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# the Socialist

Formerly **Militant**

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# TORIES OUT

# CORBYN IN

# FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

# STEP UP THE FIGHT TO KICK OUT THE TORIES AND THE BLAIRITES



## What we think

It took them 18 days following the election, but the Tories and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) have managed to agree a 'supply and confidence' deal which will allow Theresa May to form a minority government. The announcement was a muted affair, reflecting that this is no great victory - quite the opposite. It is only a first step on a rocky (and perhaps not very long) road ahead for Theresa May and the Tories.

They are hamstrung on all major policy decisions. There remains no agreement within the Tories or between the government and the EU on the way forward for Brexit. And the threat of a mass movement, spurred on by the popularity of Jeremy Corbyn and his anti-austerity policies, continues to loom large - with the potential to bring down this weak and wobbly government.

The DUP will hope that the concessions they negotiated will win them favour among their majority working class Protestant voters. Funding for Northern Ireland will be £1 billion more than planned and the Tories' plans to scrap the pensions triple lock and winter fuel payments are, as predicted, dead in the water. But these points can quickly be pushed into the background in the minds of working class people in Northern Ireland as austerity continues to bite and the DUP and other parties, from both sides of the sectarian divide, continue to hold back advances on women's and LGBT+ rights, for example.

### 'Magic money tree'?

Immediately the nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales called foul on the extra funding for Northern Ireland. In reality it shows that when the political will is there, money can be found - something that should give confidence to all anti-austerity campaigners. It also adds weight to the call of the Socialist Party and others, including several trade unions, for Labour councils to refuse to implement Tory cuts and lead campaigns to demand the necessary money from central government to fund local jobs and services - a demand that Jeremy Corbyn should now clearly come out in support of.

This would be a vital part of turning the enthusiasm for Corbyn's general election campaign into a party that can bring about the type of change outlined in his manifesto - a process which remains obstructed by the Blairites. The right wing of the party, although having to tread



**Corbyn has changed the terms of debate that had been set by neoliberal politicians of all parties for decades**



**Scenes from this year's Glastonbury festival should dispel once and for all the myth that people are apathetic**

carefully following Corbyn's success, remains absolutely opposed to Corbyn, his policies and the hundreds of thousands who have joined Labour to support them. They will manoeuvre in whatever way they can to prevent the new, anti-austerity layer from making an impact.

The executive of Enfield North constituency Labour Party, for example, has decreed that there will be no election of delegates to Labour Party conference this year - instead the right-wing leadership has selected a delegate who members can 'advise' how to vote. This is the area where local Labour MP Joan Ryan issued a letter to Labour voters during the election stating that local people had more faith in Theresa May than Jeremy Corbyn and that May would definitely win with an increased majority.

### Democratise Labour

The task of removing Ryan and those like her, both MPs and councillors, is urgent to ensure that the saboteurs are not in position to undermine Corbyn and the left for a single other election. Corbyn and all of his supporters should campaign for mandatory reselection contests to allow members - as soon as they have joined - a democratic say in who their public representatives are.

They should also support throwing open the doors of the Labour Party to all those who support Corbyn's stand. That means readmitting those who were expelled for standing up to the right wing - either in support of Corbyn or in battles against the Blairites' takeover in the past - and allowing affiliation from all anti-austerity and socialist forces, including the Socialist Party.

These democratic changes should be put out for discussion among the whole Labour Party membership. Corbyn could call a referendum within the party on a new constitution to democratise the structures, backed up by a series of mass rallies on the type of party the movement needs. Such measures, combined with boldly leading campaigns to win the policies in Corbyn's manifesto now, could cement the Labour Party once again as one seen as of and for the majority of working class people.

Corbyn has already changed the terms of debate that had been set by neoliberal politicians of all parties for decades. The idea of rejecting austerity, of there being a choice, of starting from the needs of ordinary people rather than the wants of big business, even of nationalisation and elements of socialism, are back on the agenda. This is an enormous step forward, which cannot be wasted.

### Jobstown Not Guilty - verdict imminent

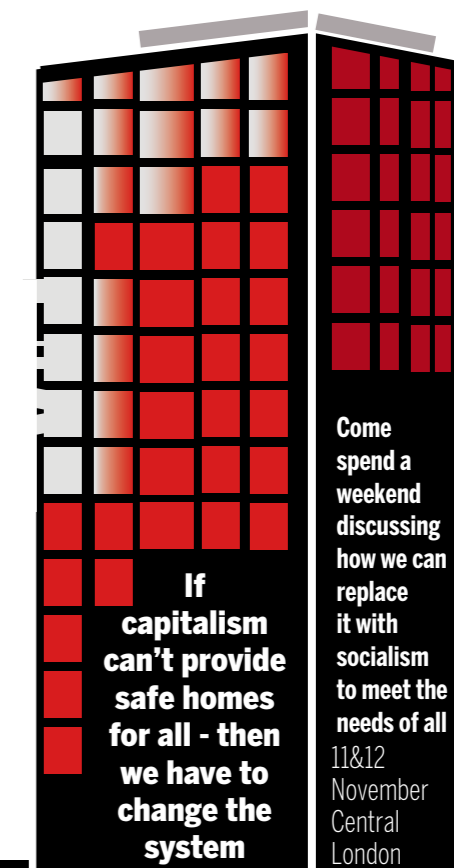
As we go to press the verdict is expected in the Jobstown trial in Ireland. Six protesters - including Paul Murphy, a TD (MP) and member of the Socialist Party's sister party - face charges of false imprisonment. The maximum sentence in the event

of a guilty verdict is life in prison. The charges relate to a sit-down protest which delayed the car of then deputy prime minister Joan Burton in 2014. More can be read about the case in 'Defend the right to protest - stop this political vendetta!' and other articles at socialistparty.org.uk. We will also post the result once it is known and any subsequent call for solidarity action.

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## Organise the 'youthquake'!

### Young Socialists - Generation Socialist

On 8 June, young people helped generate an earthquake in British politics. We massed at rallies, queued at polling stations, organised our friends and turned out in our thousands for campaign days.

We showed the establishment that far from responding with apathy, when given the chance to vote for an alternative - for the politics of hope - young people will not be found wanting in energy, enthusiasm and determination.

Free education, an end to zero-hour contracts, a £10 an hour minimum wage, nationalisation, house building, votes at 16. These were just a few of the socialist policies that helped generate such a tidal wave of support for Corbyn. It should be no surprise that more than two thirds of young voters backed him.

Theresa May has emerged from this election without a shred of legitimacy. 'Strong and stable' has morphed into weak and chaotic. She has absolutely no mandate for her government of the 1%.

Over the last month, the horrific events at Grenfell Tower have revealed even more clearly the grotesque callousness of the Tories and the capitalist system they represent.

Now, by joining up with reactionary, sectarian DUP MPs, May is attempting to cling to power in order to save the capitalist establishment



from a Corbyn-led government that would threaten its interests.

But this will be a coalition of chaos. It can be stopped. And young people can play an important part in this. This means being organised to take on the Tories. It means being out on the streets. It means having mass rallies, demonstrations, walk-outs and occupations to continue to fight for free education, £10 an hour and more.

But it also means getting organised to fight for socialist ideas, for a real alternative. That includes not only the fight against Theresa May and her government, but also the Blairites and the saboteurs who, until just a few days ago, were claiming Corbyn's left politics were unpopular and would render Labour unelectable.

In a similar way to the Bernie Sanders campaign in America, this

election has shown that our generation is discovering socialist ideas afresh. It has expressed the huge appetite that exists for change. But now we need to be organised.

That's why members of Socialist Students, Youth Fight for Jobs and the Socialist Party have decided to launch Young Socialists or Generation Socialist.

We want to bring together the young people who've been at the heart of the movement to support Corbyn and who are eager to learn about and fight for socialist ideas. Join us and help us to continue the fightback today.

■ **Get involved - text 'YS' plus your name and postcode to 07540 189 052**

■ **Join the red block on the 1 July demo - Outside Starbucks: 1-2 Langham Place, Marylebone, London W1B 3DE**



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# Justice for Grenfell - and safety for all

> Article continued from page 16

■ "Complex conflicts of interest..." read the full article, 'After Grenfell - join the fight for safe homes' online at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)

## No cover-ups! Jail the killers

As the inquests begin, the torment of still not knowing how many and who are dead goes on, amid widespread suspicion of facts being hidden.

Fear of a cover-up is much wider than that of course, as criminal prosecutions begin and the dreadful dealings start to be exposed. In the view of many, this was corporate murder.

Residents rightly demand full disclosure: impound the council's documents, seize computers and remove shredders so that nothing can be destroyed.

In addition to the inquests, we demand an independent workers' inquiry, led by trade unions and residents, which would not cover up crimes and failings in the interests of protecting profit and the profiteers.

## Fight for safety everywhere

The response of authority at all levels around the country seems to be an unholy mix of paralysis and panic, as clearly they fear a rebellion if they are exposed.

Testing of cladding has started around the country. At the time of writing, 100% of the 95 blocks have failed cladding tests. Tests are being extended to the cladding on schools, hospitals and government buildings. We demand private landlords carry out checks too.

The government must commit to funding, and councils mustn't wait - do the work now and demand the government underwrites it!

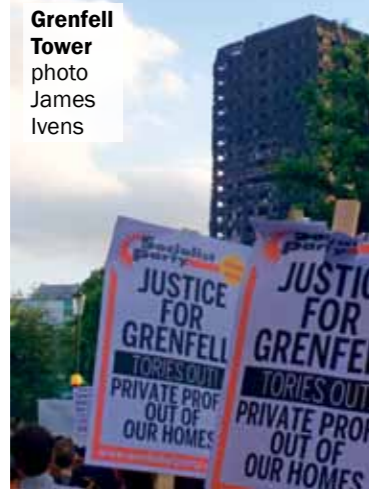
## No safety - no rent!

But it's not just about testing cladding. Where safety checks are happening, they reveal broken and missing fire doors, gas problems, and inadequate fire alarm systems and escape routes - aside from the fact that only 1% of tower blocks have sprinklers.

Resident organisation is vital - trade unions should help build joint action. No to council "drop-ins" to dissipate concerns over tea and biscuits - we demand full accountability and public debate.

We demand immediate fire safety checks, and for all information regarding materials and checks to be made public on landlords' websites. If this is not forthcoming, we need to fight - including being prepared to withhold the rent.

If it is really necessary to rehouse residents temporarily while emergency work is done, alternative accommodation must be suitable to the needs of residents. Many are older, or have young children, or pets.



Grenfell Tower photo James Ivens

## Demolition, regeneration and social cleansing

Some people, understandably including some directly affected by the Grenfell disaster, want tower blocks demolished. But we have to be wary of those calls being backed by property speculators who see an opportunity.

The experience of 'regeneration' is usually social cleansing. Grenfell-area residents have rightly demanded that the land remains in public hands.

In the 1980s, the socialist city council of Liverpool - led by supporters of Militant, now the Socialist Party (see page 4) - in defying Tory cuts, asked residents what they wanted. On their wishes, and only on their wishes, the council demolished tower blocks to build council houses.

## Capitalism kills

This terrible tale of profit before working class lives is an indictment of all the policies of privatisation, cuts and deregulation pursued by Tory and New Labour administrations at national and local level.

Any councillors not prepared to stand up to Tory cuts should step aside for those who will.

We demand a million new council homes, under democratic control. No demolition or regeneration that leads to privatisation or social cleansing - we demand a residents' vote.

We demand rent controls that cap the level of rents. We demand the end of the bedroom tax, benefit cap and 'universal credit'. Scrap the Housing and Planning Act. Update the building regulations.

A socialist housing plan would include nationalising the banks, land and building companies under democratic working class control.

■ For free organising resources including sign-up sheets, leaflets and window bills, go to [socialistparty.org.uk/leaflet](http://socialistparty.org.uk/leaflet)

■ How working class communities can organise to fight for safety: read 'Justice for Grenfell and safety for all' at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)



photo Mary Finch

## Compounded by overcrowding: build more council homes now

**'Derek Acer'**  
London housing worker and Socialist Party member

Estimates are that between 400 and 600 people lived in Grenfell Tower.

But it had 80 two-bedroom flats and 40 one-bedroom flats. That's just 200 bedrooms in total.

There is an intense housing crisis in London. Wages have not kept up with rising rents. Housing benefit has been reduced. The benefit cap has made London housing completely unaffordable to 30,000 households.

For people who have lost their homes the choice is particularly stark. There are

almost 2,000 households in Kensington and Chelsea which the council has accepted as homeless.

London councils have been dispersing homeless households to temporary accommodation at great distances from London.

A project based at Kensington town hall has been relocating families to the west Midlands on a permanent basis.

Given such an impossible situation, many homeless households go to stay with family and friends so they can maintain employment, education and social networks.

But one consequence is that blocks like Grenfell Tower can become severely overcrowded.

There should be an inquiry into homelessness across London. Homeless households should not be exiled from their local community.

When Thatcher brought in 'right to buy', properties were privatised one at a time.

New Labour then ramped up 'large-scale voluntary transfer' whereby whole estates - even the entire housing stock in individual council areas - were transferred to unaccountable social landlords.

There was a target of moving 200,000 properties each year out of the public sector.

A first step should be stopping the Greater London Authority and borough councils from selling public land to private developers.

## Camden tower block evacuation: Blairites are ducking responsibility

**Bob Labi**  
Camden

It took residents expressing fears and complaints at a public meeting after the Grenfell horror to get the council in Camden, north London, to order fire checks on five tower blocks on the Chalcots estate.

Within 24 hours the fire brigade declared four out of the five blocks unsafe, mainly due to issues with gas pipes and what now appear to be around 1,000 missing fire doors. An immediate evacuation was ordered on the night of 23 June.

The Blairite Labour-led council, while mobilising staff to help residents and bringing in contractors to begin repair

work, could not answer residents' many questions on what will happen to them.

While a spokesman said "we're encouraging all residents to stay with friends and family if they can, otherwise we'll provide accommodation," many felt left in the lurch. Councillors also sought to sidestep the questions of who is responsible for this crisis, and why previous safety reviews were not acted upon.

The Camden Blairites are unwilling to do anything that could be seen as challenging capitalism. They agreed, six days after the Grenfell fire and three days before the Chalcots evacuation, to give the new owners of the nearby closed Belsize fire station permission to turn it into 16 luxury and two "affordable" flats.

The local Labour MP is in the same mould. Speaking while the evacuation was underway, she made no mention of Jeremy Corbyn's call to requisition empty properties to provide alternative accommodation for the homeless and displaced.

Four days later, she asked the government to "support the reopening" of the closed fire station. But she did not ask the local council to reverse its agreement to the station's redevelopment.

This is not surprising. In the election, some of her canvassers went door to door explaining she did not support Corbyn.

■ Chalcots' speculative history - read the full article at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)

## Council union responds to Grenfell

Council workers in Kensington have been on the front line of dealing with the aftermath of the Grenfell fire. **Sonya Howard**, secretary of the Kensington and Chelsea branch of public service union Unison, wrote about the situation for the union's conference bulletin. The Socialist prints an edited version of Sonya's article here with her permission.

There are no words to describe the shock and utter horror felt by Kensington and Chelsea Unison branch at the loss of life at Grenfell Tower.

From day one following the fire, our members were on the ground arranging accommodation for those victims, unloading lorries and distributing items.

Some allegations regarding council workers' response have meant frontline staff in the relief effort have been put in the firing line.

There are some problems with information trickling down to officers on the

ground. But our members have stated they will not house victims out of the borough.

It is clear that the policies of austerity, cuts, privatisation and the use of sub-contractors on the cheap have all played their part in the disaster.

Justice for victims is required and those who are truly responsible should be held to account. Unison has been supporting our members and the branch.

Our community is broken, but we will mend it. My love and solidarity is with the victims, their families, friends and the whole community.

## Organising to fight for safety...

Socialist Party members have been organising safety campaigns everywhere...

### ■ West London

West London Socialist Party's campaign work on Grenfell, in our branch area, again received a friendly response. Increased sales of the Socialist, petition signatures, good donations to our fighting fund by people who had already given generously to help the Grenfell residents directly.

In the 1960s in the same area, the action of private landlords provoked big protests. Landlords were typified by Peter Rachman, who sent teams of thugs with dogs to force tenants out and push the rent up for the next tenants.

We had to set up barbed wire around their flats and organise all-night picket patrols to protect them. We have to ensure tenants' struggles are not forgotten this time.

**Keith Dickinson**  
West London Socialist Party

I was with Socialist Party members local to Grenfell on 17 June at Portobello Road Market campaigning for justice for Grenfell (see some of our demands in the main article). We were thanked, people gave us thumbs up, and our campaign stall was regularly mobbed. As well as angry passers-by grabbing leaflets, over 30 people bought copies of the Socialist.

**Ian Pattison**  
Waltham Forest Socialist Party

### ■ Coventry

Here in Coventry, WM Housing has revealed that just two of its 24 tower blocks have a sprinkler system installed - with only another two scheduled for installation.

Living in one of their tower blocks myself I noticed they quickly put up fire safety notices a couple of days after the Grenfell fire. Socialist Party members in Coventry are working towards a local housing safety campaign, initially with a petition and a plan for a public meeting.

**James Clement**  
Coventry West Socialist Party

### ■ South London

We started an initiative called 'Ashmole ASAP' on 26 June, calling for improvements to make the two tower blocks on the Ashmole estate in Oval, south London

- including my own home - 'As Safe As Possible, As Soon As Possible'.

We're using the slogan "we deserve the right to sleep safe at night." Letters signed by tenants asking for communal alarms, sprinklers and fire brigade safety checks, among other things, will go to our housing association Metropolitan, and Lambeth borough council - with further action to follow.

**Steve Nally**  
Lambeth Socialist Party

### ■ Cardiff

Cardiff West Socialist Party has begun building a campaign with residents in two tower blocks in the Butetown docks area. None of the blocks have sprinklers. As well as a campaign stall and leaflets, we organised a street meeting outside the block. Residents attended and raised safety concerns.

We have also organised a benefit concert for Grenfell at the Gwdihw Café Bar, 7 July at 7.30pm. We expect up to 250 there and lots of funds to be raised in solidarity with all those touched by the disaster.

**Rich Edwards**  
Cardiff East Socialist Party

Socialist Party members and supporters of the Young Socialists campaign protested against the Tory and Blairite policies which gave rise to Grenfell on 21 June. 30 people turned up at short notice, including nine new faces.

We had people of all ages coming up to us and thanking us. They were proud we were refusing to let Grenfell be brushed under the carpet.

**John Williams**  
Cardiff East Socialist Party

### ■ East London

East London Socialist Party is proposing to the One Housing Tenants' Action Group in West Ham to jointly visit Ferrier Point tower block in Canning Town. The block has cladding made and fitted by the same company as Grenfell Tower.

The One Housing Tenants' Action Group recently defeated plans by their housing association to hike rent by 40%. They are planning to link up with other residents' associations fighting for lower rents and safer homes.

**Scott Jones**  
East London Socialist Party

# Liverpool's socialist council - Power to the people!

Following the Grenfell Tower fire disaster, columnist Simon Jenkins in the Guardian attacked the policy of building residential tower blocks. In the article he says: "When in the 1980s Liverpool's Militant movement asked Everton's inhabitants what should be done with their towers, the reply was pull them down and give us back the streets. It was done."

This acknowledgement of the then Militant-led socialist council - democratically responding to the needs of the city's working class - hints at what was achieved in the teeth of opposition from the Thatcher-led Tory government and right-wing in the Labour Party.

Former Liverpool city councillor and Socialist Party member **Tony Mulhearn**, in an earlier interview with the Socialist, explains those achievements, how they were won and the lessons for today's anti-austerity movement.

## What were the biggest achievements of the council?

We built 5,000 houses and flats - gardens back and front in many cases. We demolished some of the worst housing in Western Europe. We then cancelled all monetary cuts and redundancies planned by the outgoing council. We built six new nursery schools. We expanded council services.

We had apprenticeships for council jobs. At one stage we had something like 16,000 workers engaged in council projects. So in effect we translated socialism into the language of jobs, the language of houses, the language of nursery schools.

## When the council was elected big cuts were being made to council budgets by the Tory government. How did you avoid making them?

Between 1979 and 1983 the Tories had slashed £120 million from Liverpool City Council's budget. In addition to that the outgoing local Tory-Liberal administration had left unallocated cuts of £10 million and was making 2,000 redundancies.

We had the choice of either saying there's nothing we can do and implementing the cuts or to fight back. We chose not to implement the cuts and instead to set a 'needs budget', and we launched a fighting campaign.

So, we were in the position that councillors are in today, but we took an entirely different stance.



Tony Mulhearn  
photo Mary Finch

## Militant supporters were not actually a majority on the council - how did your ideas get carried through?

In those days the local Labour party determined policy. Militant and its predecessors had conducted a campaign over decades inside Liverpool Labour Party for the adoption of socialist policies. And that's what the District Labour Party (DLP) did, it adopted socialist policies.

And in those days when the party had determined the policy, the councillors had to carry it out. So the DLP concretised what was contained in Clause IV of the Labour Party constitution (its socialist commitment - scrapped by Blair in 1995)

in relation to housing, jobs and services - all of which the council then implemented.

## How did the councillors link up with trade unions and working class people in the city?

The DLP was a fine, democratic organisation. It was made up of trade unions, women's committees, the Young Socialists, party branches and constituency parties, the Co-ops - all had delegates to the DLP. And that was the spring board we used to reach out to wider sections of the working class.

On that basis we were able to mobilise tens of thousands at the demonstrations. And on three occasions 30,000 council workers took strike action to defend the policies of the council.

So this notion peddled by the right wing in the Labour Party, like former Labour leader Neil Kinnock and supported by the capitalist press, that it was some kind of tiny group which had captured control of the council, was nonsense.

We couldn't have achieved what we did without mass support from the labour movement and wider working class communities.

## How did the right wing respond to your success?

They generated a campaign of hysteria in the capitalist press.

Thatcher's minister Norman Tebbit used his position in Parliament to demand of Kinnock - 'what was Labour going to do about the Liverpool extremists?' Bowing to this pressure Kinnock launched a savage attack on Liverpool at the 1985 Labour Party conference.

Shortly after, Labour's right wing suspended the DLP, this was preceded by the unelected District Auditor's decision to fine and remove the 47 fighting Labour councillors from office.

Kinnock then proceeded to conduct the most horrendous witch-hunt against not only Militant supporters but also any lefts who supported building houses and creating jobs.

Nonetheless the socialist legacy of that movement continues in Liverpool to this day.



photo Dave Sinclair

## Left Books

The Socialist Party's bookshop

### ■ Liverpool - A city that dared to fight

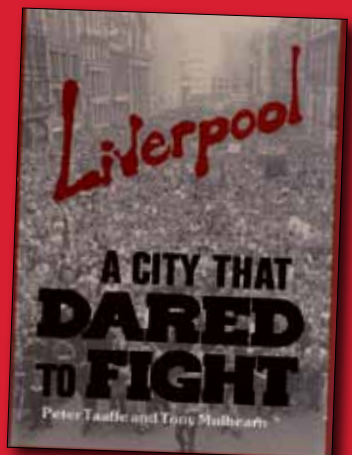
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# NHS SECRET CUTS PLANS EXPOSED

**'Harriet Ryman'**  
NHS nurse

A document leaked to the Guardian has revealed that cuts and austerity are not over following the general election. NHS England and other bosses on six-figure salaries are secretly meeting with the government behind closed doors to plan an unprecedented attack on some of London's world-renowned teaching hospitals. Great Ormond Street and University College London are in the firing line for cuts.

NHS England (which manages the NHS budget) is urging NHS trusts across four north London boroughs to 'think the unthinkable' in a drive to implement a 'capped expenditure process' which is code for brutal cuts. Ten affected hospital trusts are expected to make cuts in the next few months in order to plug a £183 million funding shortfall.

What this will mean for 1.44 million users who will end up locked out of accessing NHS care, is pain, suffering and premature death.

The cuts will tie in with the Tories' ideological agenda of eroding the fundamental human right to free healthcare by forcing desperate people to consider taking out private health insurance to get necessary care.

Unaccountable bureaucrats in

NHS England and NHS Improvement (which oversees trusts and outside providers) recognise that their proposed cuts will be 'unpopular and difficult to explain'. Therefore there will be no public consultation or full and frank public debate.

The Royal College of Surgeons correctly points out that the cuts will have a devastating impact on patients and will cost more in the long run.

## Worse

Health workers know that timely intervention is a key principle in recovery. People who are suffering conditions that might quickly have been rectified to the benefit of that person and wider society will have to wait longer for treatments, worsening the prognosis and increasing the chances they will suffer severe and enduring disability.

These cuts are not inevitable and can be stopped. The trade union movement must seek to unite and lead all 'save our NHS' campaigns to effectively resist these life-threatening cuts.

The NHS trade unions would get mass public support if they planned and coordinated a bold, united programme of militant action in order to defend a healthcare system that is still renowned for excellence and efficiency in spite of decades of assaults on it by the private sector.

# Police accused of killing cover up

Black Lives Matter march in 2016 photo James Ivens



**Simon Carter**  
East London Socialist Party

Anger over the death in police custody of another young black man erupted onto the streets of Newham in east London last Sunday, 25 June. Protesters demonstrated in Stratford and later outside Forest Gate police station demanding justice over the death of 25-year-old Edir Frederico Da Costa, who had been arrested in Newham ten days earlier. Clashes between some protesters and police later took place.

Police accounts of Da Costa's death, and an Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) release of a preliminary postmortem denying police brutality, has reportedly not convinced family members. Protesters suspected another police cover up.

## Theresa May

In 2015 the IPCC had its reports clearing the police of unlawfully killing black men Olaseni Lewis and Sean Rigg overturned. The then home secretary Theresa May was compelled to launch an investigation following a spike in the number of deaths in police custody.

The unexplained death of Frederico Da Costa has again highlighted the unaccountability of police and also the targeting by police of young black men.

Since 1990 over 1,500 people have died in custody and other police incidents, of which over 10% have been black and minority ethnic. Some research suggests even higher figures.

In 2011 the shooting dead of Mark Duggan by police in north London sparked widespread rioting for several days across several cities in England.

Democratic control - through elected local authority police committees, with control over resources, discipline, training and day-to-day policy - is necessary to ensure public accountability of the police.

# Students skirt school uniform issue

**George Jenkins**  
College student

In the current political climate, school uniforms may be a seemingly trivial topic. However, the recent heatwave left many school children suffering during exam season.

While some schools in

leafier areas rolled out the summer uniform of polo shirts and shorts, others didn't - partly because of parents struggling with the cost of two uniforms a year for each child.

A strict policy of wearing school uniform and the disproportionate consequences which can follow disobedience, has been harmful to students learning. In Exeter, some male students protested their school's 'no shorts' policy by wearing skirts, causing rules on the matter to be reconsidered.

But elsewhere the experience of school students was not so charming - many felt they had to wait around after school hours to avoid the three o'clock heat.

The punishment of such small acts of defiance, like altering uniform, contributes to an attitude that pushes many young people away from a good education and creates an atmosphere that prepares young people for conforming to rigid hierarchy at work too.

To improve our education system, schools need to become more lenient in regard uniform as part of an effort to develop a more cooperative and a more beneficial learning environment.

Decisions on uniform policy should be made democratically by students, teachers and parents.



photo lucuzade/CC

# TRUMP AND THE FOSSIL FUEL CORPORATIONS - A LETHAL COMBINATION FOR THE PLANET

Pete Mason

On 1 June 2017 the world's TV cameras broadcast live, as President Donald Trump announced that the United States will withdraw from the Paris agreement. It drew lengthy applause and whoops of delight from the audience gathered around him in the White House Rose Garden.

Yet in reality the Paris agreement, drawn up in 2015 by the United Nations, is a feeble attempt to mitigate the effects of climate change on the world.

Trump's spoilt schoolboy pout appeared on news channels globally - he was going to 'make America great again', this time at the expense of the earth's climate. He championed the greed of the US fossil-fuel industry capitalists at the expense of every other nation on earth. Meanwhile, our planet warms, ice sheets melt and seas rise.

Trump then said he intended to "begin negotiations to re-enter either the Paris Accord or a really entirely new transaction" - an empty promise from a president who has tweeted climate change scepticism 115 times. The Vox media website immediately reproduced every tweet.

A Bloomberg news correspondent noted that the withdrawal from the Paris agreement will help foil legal challenges as the Trump administration eviscerates the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Scientists fought back to challenge the anti-science president. "Factcheck shows Trump's climate speech was full of misleading statements," Scientific American headlined the following day.

## Climate change denial

Trump avoided giving explicit support to the thin soup of climate change denial with its floating lumps of fake news. Where was the ideological offensive against the science of climate change itself? Why no fake claims about growing glaciers, robust arctic and Antarctic ice sheets? Or talk of storms on the surface of the sun heating the earth?

The evidence of manmade global warming is so overwhelming that perhaps Trump's advisers warned against courting ridicule (see box: Climate change: the evidence is in). Even his daughter, Ivanka Trump, assistant to the president and now a fully signed up member of the US oligarchy, was said to have argued against

withdrawal from the Paris agreement!

The Paris framework agreement allows each nation complete freedom to decide its own terms, financial or otherwise. So how is it remotely meaningful for Trump to talk about "negotiations to re-enter" the Paris agreement? Or to claim a "\$3 trillion" cost to the United States by 2040?

The Paris agreement does not even make a ruling on limiting coal production, the 'single greatest threat to our climate,' according to environmental group Greenpeace.

The fake news of Trump's announcement was based on concealing these facts. "China will be allowed to build hundreds of additional coal plants. So we can't build the plants, but they can," the president said. Fake. "This agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the United States." Fake. "I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris." Pittsburgh voted for Hillary Clinton, the Mayor of Pittsburgh protested!

But beneath the fake news of the oligarch's rhetoric, his attacks on China and India reveal some important truths. It is precisely the capitalist competition between the USA and other nations - China in particular but also India, Brazil and Russia - which prevented

the Paris agreement from taking on any flesh. (See box: Can free market capitalism save the planet?)

The deeply flawed Paris agreement is nothing but "a fraud, a fudge without action, just promises" according to James Hansen, 'father of climate change awareness' and head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

Fuelled by opposition to Trump and his pro-fossil fuels and environmental deregulation policies, 'March for Science' demonstrations were held worldwide on Earth Day, 22 April. Organisers claimed more than 600 satellite marches took place globally. Thousands gathered in London, many protesting against 'a trend among politicians for discrediting scientific research' the BBC reported.



The billionaire bigot has ripped-up environmental protection to satisfy the profit-hungry fossil-fuel industry photo Tammy Anthony Baker/CC

## Climate change: the evidence is in

The ice is melting in our warming planet. Arctic sea ice expands in winter but on 7 March this year it reached its lowest maximum extent in the 38-year satellite record. The previous summer's September low shared second place in the lowest ice extent, and this year could be record breaking. At the current rate - if it does not accelerate - there will be no arctic ice in September 60 years from now.

The shrinking arctic ice affects the UK's climate because it causes wild swings in the polar jet stream. The UK has been pounded by severe storms and in the US, deadly summer heatwaves and torrential floods have been linked to the distorted polar jet stream. The earth's agriculture relies on a stable climate - global warming is destroying crops around the

world, leading to forced migrations and conflict.

The Antarctic will not disappear so quickly as the arctic ice, but it is here (and on Greenland) that the melting land-based ice is raising sea levels. The day before Trump's announcement, scientists announced that a rift in the Larsen C ice shelf now stretches 193km.

When it breaks off, any day now, it will create one of the largest icebergs ever seen. It would stretch from Cardiff to Tenby - almost the entire south Wales coast line - and would reach 50km inland at its widest. Once it goes, the rest of the ice shelf will likely follow, as have Larsen A and B before it.

While the floating iceberg won't raise sea levels, the collapsing ice shelf allows the Antarctic glaciers to more

freely flow into the sea, raising it in the next few centuries or so by 60 meters, greater than the height of Nelson's column.

Global warming science is not and has never been genuinely in question. Yet this is the future Donald Trump is bequeathing our children.



photo Pixabay/CC

## Can free market capitalism save the planet?

As far back as 1946, leading oil companies in the USA created a Smoke and Fumes Committee which backed scientific research - but only in order to 'prevent environmental regulations they deemed hasty, costly, and unnecessary', the Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL) discovered.

The CIEL, which published an expose into oil industry disinformation last year, is investigating whether ExxonMobil engaged in a cover-up to mislead the public, reports Joe Romm of Climate Progress.

In 1957 ExxonMobil published a paper showing evidence of global warming due to CO2 emissions. Yet, in subsequent decades, in a twist of Frankenstein monster proportions, Exxon has spent more than \$30 million on think tanks that promote

climate denial, according to Greenpeace.

Trump appointed former Exxon chief Rex Tillerson as US secretary of state. Throughout his speech, Trump argues that the Paris agreement is an 'agreement that disadvantages the United States, to the exclusive benefit of other countries'. For United States, read 'US capitalism'.

Is it possible that the world's capitalist leaders can negotiate to avoid climate change? Can we have faith in the 'invisible hand of the free market'? The short answer is no. Capitalism generates a flea market of climate scepticism. It is cheaper to individual companies - and capitalist countries - to let 'someone else' pick up the cost of a destroyed environment.

The result is that the world's population faces frequent

extreme weather events, severe disruption to food production, forced migration of millions, increasing civil conflict and wars.

Socialist planning - as long as it is genuine democratic planning at every level, not top-down dictates from unelected bureaucrats - is far cheaper and more efficient than the anarchy of the capitalist market.

It is a refusal to recognise these elementary facts that hobbles the United Nations and the Paris agreement. Public protest can force environmental regulation, only to be undone by a Trump election.

Only public ownership and socialist planning, which always assesses long-term environmental impacts when looking at production costs, will provide a long term solution.

## Socialist solution

While Theresa May refused to add her signature to a protest letter to Trump signed by other EU leaders with more electoral acumen, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn confirmed he would have signed.

In 2015, while welcoming the Paris agreement, Corbyn stated clearly that "it seems likely that the targets and mechanisms will not go far enough", placing greater emphasis on government intervention and public investment to solve the issues of climate change. This is a clear step in the right direction and is very welcome.

Unfortunately for the planet, Corbyn didn't win the general election, but should the weak and unstable government of Theresa May collapse, he should adopt a more forthright position on the immediate nationalisation of the entire energy industry

(which is supported by majority of the electorate), with compensation given only on the basis of proven need.

Public ownership and a plan of production, particularly of the energy and transport system, is the only way to end this dirty, polluting system of capitalism, and plan and fund the necessary defences against rising sea levels.

But in the drive for greater public ownership, a Corbyn-led government will inevitably come up against the obstructionism and intransigence of big business. Corbyn must be prepared to respond with his own brand of determination and intransigence and replace the robber barons of the FTSE 100 with democratically elected representatives of the workers, in a plan of production that will overcome the systemic failures of capitalism.

- The fundamental drawback of the Paris agreement is that it is completely voluntary. If Trump hadn't pulled out of it his administration could have simply ignored its commitments without fear of legally binding sanctions
- Even if all the commitments made in Paris are fulfilled, global temperatures will probably still rise by a disastrous 3°C
- 2016 was the hottest year globally - the third successive hottest year in a row - since recorded records began in 1880, and the warmest for 115,000 years. Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the main driver of global warming, has gone over 400 parts per million (ppm) - the highest level in 4 million years. When it reaches 450 ppm there will be a real danger that a tipping point will be reached and uncontrollable global warming will set in



Extreme weather events are increasing in frequency photo Haitthanh/CC

# CARDIFF: YOUTH AND WORKERS UNITE IN SOLIDARITY WITH GRENFELL

Local youth, workers and activists in Cardiff have been spurred into action by the horrifying and avoidable fire at Grenfell in a stirring show of working class solidarity.

The fire has been the primary topic of conversation with members of the public on campaign stalls, so the newly formed Cardiff Young Socialists organised a rally on 21 June on Queen Street to protest the horrible neglect and greed which had led to such a disaster. The rally was well-attended with over 30 there and dozens more stopping to sign the petition and discuss the tragedy.

Cardiff Young Socialists has organised a benefit concert for those who have suffered as a result of Grenfell for 7 July at Gwdihw in Cardiff at 7.30pm. Up to 250 attendees are expected so it promises to be a raucous night with lots of funds raised in solidarity with all those touched by the disaster.

Cardiff Young Socialists' first public meeting will be on the Monday after the gig at 7.30pm, 10 July at the Little Man Cafe, Bridge Street, Cardiff.

**Richard Edwards**  
Cardiff Young Socialists

Recent research suggests that Jeremy Corbyn had over 70% of the youth vote in the general election. What this shows is the optimism and enthusiasm coming from young people.

This is why members of the Socialist Party and Socialist Students have set up Young Socialists.

At the kick-off of Young Socialists in Wales on the 21 June it was a really encouraging sight to see nine new faces turn up 30 minutes before the protest, eager to get involved and help in whatever way they could. When the protest was big enough, one of them gave a heart-warming speech about how capitalism creates the conditions of suffering around Britain and across the world.

We had people of all ages coming up to us and thanking us individually for what we're doing. We even had young kids on bikes asking questions about what we were doing. We gave out hundreds of leaflets - and no doubt got the message out! And even better, the new faces gave us their contact details and are eager to get involved further.

**John Williams**  
Cardiff Young Socialists



# SOCIALIST SUMMER FESTIVAL

Hosted by Socialist Party Eastern region  
**Friday 25 - Monday 28 August**  
in a Hertfordshire campsite.  
Come and enjoy sun, fun & socialist ideas in a relaxed atmosphere

## FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Political workshops and rallies on basic questions of Marxism and socialism, history, what we stand for, and more (in a marquee with heating available) Get in touch if there are issues you'd like to have on the agenda for the weekend
- Informal Q&A sessions - these will be participatory, ie ask all those questions you've always wanted to ask!
- Football tournaments, rounders, cricket, etc
- Evening entertainment including live music, camp fire singing, quizzes
- Cooked breakfasts and evening meals for sale
- Evening burger and drinks bar
- Crèche (places for the crèche are free but must be booked by 1 August)
- Climbing ropes, zip wire, archery and more (run by the camp so need to be booked and paid for)
- We can arrange lifts from the nearby station for those coming by public transport
- On-site shower and toilet block
- The camp is set in beautiful countryside with lovely opportunities for walks and runs - if you wish

Prices will be confirmed at the start of July so check the Facebook event: Socialist Party Summer Camp 2017.  
If you have queries contact: [steve.glenon@tesco.net](mailto:steve.glenon@tesco.net)

Housing campaigners and women against the Tories and DUP marched together in central London. The Saturday 24 June protest was the 14th in London since the election three weeks ago. This time they blocked the road outside 10 Downing Street and were later joined by anti-racist protesters who had been opposing the far-right EDL. photo Mary Finch

## Why I joined the Socialist Party To join the struggle to save the NHS

**Tom Hunt**  
Mansfield Socialist Party

I am an NHS nurse and have been for over 37 years.

Despite the blood, sweat, and poverty I can say hand on heart I love my job just as much now as when I started.

I have seen the service eroded under both Tory and Labour governments. My mother was a nurse and that generation fought for what we have today and I joined the struggle to save this wonderful legacy.

I firmly believe that a democratic mass workers' movement is the only way we're going to save this service. However, I understand that this cannot be done in isolation and in fact all our services and things we hold dear can only be carried forward by the removal of the capitalist system.

I've not been in the Socialist Party for that long, about a year and a bit. I've been to meetings and helped out with Socialist Party campaign stalls. And my education has begun. My new year's resolution was to educate myself on the Russian revolution with it being its centenary.

**Join the fightback!  
Join the Socialists!**

[socialistparty.org.uk/join](http://socialistparty.org.uk/join) 020 8988 8777

@socialist\_party text 07761 818 206 /CWISocialistParty



photo Socialist Party

# ROCK-STAR RECEPTION AS CORBYN INSPIRES THOUSANDS AT GLASTONBURY

**Tom Costello**  
Lancashire Socialist Party

Thousands of people flocked to Glastonbury's Pyramid Stage on 24 June to hear Jeremy Corbyn deliver his anti-austerity message.

As the crowds eagerly waited, the now-famous chant began to spread gradually throughout the audience, finding a climax when he finally took to the stage.

Corbyn delivered an excellent speech in which he railed against the ugliest excesses of today's capitalist world. He addressed the reactionary bigot Donald Trump

and the miserable conditions that workers face in Britain today at the hands of a ruling class that will stop at nothing to protect its exploitative interests.

He also addressed the devastation caused by imperialist wars and stressed the importance of understanding the root causes of them - including the never-ending need for natural resources that this economic system breeds.

He rounded his speech off with an inspiring quote from the romantic poet Percy Shelley: "Rise like lions after slumber, In unvanquishable number, Shake your chains to earth like dew, Which in sleep had

fallen on you, Ye are many - they are few!"

Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party is faced with numerous challenges. He is still burdened by the right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party sabotaging his leadership at any chance that they can get. And, unfortunately, the bureaucracy is still in the hands of the pro-capitalist right.

But at this moment, nobody could feel anything but hope for the future of socialist politics. A truly inspiring thing to witness. Corbyn's leadership has put socialism back on the agenda, and it is events like this that prove that.



Jeremy Corbyn during the election photo Paul Mattsson

## Socialist Party Fighting Fund

	£ received	£ target	April to June 2017	Deadline: 30 June 2017	
Northern	1,905	750			254%
North West	3,802	2,100			181%
South West	2,660	1,800			148%
West Midlands	3,347	2,600			129%
Southern	1,900	1,600			119%
Yorkshire	3,798	3,300			115%
Eastern	1,327	1,200			111%
East Midlands	1,965	1,850			106%
Wales	2,404	2,300			105%
London	4,954	6,100			81%
South East	342	750	46%		
Other	3,314	5,650	59%		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31,718</b>	<b>30,000</b>			<b>106%</b>

# From Militant to the Socialist Party - what you thought

"Well I have finished it! I have completed reading the marvellous book From Militant to the Socialist Party. What an absolutely brilliant read, remembering some of the events I was involved in.

"From Militant to the Socialist Party is a lesson on building a Marxist socialist organisation on the one hand and continuing to raise the ideas of socialism in the wider working class movement on the other. I recommend all Corbynistas read this biography of a socialist tendency that has developed a powerful base in the British workers' movement over the past 53 years.

"Also read the first volume in this trilogy, called The Rise of Militant, to understand that the building of socialist ideas cannot rely on enthusiasm alone, but needs concrete socialist policies and organisation to defeat British, European and world capitalism."

**Jimmy Haddow**

"I have just finished reading Peter Taaffe's brilliant and stimulating book From Militant to the Socialist Party. At times, I was deeply moved, as Peter carefully and lucidly took me through his fascinating and knowledgeable experiences.

As a new member of the Socialist Party, many of my questions were answered and the book confirmed my feelings of despair and disillusionment with New Labour and its politicians.

I was very happy to have my decision to join the Socialist Party confirmed. I recommend that all new members of the Socialist Party read this book.

The style, print and short chapters all helped me to read and understand very clearly the political beliefs and progress of the Socialist Party in relation to other political parties and international socialism. My hope for a brighter future is restored."

**Mary Rodwell**



**From Militant to the Socialist Party**  
by Peter Taaffe  
£15, available from [socialistbooks.co.uk](http://socialistbooks.co.uk)

# Pentrich Rebellion 200 years on

**Karen Seymour**  
Mansfield Socialist Party

On 25 July 40 people gathered in the village hall in Pentrich, Derbyshire, to mark the 200th anniversary of the Pentrich Rebellion (see [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk) for more). The excellent meeting, organised by Mansfield Socialist Party members, was followed by a choice of walks to discover more of the village's remarkable history.

We were honoured to be joined by a relative of Isaac Ludlam, one of the hanged rebels. She, in turn, spoke about how proud she was to be a descendant of his.

## Agent provocateurs

The 200 or so workers who marched to Nottingham in 1817 were determined to bring down Lord Liverpool's Tory government and improve their own poverty-stricken lives. Agent provocateurs and light dragoons, however, made sure that fate by hanging, imprisonment or transportation was assured.

200 years later, the ruling class is terrified of the huge power and strength of the working class when it is united.



Former socialist Labour MP, Dave Nellist, spoke at the meeting photo Andy McQuillan

This weak, split and in-fighting Tory government can and must be brought down.

A Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn could deliver immediate improvements in people's living standards, and show what could potentially be achieved in a socialist society, which is the ultimate goal.

# TRADE UNIONS MUST ORGANISE MASS MOVEMENT TO KICK OUT THE TORIES

**Rob Williams**  
Socialist Party industrial organiser

The general election result has not only confounded the Tories and the Blairites but also many trade union leaders.

It has been reported that, at the beginning of the campaign, Trade Union Congress (TUC) general secretary Frances O'Grady expected Labour to be "where the Tories were in 1997", on the receiving end of a landslide defeat.

Incredibly, she tweeted: "Promising set of commitments from the Conservative Party pledge to expand workers' rights". This implies she was looking to build a partnership with an expected strengthened

Theresa May government.

Many of the union leaders have completely misread the political and social situation and drew only pessimistic conclusions. They have a one-sided analysis of record low union membership and strike figures and don't see below the surface the raging anger against Tory austerity and the management offensive in the workplace.

## Walkouts

Just in the last month or so, Royal Mail workers in four different areas covering 12 offices have walked out in unofficial action against the victimisation of their Communication Workers Union reps.

Of course, the right-wing union leaders conveniently forget the role that they have played in opening the

door to the massive cuts offensive.

The decision of the leadership of the TUC, and the Unison and GMB unions, to effectively end the 2011 public sector pension struggle just weeks after the two-million strong 'N30' strike, gave Cameron and Osborne confidence to crank up the attacks. The growing joint pay dispute in 2014 was also allowed to peter out.

But some signs were far more visible. A big number of the 45% who voted for Scottish independence in 2014 did so for anti-austerity reasons.

Even the pro-EU Labour shadow minister Keir Starmer recognised the anti-establishment element that was part of the Brexit vote. And, of course, Jeremy Corbyn's election as Labour leader and his re-election last summer was a reflection of this mood.

Starmer made his comments at a fringe meeting at Unison conference (see opposite), where the overwhelming mood of delegates was one of huge support for Corbyn and 'the Tories are on the ropes, one last heave can get rid of them'. It's clear that the new, more favourable balance of forces that has resulted from a weakened Tory administration has given some workers a boost of confidence and a feeling of 'now it's our turn'.

And now workers will be asking: "If the Tories can find £1 billion from their 'magic money tree' to do a deal with the DUP, why can't we have a pay rise or why can't the cuts be stopped?"

Even the TUC has been forced to recognise this mood, especially against the catastrophic decline in living standards from seven years of Tory pay restraint, and has called a 'Britain still needs a pay rise' rally in central London on 17 July.

We welcome this initiative if it launches a serious struggle, although we think the TUC and the unions should have played the central role in the 1 July demonstration, rather than sub-contracting out to the People's Assembly. In any case, union leaders who speak at the demonstration should use the platform to build for the pay rally and the industrial action that will be necessary against the Tories.

The TUC rally and 1 July demo have to be used to launch a mass campaign in the public sector to break the 1% pay cap. Even the RCN nurses' union, which has been historically opposed to strikes, has voted in an indicative ballot for action on pay.

91% of members would take industrial action short of strike, with 78% saying they were prepared to



strike. The RCN now says that unless the Tories end pay restraint, it will ballot for strike action.

No doubt some unions will argue that the Trade Union Act, with its higher undemocratic voting thresholds, makes national strike action impossible. We certainly don't underestimate its effects but a serious mass campaign is the only way to get the vote out. Although ultimately, even some of the more far-sighted Tories recognise that anti-union laws can't always contain workers' anger.

While we don't take defying these laws lightly, it will be posed at a certain stage and would leave the government powerless.

## Private sector

There is also the potential to reach out to workers in the private sector who are also under the cosh on pay and pensions. This year has seen workers in BMW and the Atomic Weapons Establishment on strike to defend their final salary pensions.

Although, in some public sector unions, pay may not be the most important issue at the moment. The teaching unions are facing down

the funding crisis in schools, while many health workers see the £22 billion NHS cuts through 'sustainability and transformation plans' as the priority.

And any campaign has to incorporate these threats. Similarly in other sectors, workers have taken action against office closures in the civil service and to stop driver-only operation on the trains.

But pay can often act as a lightning rod for all the many other grievances that have resulted from the cuts.

In the week after the 1 July demonstration, Unite members at British Airways and in the Barts Health Trust will be on strike. Both involve low-paid workers who have been pushed over the edge by grinding poverty.

The election result reflected the huge turmoil in society but most of all a desire to throw off the chains of austerity. The prospect of a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour government that workers will hope totally changes their lives could be just months away.

But that mood has to be mobilised in a serious mass movement to push the Tories out.

## Unison conference

# Confident delegates take control and give Corbyn rapturous welcome



Conference delegates and Brighton residents gather to hear Jeremy Corbyn following his popular conference speech photo Rob Williams

**Glenn Kelly**  
Socialist Party  
industrial department

Unison's 2017 conference was the first big trade union conference after the general election. It didn't take long to see the lift in confidence the result had given.

Delegates broke out in spontaneous cheers when it was announced that Jeremy Corbyn would be addressing the end of conference.

The first debate on smashing the pay cap and for a £10 an hour minimum wage was electric, with so many Socialist Party members speaking, it started to feel that you were at a Socialist Party meeting!

Such was the mood the leadership

was compelled to say it "would break the pay cap in the next 12 months." However, many delegates have heard this before and remain sceptical that, without a clear strategy, they were going to do it.

## Cliff edge

In his conference speech Unison general secretary Dave Prentis tried to wrap himself in Corbyn's red flag, saying that he and the leadership had always backed him and the union "effectively wrote the Labour manifesto".

As delegate after delegate cheered Corbyn's victory that had pushed May to the cliff edge, they now demand that the union help push her over, by supporting the demo on the 1 July and preparing for strike action.

As the conference went on and delegates took control, Prentis and his supporters looked increasingly glum. Like Theresa May, they looked like the team who had won but lost.

Compare that to the upbeat mood of the 400 delegates at the Unison Action fringe meeting (the new left organisation initiated by the Socialist Party) celebrating that we had won 29 of the national executive committee seats and now were ready to organise to win the union for the members.

Socialist Party delegates played a key role at the conference and our ideas were warmly welcomed. This was reflected in the fact that we sold 238 copies of the Socialist, 20 non-party members attended our fringe meeting where £1,400 was raised for the fighting fund, and two delegates agreed to join.

The conference ended with Corbyn addressing delegates to a rapturous standing ovation. When asked by a young delegate why 16-year-olds should be denied the £10 an hour minimum wage if they were doing the same job - Labour's manifesto promises it for over-18s only - Corbyn responded: "That's a fair point, I agree, 16-year-olds don't eat any less so they should get the same."

Having addressed 2,000 delegates in the conference hall, hundreds of young people from Brighton then organised an impromptu rally outside to greet Corbyn, where he then stayed and addressed them. When he climbed into a car it had to crawl slowly along the road with supporters following him lining the streets singing "oh Jeremy Corbyn".



# "What do we want? Pay parity. When do we want it? 11 years ago!"



photos Becci Heagney

Striking Mears workers in Manchester hold a protest outside Northwards housing association offices on 23 June chanting "what do we want? Pay parity. When do we want it? 11 years ago!"

Mears employees earn up to

£6,000 less than workers on the other side of the city. Unite the Union is looking to step up the dispute, regularising strike pay and moving to involve other Mears staff who maintain the council's own premises, including the iconic Gothic town hall.

## Refuse workers strike against bullying bosses

**Clive Walder**  
Birmingham Central Socialist Party

Birmingham council refuse workers represented by Unite have voted to strike on 30 June followed by a series of two-hour stoppages commencing at 6am on 3, 11, 19 and 27 July and 4 August over a bullying culture among management and a threat to make 122 workers (20% of the workforce) redundant.

There will also be an overtime ban with workers adhering to their contracted hours, plus returning to depots for all lunch and tea breaks, also starting on 30 June.

The Labour council claims that this is necessary due to budget cuts - it is expected that the overspend will be £11.9 million as opposed to the £9.7 million originally predicted. The workers think that the bullying from management is designed to force workers to resign without redundancy pay. 90% voted to strike and 93% voted for action short of a strike.

At the same time as wanting to

make these workers redundant, the council has been replacing permanent workers with agency staff. It is clear that the intention is to create a more insecure workforce.

Even before making these workers redundant it wasn't unheard of for refuse collections to not take place on the scheduled day. The union has offered to have conciliation service Acas mediate in this but has said that workers are prepared to fight on the streets, in the media, and in the courts if necessary.

## Donate today!

If you agree with what you read in the Socialist, consider making a donation to the Socialist Party's fighting fund:

■ pay by card on  
020 8988 8777  
or socialistparty.  
org.uk/donate

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photos Paul Mattsson



# Homelessness soars - Corbyn offers housing revolution

Nancy Taaffe  
Waltham Forest Socialist Party

The Housing crisis has fast become the issue that defines all that is wrong in Tory Britain.

At Glastonbury (see page 11) Jeremy Corbyn asked the crowd: "Is it right that there are people with nowhere to sleep at night?" To which the crowd roared back: "No!"

Yet people do live on the streets. Thousands. And it's becoming normalised.

In supposedly "gentrified" Walthamstow, a homeless man started to sleep on the street corner opposite my house with his plastic bags all around him. Someone gave him a chair he was there so long.

Now he has a coffee table and a plate and cup. I sometimes see him coming back from the pub with his toothbrush in his hand. People now say hello in the morning when they're taking kids to school and going to work. His homelessness has become normalised. It's like people have come to accept that he lives there, on the street, in that corner.

This is how shanty towns are made. And normalised.

A recent report said the number of families in temporary accommodation has soared by 71% since the Tories came to power in 2010.

Of the 77,240 households in temporary accommodation almost a third had been placed outside of their own local authority district, some 90% of those who had been moved were from London.

Corbyn's bold call for state acquisition of empty properties in Kensington and Chelsea and the buying up by the Corporation of London of homes at Kensington Row to temporarily house survivors shows that these homes were always available. That one act alone shows we don't have a housing shortage in this country.

We have a housing speculation problem. Those homes were bought within a week. This is a small glimpse of the resources available when the ruling class is under pressure.

## Empty homes

Mass requisitioning of empty homes to house those in bed and breakfast accommodation and those on the streets is entirely possible. Homelessness is unnecessary and it can literally be solved overnight. It just requires the political will.

We don't want any more tragedies for this policy to be enacted. A socialist government would take empty properties; renovate the old ones and plan towns and cities for public need, not private greed.



photo Paul Mattsson

# BENEFIT CAP DEFEAT FOR GOVERNMENT

Karen Seymour  
Mansfield Socialist Party

A court challenge was won on 22 June against the enforcement of the benefit cap for people with children under two years old. This is set at £23,000 in London and £20,000 outside the capital.

The ruling was made in response to a judicial review brought by four lone parent families - shockingly including two who had been made homeless due to domestic violence. To avoid the cap, they had to be able to work at least 16 hours a week. Because they could not, the cap was enforced.

What is forgotten here is that the cap amount includes housing benefit which goes to the landlord of your property. It is not money that can be used for day-to-day expenses!

Even the high court judge said the cap was causing real misery to these families, and it served no real purpose!

Not surprisingly, the government

intends to appeal, and insists that the cap incentivises work. That's doublespeak for: "We want to punish you because you are unemployed!" The Victorians had the same attitude to those who were unfortunate enough to have no work.

This is yet another example of the war that is being waged against working class people by those who seek to govern us. It is not a measure that saves the government a huge amount of money, but it is designed to make life just that little bit more difficult - to wear us down so that we will not fight back.

We need to show them we know their game and we won't take any more. The ruling class is terrified of our power and strength when united. Let's use it to bring an end to the benefit cap, benefit cuts and all austerity.

Labour under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership could deliver real improvements to workers' living standards. Let's kick out the weak and divided Tories and get Corbyn in as soon as possible.



photo Cardiff Socialist Party

# Barclays finally charged for having their hands in the till



photo Gideon Bernar/CC

Neil Stonelake  
Caerphilly Socialist Party

After an investigation of six years, and over nine years following the events concerned, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has finally decided to bring charges against Barclays bank.

Four of its former senior managers face prosecution for serious breaches of financial regulations during the banking crisis of 2008.

The allegations centre on loans taken from Qatari investors - and subsequently hidden in the books. Apparently these were used to prop up the bank when it was threatened with part-nationalisation at the same time as Lloyds TSB and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The executives don't even think they have done anything wrong.

Readers of the Socialist will not be surprised to learn that senior officers in banking have acted in ways alleged to be systematically and blatantly corrupt. Any crackdown is to be welcomed, even at this late stage.

Nevertheless, it all comes too little and too late. The SFO has always been the sort of watchdog that big business likes: slow and ponderous with very few teeth.

The fact is that even throwing some of the executives into prison would do no more than paper over the cracks in the fundamentally exploitative system of capitalism.

Gordon Brown took action to save the banks in 2008-09. He nationalised the debt instead of the whole banks - and, we would add,

the commanding heights of the economy.

Now everybody owes as a result of the bankers' incompetence and greed.

What Barclays is alleged to have run is a money carousel. Capitalists in Qatar fund the banks to stay privately owned, while they get a return on their investment after the state has sorted out capitalism's latest mess at massive public expense.

And the whole affair probably wouldn't have come to light if Qatar hadn't blotted its copy book with the other petrodollar merchants.

Advocates of creating a 'national investment bank' without taking the other major finance institutions into public ownership should reflect on how easy Barclays' actions were to commit.

# Tories may have broken election laws...again!

photo Oregon State University/CC

Ryan Aldred  
Plymouth Socialist Party

It's been revealed that the Tories may have broken electoral laws with the use of so-called 'market research' company Blue Telecoms.

It has been reported by both Channel 4 News and the Guardian that Blue Telecoms used a script in the run up to polling day which appeared to canvass for support in a number of marginal constituencies rather than simply conducting market research.

Also, earlier in the campaign Channel 4 News reported that Blue Telecoms staff were claiming to be calling from 'Axe Research', a company which doesn't appear to exist. This would be a violation of the Data Protection Act.

This comes just weeks after it was confirmed that the Tories had overspent on their 2015 election expenses. On that occasion the Tories escaped without charge as the Crown Prosecution Service would not be able to decisively rule whether or not the overspend was down to "human error" as claimed by the Tories.

Whether Blue Telecoms did or did

not act illegally, this latest scandal draws attention to the fact that the Tories are having to rely on market research companies as part of their election strategy.

This suggests they lack a genuine support base and party activists to carry out an election campaign which would come close to matching the people-powered campaign conducted by Jeremy Corbyn.

This scandal is yet another problem for an already beleaguered minority government which has shown itself to be anything but strong and stable, which will only further fuel the growing calls for Theresa May to resign.

## Donate today!

If you agree with what you read in the Socialist, consider making a donation to the Socialist Party's fighting fund:

■ pay by card on 020 8988 8777 or socialistparty.org.uk/donate

■ cheques payable to 'Socialist Party', PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD



Fanatical right-wing gutter rag the Daily Mail ran a piece on Socialist Party London organiser Paul Callanan on 21 June. Its headline: "They are the lowest of the low." The "full-time far left agitator" stands accused of... writing to unions and campaign groups. Paul had invited them to a protest against the Queen's Speech and the Tory minority government. He wrote "we would like for you join us and make it a real show of strength. Please also mobilise, bring banners and make as much noise as possible."

Responding to the article, Paul tweeted "The 'Lowest of the low' eh? Coming from the Daily Mail that really is quite the compliment!"

## What we stand for

The Socialist Party fights for socialism - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.

As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

### Our demands include:

#### PUBLIC SERVICES

- No to ALL cuts in jobs, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.

- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and 'free schools'!
- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!
- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

#### WORK AND INCOME

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £10 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards a real living wage. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings. Scrap zero-hours contracts.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.
- Reject 'workfare'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

#### ENVIRONMENT

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low-fare, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

#### RIGHTS

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.
- For the right to vote at 16.

#### MASS WORKERS' PARTY

- For a mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

#### SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- No to imperialist wars and occupations.
- Tax 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.
- 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 bosses' neoliberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!

Join the fightback!  
Join the Socialists!

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## After Grenfell Tower fire

**JOIN  
THE  
FIGHT  
FOR  
SAFE  
HOMES**



**Paula Mitchell**  
Secretary, Socialist Party London

**A**s survivors, local residents and workers struggle to come to terms with what happened at Grenfell and begin the fight for justice, so many more issues are raised. So too for residents of tower blocks around the country.

**Rehouse survivors locally - take over empty property**

Most immediately for survivors, of course, is dealing with the horrific trauma itself. This is made worse by the continuing failure of Kensington and Chelsea council, shoving some survivors from pillar to post, splitting up families and evicting them from hotels.

The fight to be rehoused locally goes on. At the time of writing, over 150 households are in hotel rooms; 364 households are in emergency accommodation.

There has been much talk in the press of the offer of luxury housing to survivors. This is very far from requisitioning some of the 1,399 properties deliberately left empty in the borough, largely owned by super-rich speculators.

In reality the homes on offer are already designated as "affordable" and without access to the luxury facilities - known colloquially as having "poor doors." In any case, they do not meet the number required.

**Spend the £300 million council stash!**

The belief that the Tories are not doing enough goes on, with just £5 million provided by the government. It includes emergency payments of £5,500 each, plus a £1 million grant to the Red Cross. £800,000 has gone on hotel bills alone.

Compare that to £1 billion to 'bribe' the DUP to prop up the government.

These paltry figures are matched by the donations made by ordinary people, and dwarfed by the staggering £300 million in the coffers of the council.

The chief exec of the council has been the sacrificial lamb. But we have to demand not just that council leaders resign, but that the £300 million is immediately used!

Local issues that need urgent action include the ongoing lack of heating and hot water for the blocks around Grenfell, which came from boilers in the basement of the tower.

And residents around the tower are still asking if their homes are safe from the destruction of the tower itself, given that nearby tube stations were closed for safety reasons. They have been left in their homes without information.

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photo Mary Finch

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