the founding international meeting for 20 November. We're now organising walkouts and protests across the country. But this cannot be done without much-needed resources.

The Socialist Party has a rich history for organising and rallying young people to fight against capitalism's ails. In the 1990s, members of Militant, Socialist Party's predecessor, formed Youth against Racism in Europe (YRE). We organised demonstrations and marches tens of thousands strong in the context of deep economic downturn, and an heightened whirlwind of vicious racism and organised fascists.

Decades later, the Socialist Party and its youth continues to fight for every gain that the working class can win. Any donation, large or small, will never be wasted. It will strengthen our organisation and its ability to organise amongst working-class movements, and leave capitalism in history.

Donate to the Socialism 2026 finance appeal. Help us reach our target to raise £50,000.

Fund the fightback

I was inspired by Socialism 2025

You should come to Socialism 2026!

ALANAH CAREY-PEACHER
LEICESTER SOCIALIST PARTY


MARY FINCH

I joined the Socialist Party at the end of summer 2025, after encountering my local branch campaigning in the street.

I had a very limited idea of what socialism truly was. But I knew that I had a passion to change society – with the UK experiencing the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation, and anti-migrant protests erupting that past year. I just had nowhere to place my passion yet.

I headed down to Socialism 2025 with the rest of our Leicester contingent. It really began my education.

I was invigorated by being surrounded by hundreds of people with very similar ideas to myself, and hearing from our members nationally, internationally, and within the trade unions about the struggle and the wins of the past year.

The sessions are a perfect blend of historical working-class struggle, theory, and current events. The event gives an understanding of how we could build a new workers' party from the bottom, if the working class comes together – and the crucial role of a party, like the Socialist Party.

The pieces of the puzzle came together for me. My beliefs were socialist beliefs.

I'm looking forward to Socialism 2026, and organising for the fast-approaching 20 November international youth strikes.

Capitalism is burning.
Time for SOCIALISM 2026
Special offers for freshers, college and school students
Hosted by the Socialist Party
14 & 15 NOVEMBER
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, BEDFORD WAY, LONDON WC1H 0AL
socialism.org.uk

Come and discuss
Come to a Socialist Party meeting near you

The Socialist Party has regular meetings in towns and cities across the country.

If you would like to participate:

- **socialistparty.org.uk/events**
- **Or text 07958 032 071 with your name and postcode.**


PUBLIC DOMAIN

Barclays cuts 5,000 jobs and accelerates AI reliance

JAMES GRETTON
SOUTHAMPTON SOCIALIST PARTY

Barclays Bank announced 5,000 job cuts worldwide by the end of 2026. They justify this by their accelerated reliance on AI. Comprising 5% of the bank's global workforce, 60% are support staff, and 1,000 posts have already been closed. Barclays' India branch will be especially impacted, as they manage some of the UK's back office functions. According to CFO Anna Cross, the bank expects to save over £1.1 billion next year, while CEO C. S. Venkatakrishnan characterised AI as the "icing on the cake" of their 'modernisation' strategy. Additionally, Barclays announced £500 million in stock buybacks for its shareholders, enriching them while throwing thousands into unemployment.

Unite, whose finance and legal sector encompasses over 50,000 members, has condemned the cuts, with general secretary Sharon Graham describing the use of AI "as an excuse to discard its loyal and long-suffering workforce." Unite's national officer for finance, Rick Coyle, called for "urgent and frank negotiations", and for Barclays to instead "put measures in place to upskill and adapt workers for new technology".

In a wider trend of AI banking and related layoffs, Standard Chartered announced over 7,000 job cuts in line with its own AI adoption in May. In their news release on 19 October, Santander announced they are re-searching efficient AI models "designed for specific banking tasks".

AI hasn't been so friendly to students; a report by Prospects (part of the data agency Jisc) found that compared to the previous four cohorts, 2023-24 graduates were more likely to be unemployed and doing unpaid work, and less likely to be working full time.

Even if the Budget contains new taxes on the banks, that won't hold Barclays and others accountable. Chancellor John Healey is expected to lay it on thick that AI will revitalise the British economy. But the experience so far is that, far from creating more jobs, AI is creating more opportunities to justify mass layoffs and further enrich shareholders. Only the means of exploitation are being 'modernised,' all the while young people are in more financial precarity than ever.

Barclays made £6.1 billion in profit in the first half of the year, the other big banks have also made massive profits from this year's volatility, while we have paid the price with higher petrol prices and uncertainty. Taking some of the banks' profits could be used to take the edge off the cost-of-living crisis and youth unemployment. Bringing down our bills and creating socially useful work. But it won't make a meaningful difference if those taxes go towards increased defence spending. What would be meaningful is bringing both banks and AI into public ownership, a long-term solution which Unite, socialists and other activists can fight for. Paying compensation only on the basis of proven need, with no extra money to the fatcat shareholders, nationalising the big banks and businesses would mean we could democratically plan what we need in society instead of what makes a profit for a few. Advances in technology could be used to free our lives from toil, instead of driving down pay and living standards.

Socialist Party

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

PUBLIC SERVICES

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

ENVIRONMENT

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

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

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

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

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

Do you agree? Join the fightback!

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

- Visit **socialistparty.org.uk/join**
- or call **020 8988 8777**
- or text your name and postcode to **07958 032 071**

to find out more today!



Help fund the fightback!

DONATE TODAY **socialistparty.org.uk/donate**

Birmingham protest in solidarity with India Cockroach movement



The Cockroach protests in India and inset: Mila speaking at the solidarity protest in Birmingham PHOTOS: SUMITA ROY DUTTA AND BIRMINGHAM SOCIALIST PARTY

Mila Hughes (Maneet Matharu), West Midlands Socialist Party, spoke at a solidarity rally in Birmingham on 24 October.

It's incredibly inspiring to see the events erupting all across India. The initial wave of protests that hit the streets of India, started from the anger and frustration felt by the majority of exam takers and has now spread to take on much more. We've seen thousands of young people continue to keep that pressure on, forcing a resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan the education minister too. The BJP thought that would've killed all of the anger felt around the employment and cost-of-living crisis, and they were wrong!

The BJP government has been absolutely repressive at targeting any voice that speaks against it. We've seen the CJP (Cockroach) leaders and activists mysteriously arrested, mass police brutality, with 2,000 protests detained.

These events also show that police detentions and scare tactics can stop a protest for a couple of days, but this cannot remove the causes as to why young people remain furious. Graduate unemployment is at an all-time high, wages can't cover the cost of living, there is a workforce squeezed by Trump's tariffs, and a government that answers protest with internet blackouts. All are still there and as long as they are, we will continue to have young people frustrated!

We know it is not enough to continue like this. It's clear that the movement needs to link up with the already striking workers and trade unionists, because the power to stop the economy lies with the working class.

This needs to be armed with a socialist programme that goes beyond the resignation of one official but to fight for jobs, decent pay, democratic rights and a society run in the interests of the many.

We know that's not just unique to the events of India - we've seen young people in Albania, Austria, France, Germany and Spain take to the streets to fight for a future that's worth living. We have governments that are more interested in funnelling money and resources to defence and war than funding young people's future. We have mass unemployment here, a cost-of-living crisis and many people who see that we're paying more and more for less. I don't think that's fair or right!

If you're angry about that too, Socialist Students and other organisations are linking up to join with the youth for an international youth strike on 20 November, to fight for our futures and not their wars!

Kashmir - the struggle against oppression and for democratic rights

Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

Brazil presidential election: Lula defeats Bolsonaro - but the struggle is not over

SOFIA PANDOLFI

Current Brazilian president Luis Inácio Lula da Silva has been re-elected following presidential elections on Sunday 25 October, winning against Flávio Bolsonaro with 52% of the votes. After ending the first round of voting in second place behind Flávio, Lula gained an extra 10.3 million votes in the second round. That makes it the first time a candidate has won the presidential elections after losing in the first round.

This turnaround follows three weeks of protests across Brazil, where millions of students and workers took to the streets in what Lula's Workers' Party (PT) named 'demonstrations for democracy'. The demonstrations in over 70 cities across the country had workers and young people standing up to the threats of Flávio Bolsonaro's attacks on workers, his ties to organised crime, and his open support for the military dictatorship which ended in 1989.

Flávio was not initially seen as the ideal candidate by the right-wing parties to stand in the elections. Since the start of his candidature, there were divisions in Flávio's Liberal Party (PL) but eventually Flávio stepped up as the candidate to continue the legacy of his father Jair Bolsonaro, currently serving a 27-year sentence for planning a military coup. Flávio himself is currently being investigated by the Supreme Court for money laundering and involvement in a banking scandal, in which he asked jailed CEO of Banco Master, Daniel Vorcaro, for 134 million Brazilian reais.



Lula PHOTO: LULA OFICIAL/CC

Distrust

Both Lula's Workers' Party and Flávio's Liberal Party have been involved in recent corruption scandals, creating distrust amongst the electorate. The defeat of Bolsonaro in the second round of elections came with the highest voter turnout in 20 years, whereas the first round of elections had the lowest voter turnout since 1989. The increased number of voters following the first round shows the initial reluctance of the Brazilian population, feeling disillusioned and not represented by any of the candidates. As no candidate put forward a real alternative for workers, the distrust towards the political establishment at first translated into votes for Flávio, with people feeling that the past four years of Lula in government has not brought sufficient improvements to their lives. However, leading up to elections, Flávio's ties to Vorcaro's banking fraud became further exposed. Meanwhile, Lula agreed to release his bank, tax, and telephone records to the public, undermining PL's election campaign based on saving Brazil from Lula's corruption and lies.

In his winning speech, Lula stated that "Brazil will not accept being anyone's backyard". This follows accusations that social media company Meta had been interfering in the elections by bringing down Lula's social media campaign, while boosting posts made by Bolsonaro. These accusations led to more anger towards the United States and Trump's friendly relationship with the Bolsonaro family. Since Trump set 50% tariffs on Brazilian products last year, Lula has maintained his stance against American involvement in Brazil's economy and politics. Therefore, Lula's win has been framed as a fight for independence from interference by the United States and a win for democracy.

Stopping a Bolsonaro presidency that pledged to slash spending by 200 billion reais is a win for the Brazilian working class, but that does not mean Lula's government will be a workers' government. Reforms have been won in Lula's presidency under pressure from the workers' movements, including recently the end of the six-day working week and a reduction to a 40-hour working week. But small reforms will not be enough to answer the needs of the millions of workers who voted Lula in.

Lula's challenge

Despite coming into politics as a trade union leader, all of his three terms as president have been characterised by attempts to conciliate between the working class and the market's interests. His vice-president Geraldo Alckmin is a right-wing politician, whose role has been seen as uniting both the left and right against the threats of Bolsonarism. Alckmin's belief in a 'strong' fiscal policy is an indication that Lula's fourth term will be one of more cuts to reduce government spending. Already in the days following the election financial markets are piling on their pressure demanding austerity cuts.

Lula's reforms will also be challenged by Brazil's Congress. While PL did not succeed in electing its presidential candidate, it made the biggest electoral gains, winning 121 seats in the Chamber of Deputies compared to PT's 70. The Senate now also has a right-wing majority, meaning it will do everything it can to oppose and clamp down on any laws Lula's administration tries to pass. However, this opposition cannot be used as an excuse to uncritically support Lula's administration as it gives in to the pressures of the markets and big business.

The working class

Ultimately, the biggest pressure Lula will face will be from the working class who voted for him in the hope he would 'save' Brazil from Bolsonarism. Yet, his capitalist government will not be able to save workers from the massive levels of inequality in the country. It will also not save Brazil from future right-wing governments.

Lula's fourth presidency will be his last, after running in seven out of the ten presidential elections since direct voting was introduced 1989. This has created a narrative that Lula is the only candidate capable of preventing the growth of the far right in Brazil, with left-wing parties such as PSOL not standing a candidate in the elections to unite the fight against Bolsonarism. The next four years where capitalist interests are put above the needs of workers will not prevent the growth of the right, it will increase it. Without responding to the high cost of living facing the Brazilian population, frustrated voters might again look for an alternative in right-populist politicians. Only building a working-class alternative with a socialist programme that fights for secure jobs and better living conditions can cut across the support for right-wing populist parties in Brazil.

CWI CIT

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

socialistworld.net

Tariffs and turmoil - Marxist economics in today's world

Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 14 & 15 NOVEMBER socialism.org.uk 2026

Flávio Bolsonaro PHOTO: AGÊNCIA SENADO/CC



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Issue 1388 | 29 October - 4 November 2026 | formerly Militant

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH STRIKE

20 NOVEMBER

Fight for our future!

Youth across Europe are rising up. And on 20 November, school, college and uni students in Britain will be joining them. Socialist Students is building for the biggest-possible walkouts and strikes, coordinating with youth organisations across Europe, including France, Italy, Germany and the Spanish state - where mass youth protests have already been taking place.

Five days before, on Sunday 15 November, Socialist Students is hosting a rally at the Socialism 2026 weekend. Speakers include leaders of the youth protests in France (Alice Cohen-Morzadec from Union Étudiante) and the Spanish state (Laura Spearey from Sindicato de Estudiantes). They will bring lessons of their mass struggles, and reports of general strikes looking set to take place in France on 5 November and in Spain on 11 November. Leaders of the Italian and Belgian youth movements have been invited too.

Socialism 2026 is a weekend of discussion and debate. There are over 40 workshops including on 'Are the Greens the type of party we need to change the world?', 'What role for direct action in the struggle for socialism?' and a debate 'Re-armament, conscription and war - how can it be halted?' Saturday evening also includes a rally, 'Capitalism is burning, time for socialist change'.

Tickets for school and college students are available at a special discount of £5 per day.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WALKOUT

N20 INTERNATIONAL YOUTH STRIKE RALLY

Hosted by socialist students

SUNDAY 15 NOVEMBER, 3PM

AT THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, BEDFORD WAY, LONDON, WC1H 0AL



Part of the SOCIALISM '26 weekend

WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN DEMANDS ▸▸▸ see column on p14

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