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# the Socialist

Issue 1288

5-11 September 2024

formerly **Militant**



FIXING THE FOUNDATIONS

ZARA FERRAR & SIMON DAWSON  
10 DOWNING STREET/OGL



FIXING THE FOUNDATIONS

## Labour threatens more cuts

# MAKE THE RICH PAY, NOT WORKERS

**K**eir Starmer and Rachel Reeves say it was a “tough decision” to scrap Winter Fuel Payments, taking £1.4 billion from pensioners’ pockets. The top 20 biggest energy companies have posted £61 billion of profits already so far this year. And the government has given them permission to increase bills by a further 10% from 1 October.

The real tough decisions will be made by pensioners setting their thermostats as autumn approaches. So too by parents, including those of the 1.6 million children affected by the two-child benefit cap, many who will go without to make sure their kids don’t go hungry, or have decent shoes to start the new school year with.

The misery of Tory austerity is continuing under a Labour government, and Starmer is telling us “things will get worse”.

The best fighters against the Tories were the trade unions – 6.5 million workers, many of whom fought back together to win improved pay and funding for services. It’s no accident that the Labour government has given the biggest pay offers to those workers it sees as the most likely to continue striking.

Starmer and Reeves can’t be allowed to pen the finer details of their 30 October Budget, safe in the assumption that the trade unions are backing them. The trade union leaders have to show that they will organise the fightback against the attacks to come. The Trades Union Congress (TUC) in Brighton from 8-11 September should be used to make that message crystal clear.

The Socialist Party is supporting the National Shop Stewards Network lobby of the TUC on Sunday 8 September, pressing for demands that should be put on the Labour government, including abolition of all the Tory anti-union laws, and full funding for public services including local government.

The trade union leaders must answer the Labour government’s claims of a £22 billion black hole by pointing out the huge profits the super-rich bosses are making at the expense of workers. The wealth is there to provide decent services, decent pay, and to meet the needs of all working-class people. A key trade union policy to fight for, part of the working class getting its hands on that wealth, is for nationalisation under democratic workers’ control and management.

Join the Socialist Party to fight for that and other socialist policies that can bring an end to austerity cuts and privatisation for good.



## Trade unions must lead fightback

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The Socialist is written, read, sold and bought by ordinary workers, trade unionists, young people and Socialist Party members. We want you to write for the Socialist.

Send us reports of your workplace and community campaigns, short letters on working-class issues, or ideas for other articles.

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

## Corbyn's 'Independent Alliance' and the fight for a political alternative

Jeremy Corbyn and the four 'Independents for Gaza' MPs have established an 'Independent Alliance' as a formal parliamentary group, in an important step forward. As the editorial of our sister publication Socialism Today (issue 280, September 2024) argues, the general election "led to the establishment of at least a putative group of 'workers' MPs' in parliament. In addition to Jeremy Corbyn, elected as an independent in Islington North, the four 'Independents for Gaza' MPs have been joined by seven Labour MPs who have been excluded from the Parliamentary Labour Party for having the temerity to vote for the scrapping of the two-child benefit cap. Potentially this outline 'workers' bloc' of MPs is more than twice the size of Reform's little Englander bloc."

The Independent Alliance is not a political party, but its existence will put pressure on the parliamentary authorities for more allotted time speaking in debates, asking questions and representation on parliamentary committees than would be so for five separate individual MPs.

The 'suspended seven' aren't part of the formal group. But expectations will now grow that they and others will act under working-class pressure and vote with the Independent Alliance to oppose scrapping

pensioners' winter fuel payments, for example. Corbyn's group said: "Our door is always open to other MPs who believe in a more equal and peaceful world."

"By fighting on the central issues facing the working class," the Socialism Today editorial goes on, "and by the left-led unions proactively 'adopting' them into their parliamentary groups to champion workers' politics inside and outside the Commons chamber, such a bloc could be an important lever to speeding up the creation of a party. But not, though, a fully sufficient one to get a new mass workers' party off the ground."

The Socialism Today editorial analyses the 'first lightning flashes' in the storms that are following the election of Keir Starmer's Labour government, including the summer riots and racist far-right attacks. It also addresses thoughts that Jeremy



JESSICA TAYLOR / UK PARLIAMENT/CC

Corbyn himself has published about what kind of political alternative to Starmer's government is needed and how it can be built.

"Corbyn and his supporters could seriously advance the debate by openly linking up with those in the unions fighting for a new party; and, in parliament, with the other left independent MPs, by being the best fighters for trade unionists' interests..."

"The summer riots have brought a new immediacy to the task facing the workers' movement of building

a new, mass vehicle for its political representation, and the debate on the way to achieve this must be urgently stepped up. But to put things in proportion, just weeks into the new situation of a Starmer premiership, they are but the first lightning flashes of the wild and stormy weather to come which will further enormously develop the conditions needed to realise the goal."

- Read the article in full: **'The first lightning flashes – and what to do' at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)**

### SOCIALISM TODAY

Monthly magazine of the Socialist Party

September issue includes...

- After the riots - what way forward politically?
- Boy troubles: is masculinity in crisis?
- Women, life, freedom protests in Iran

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Scan to read:



## Landlord Labour MP has mouldy properties

The BBC has revealed that the biggest landlord in parliament, Labour MP Jas Athwal, has tenants in some of his 15 properties that are battling mould and ant infestation. He has since thrown his property manager under the bus, who tenants reported threatened them with eviction when they complained. And to top it off, the properties aren't even on the landlord register – something he introduced as leader of Redbridge council!

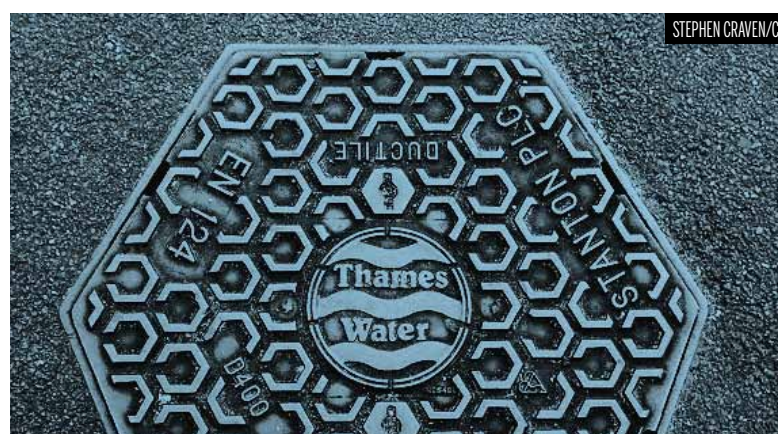
People up and down the country will have similar stories to the tenants in Athwal's properties – but without the extra public scrutiny to shame their landlords into acting.

Keir Starmer's Labour cannot be relied on to fight for people struggling with sky-high rents, dodgy landlords and unsafe properties – over 40 of his MPs make over £10,000 renting properties they own.

We need a new mass workers' party – one that will fight for a mass council house building programme and end the housing nightmare.



ROGER HARRIS / UK PARLIAMENT/CC



STEPHEN GRAVEN/CC

## 'We've wasted £7 billion, so let's add another £696 to your water bill'

Thames Water is demanding the right to increase customer bills by 59% – a £696 yearly increase. Thames Water has the cheek to say that it is making "up for years of keeping bills low".

Government regulator Ofwat has said Thames Water is 'only' allowed to increase bills by a 'lower' amount. But still in the hundreds of pounds!

Thames Water claims that the shocking bill rises are needed to encourage "investment", and that "the money we're asking for from customers will be invested in new infrastructure, and improving our services for the benefit of households and the environment".

Ofwat has said it will independently monitor Thames Water. But more

than that, the whole privatisation model of water, and our public services, has failed.

Sewage spills doubled in 2023. Thames Water alone has racked up £14 billion debts, while paying £7 billion to shareholders since privatisation.

Thames Water, and the rest of the leeching private water companies, should be nationalised, under the democratic control of the working class. Compensation should only be paid on the basis of proven need – nothing should go to the fat-cat shareholders. That way, workers and consumers could properly plan our water industry, reduce spills and bills, while helping the environment.

# TUC MUST PREPARE UNION MEMBERS FOR FIGHTBACK AGAINST LABOUR CUTS



## WHAT WE THINK

**T**rades Union Congress (TUC) meets 8-11 September, 65 days into the first 100 days of the new Labour government. It is an opportunity for the trade unions to draw a balance sheet of the first phase of Keir Starmer's administration and prepare the 6.5 million-strong union movement for what comes next. However, the indications from many of the union leaderships over the last few months, reflected in a whole number of motions to Congress, point to the opposite, covering up of the shortcomings of Starmer's Labour, leaving workers wholly unprepared.

**Public sector pay**

These union leaders point to the measures taken by Starmer, which they claim prove that he is 'listening' to them and acting in the interests of workers. Prime in this are the pay offers to public sector unions, which appear to range upwards from 5%. These offers have opened up a wide-ranging debate amongst reps and activists. While it is true that they are above the current rate of inflation, they go nowhere near recovering the vast amount lost during 14 years of savage real-terms pay cuts by the Tories, and pay freezes by New Labour before them.

And, on closer inspection, some workers such as those in local authorities could receive far less than the headline figure. In addition, there are at least some pay rises that will not be fully funded, raising the prospect of cuts to jobs, terms and conditions down the line.

But his record on strikes, along with the cut to pensioners' heating allowances and refusal to lift the two-child benefit cap, should caution the union leaders not to blanket welcome these concessions. The trailing of Reeves' autumn budget, now enforced by Starmer, with warnings of public sector cuts, is a blunt warning that this is likely to be as good as it gets and the unions must prepare their members for a Labour austerity offensive.

Starmer hasn't spent the last few years coying up to big business to be a champion of the working class. His starting point, both at home and abroad, as his disgraceful position on Gaza shows, is to represent the interests of the capitalist establishment. But that doesn't mean that the unions can't force concessions out of this Labour government.

**Council funding**

This is exacerbated by the growing funding crisis in local authorities where councils, including Labour-run ones, operating under Section 114 'bankruptcy' notices, are pushing cuts on to workers, such as bin workers in Birmingham. Alongside taking strike action to defend jobs and services, unions should call on Labour councils to refuse to implement cuts. The demand should be put on Starmer and his Chancellor Rachel Reeves to recall unelected government-imposed commissioning and guarantee full funding. This funding crisis is mirrored in higher and further education, again threatening staff.

Despite these issues, Starmer has clearly sought to buy time by attempting to eliminate the possibility of a rash of public sector disputes. This isn't out of solidarity with the workers that he previously refused to support – as he stated unapologetically to delegates at the last Brighton TUC Congress in 2022. As Reeves



Council unions protesting against cuts to Labour-run Birmingham council after it issued a Section 114 notice. BRUM.SP

admitted before tabling her public sector pay offers in July: "There is a cost to not settling, a cost of further industrial action". This is the priceless legacy of the strike wave of the last few years. The fighting capacity of workers is a factor in Starmer's political calculations.

**Trailing austerity budget**

Starmer hasn't spent the last few years coying up to big business to be a champion of the working class. His starting point, both at home and abroad, as his disgraceful position on Gaza shows, is to represent the interests of the capitalist establishment. But that doesn't mean that the unions can't force concessions out of this Labour government.

**Special TUC**

The role of the unions is to state clearly what the situation is rather than prettify it, the better to prepare for the action that can force gains from Starmer. Without such a statement of intent, Starmer will draw the conclusion that the union leaders are on board. TUC delegates should support PCS's amendment (devised by the union's new left NEC majority) to EIS's Motion 01 entitled 'End of the hostile environment towards workers' – that if Starmer hasn't delivered on the key workers' rights promised in his New Deal for Workers "within the first hundred days of the new government, a special TUC Congress will be called to discuss next steps."



**Starmer hasn't spent the last few years coying up to big business to be a champion of the working class.**

**But that doesn't mean unions can't force concessions out of this Labour government**

This shows the role of the genuine left in the unions, with Socialist Party members prominent, who are demanding that unions fight for more, and ensure that all pay increases are fully funded. Also, while it is obviously welcome that Starmer appears to be intending to honour the commitments he made in his election manifesto to repeal the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act and 2016 Trade Union Act, it is essential that unions demand the repeal of all the Tory anti-union legislation, going all the way back to Thatcher, which scandalously Blair and Brown left intact after 13 years of New Labour governments. Congress should unanimously support the POA's motion to restore the right to strike of their prison members and demand that Starmer carry it out.

**Nationalisation**

A number of Congress motions miss the opportunity to put demands on Labour, which is essential in protecting the interests of their members. For instance, it is a serious omission by the CWU leadership not to follow the union's policy of demanding renationalisation in its motion on the takeover by the new vulture capitalist. In contrast, PCS's climate change motion 18 calls for "public ownership of key sectors such as energy, water, transport, mail, broadband, education, health, and social care" as the basis to protect workers' jobs, wages and pensions.

Community correctly has a motion on the steel crisis, just as thousands of jobs in South Wales are under threat. Yet, true to form, the Community leadership refuses to raise nationalisation. It is a serious mistake of all the steel unions not to put this demand on the Labour governments in Westminster and Cardiff, as the unions engage in vital talks with Starmer's ministers and Tata Steel management.

● See page 7 for what's happening with public sector pay this Autumn

[nationalshop.com](http://nationalshop.com) [shopstewards.net](http://shopstewards.net)  
[stewardsnetwork.org](http://stewardsnetwork.org)

**LOBBY THE TUC**  
Keep the pressure on to scrap the Tory anti-union laws

● Sunday 8 September, 1pm, Old Ship Hotel, 32-38 Kings Rd, Brighton, BN1 1NR

Unite's motion 'A workers' transition for the North Sea' should call for the oil and gas companies to be nationalised as the basis to protect workers' jobs, pay and pensions for a real workers' transition from fossil fuel industries. However, it is welcome that Unite's amendment to GMB's 'Industrial strategy is national security' motion does "support the public ownership of energy companies to end profiteering, reduce household bills and strengthen national security."

**Build fighting broad lefts**

Even in the first stages of Starmer's Labour government, two trends are emerging in the union movement. This is between those who are prepared to face up to the reality that exists and will further develop of a pro-capitalist government, whose first instinct will be to make workers pay for the crisis, and on the other, those union leaders and their backers who have no confidence that an alternative is possible, finding themselves as covers for what is to come.

This raises the need for the building of powerful left forces in all the unions, and across the union movement, that are prepared for the industrial action that will be necessary but also who see the need for the unions to build a political alternative that can fight for the interests of workers, their families and communities.

## Free school meals a lifeline for pupils in need



PHOTO: AMANDA MILLS, USCCDC/CC

After over a decade of austerity, child poverty has increased. As Keir Starmer warns of 'tough decisions' to come, likely to weigh heaviest on the poor, will free school meals be on the chopping block? Child Poverty Action Group estimates that 900,000 children live in poverty but are ineligible for free school meals. The Socialist Party fights for free school meals for all children, and for kicking out private catering companies siphoning profit from our school system. **Jay Coward**, South East London Socialist Party member, recounts how vital free school meals are

I spent five years working in the education sector, working exclusively in lower income areas with children with special educational needs and disabilities who were all primary school age or younger. One such job involved working with a student who had it rough in their home life and would often act out at school because of this in ways that you would expect: taking up space, mood swings, making a ruckus etc.

It didn't take deep inquiry with safeguarding to know this child wasn't getting enough sleep or enough to eat on a regular basis. They

would often come to school late, pallid and lethargic, as would their sibling. It broke my heart to present them with work everyday knowing their base needs weren't met. So instead, I dropped the curriculum and saw about getting him some breakfast one day.

Luckily, another member of staff was OK with me using their bread and jam to make some toast in the mornings. The change was instantaneous - more energy, more room to think and so much calmer. This helped develop some sense of safety, when they didn't have much at home at all - often talking about arguments and rats in their bedroom.

This is just one story of a few in my experience, I've been no stranger to comforting a crying, special needs toddler who's still hungry after they've eaten everything in their packed lunch. When the toast and jam runs out it's then an individual person's responsibility to pick up more out of their own scarce pocket. When a packed lunch isn't ideal, it falls to the parent to somehow purchase, prepare and pack a fresh, nutritious packed lunch every morning before they are forced to go to work.

This creates a cycle of demonised parents and overstressed teaching staff. Somehow the government expect children to pick up seven hours of information after being sent hungry to school everyday. That's why we call for universal free school meals and for them to be extended into school holidays. Economic struggle does not end after a term has finished. Free school meals for all, all year round!

# ISRAEL-PALESTINE: GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST NETANYAHU GOVERNMENT

## Build mass working-class struggle to end war and win Palestinian national self-determination



### WHAT WE THINK

In the space of just a week, the reports from Israel-Palestine included yet more terrible atrocities carried out by Israeli military forces in Gaza, the reappearance of the deadly and paralyzing polio virus in Gaza, a major military offensive on Palestinians in Jenin in the West Bank, and a massive eruption on the streets of Israel together with a general strike.

The mass protests and strikes in Israel arose from a surge of fury against the Benjamin Netanyahu government following the sickening death of six Israeli hostages who had been held captive in Gaza since 7 October. "Israeli hostages die so Netanyahu can keep his coalition alive", was the editorial headline of Israeli paper Haaretz, reflecting blame for the deaths being placed on Netanyahu by the mass movement. Netanyahu has repeatedly obstructed possible ceasefire deals, spurred on by the far-right parties in his coalition government who threaten to collapse the coalition if he stops the war.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters demonstrated and blocked major roads, facing heavy and brutal policing, including stun grenades. The general strike on 2 September was called by the leaders of the main trade union federation, Histadrut, defying legislation against political strikes, under pressure from grassroots workers' anger and the families of the hostages. A number of leading capitalist representatives also called for the action, alarmed about the repercussions of the war on the economy and society, and an escalation of its spread against Hezbollah in Lebanon and in the West Bank.

The strike was extensive, involving transport, civil servants, local government services, schools, health services, large private sector enterprises and with many small businesses closing in support. It was a show of strength for the working class, 'halting the country' - the specific request of the Hostages Forum - and exposed for a few hours who has the real power in society: the working class, as opposed to the capitalist class and its government, which at present has support from only a minority of the population.

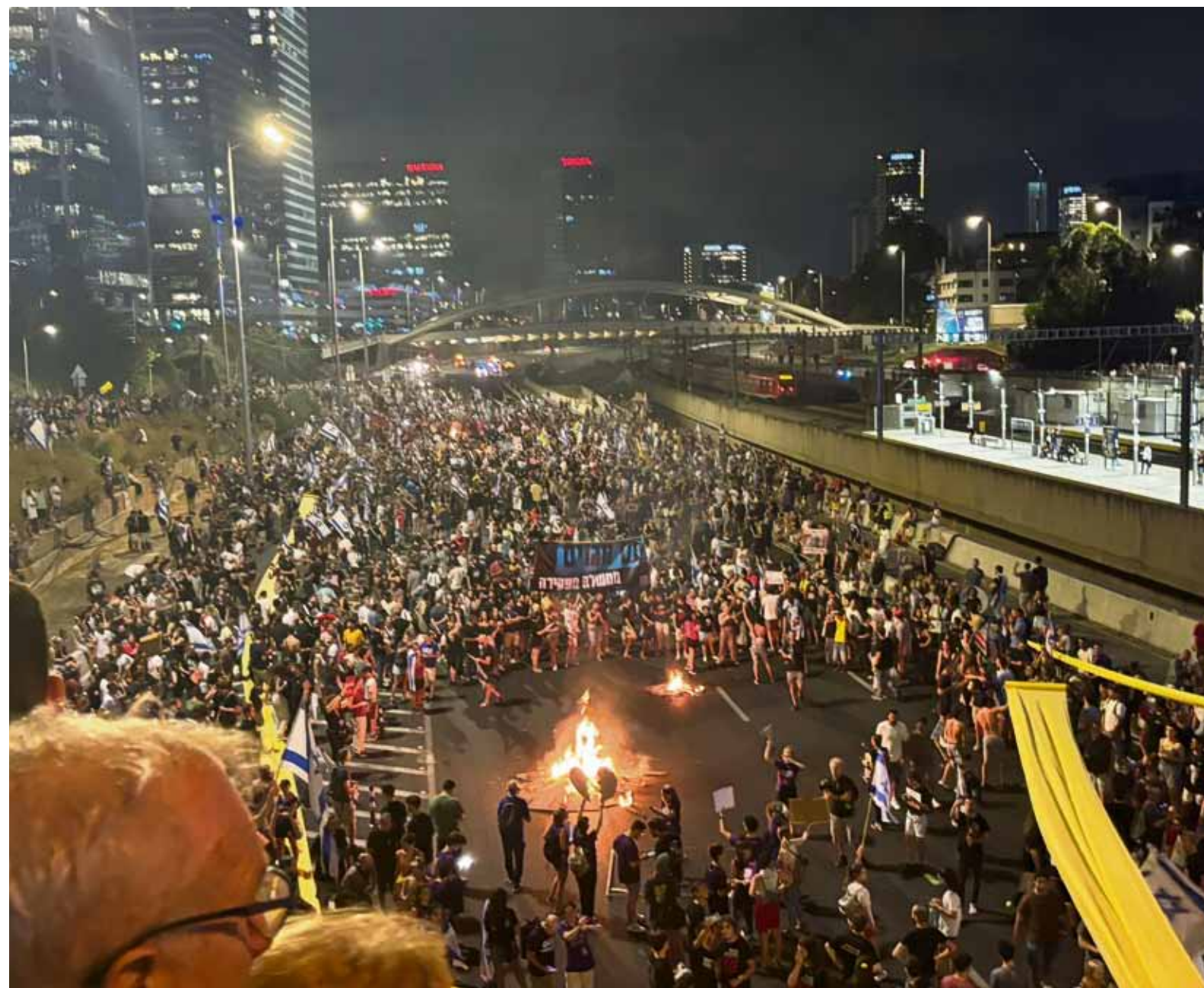
However, the encouragement and participation from some capitalist circles meant it also had a cross-class aspect, which the workers' movement will need to break away from. No trust should be placed in those capitalist representatives or union leaders who collaborate with them, or the army generals who oppose the Netanyahu government.

Reflecting present consciousness and attitudes, the mass movement is aimed primarily at saving Israeli lives rather than Palestinians, who have suffered a far greater death toll under horrifically overwhelming military bombardment. But it shows the potential power of the Israeli working class to aid ordinary people on both sides of the national divide, initially through escalating the movement to bring about the downfall of the Netanyahu government and to stop the war.

The government coalition is precarious, consisting of six different parties with a majority of only four seats, including right-wing religious nationalists who are based on less than 15% of the population. The latter are intent on making use of their current influence in order to increase the Jewish settlements on land in the occupied territories - in the process encouraging brutal repression, slaughter and displacement of more Palestinians. Previously illegal outposts have been approved and, in June, 5,295 new settlement houses were authorised. Meanwhile, since 7 October, around 41,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and 600 in the West Bank have been killed. Around two million Palestinians have been displaced in Gaza and 9,000 arrested across the West Bank.

This doesn't mean that any illusions should be placed in the nature of a replacement Israeli government. While at some stage this prolonged round of shocking bloodshed will come to a close or shift to a lower level, the pro-capitalist political leaders who oppose Netanyahu's government are not against the use of military repression in the occupied territories. No brand of pro-capitalist government will have a solution to the conflict or be able to satisfy the aspirations of Israeli workers for decent wages and conditions, as well as for security.

So the task that lies ahead for workers in Israel is to build a socialist political alternative that can cut across the dangers of further political polarisation and act in the interests of all workers in Israel in all respects, including having a programme to



Protesters block roads during the Israeli general strike  
PHOTO: UZI D

end the occupation. The Palestinian masses in the territories also need to build their own struggle and organisations, completely unaligned with pro-capitalist parties like Fatah and Hamas, in order to build a successful mass resistance to the occupation, and as the only route towards Palestinian self-determination that can also end capitalist exploitation and inequality.

Workers' movements internationally can support those Palestinian and Israeli workers' struggles on both sides of the divide and help with links between them. An important part of that at present is building the anti-war movements globally, in particular through stepping up worker-led demonstrations and actions, including sanctions decided and enacted by trade unionists against the transport of arms to Israel and other measures that can impact against the war, the occupation and the blockade of Gaza.

No trust can be placed in the interventions and sanctions imposed on Israel by capitalist governments - one of the latest being the UK's suspension of 30 out of 350 arms export licences to Israel - or on decisions by the 'international law' institutions funded by those governments. While those limited gestures are not unwelcome to anti-war movements and more can be demanded, at the same time it's necessary to recognise that the world powers intervene fundamentally for their own capitalist and imperialist interests, including to try to prevent workers' uprisings in the Middle East, and a wider war

from developing, and not for those of workers at home, in the Middle East or anywhere else.

### Israeli working class

In contrast to certain other left organisations, the Socialist Party and Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) recognise the crucial role that the Israeli working class will need to play on the path to a socialist solution to the conflict.

One of the counter-arguments sometimes used is that Israeli Jews are privileged compared to Palestinians and have a vested interest in the occupation being maintained. The average standard of living for Jewish people in Israel is significantly above that of the Palestinians living under occupation and also above that of Palestinian residents inside Israel. But it is also the case that many Israeli Jews live in poverty. According to Israel's National Insurance Institute, in 2022, 39% of Palestinian residents of Israel lived in poverty, as did 35% of Israel's ultra-orthodox Jews and 14% of non-orthodox Jews. Many Israeli Jews who are above the poverty line are also struggling financially. The route out of such conditions for both Israeli Jews and Palestinians in Israel is for united, working class-based struggle against their capitalist bosses who all at root have a system-based reliance on exploitation.

At the same time, most Israelis feel physically insecure due to the national conflict, an insecurity that is a constant theme in the Israeli capitalist media, played up as much as possible. It isn't surprising that

Israel's military forces are seen by Israeli Jewish workers as vital for their defence; but the long Gaza war has been exposing the limitations of superior force - it cannot totally defeat right-wing Islamist militias like Hamas or Hezbollah and deliver long-term security for Israelis, never mind being capable of stopping the Palestinians' yearning for liberation.

Questioning on what the alternative is and developments in political consciousness within Israeli society are inevitable, with the 2 September general strike - which demanded a Gaza ceasefire - being an important and significant step along the way. Even before these latest events, polls of Israelis were showing that two-thirds want a prisoner exchange deal rather than continued war and more than two-thirds want Netanyahu out of power.

The present rabidly right-wing Israeli government is in many ways a product of the bankruptcy of the capitalist governments before it; the inability of those governments to solve any of the problems facing Israeli capitalism. The acute crisis now faced by the Israeli ruling class is reflected in open divisions at the top of society: former army leader Benny Gantz walked out of the war cabinet, defence minister Yoav Gallant has denounced Netanyahu for blocking a ceasefire deal... in fact, virtually all the upper echelons of the military apparatus have criticised the government's decisions regarding the Gaza war and interventions in the West Bank. They have warned that greater Palestinian resistance will be fuelled.

the war fronts might spread out of control, the military can become overstretched, fewer reservists are reporting for duty, and the repercussions on the economy can worsen.

As with all the other capitalist establishment figures, those generals have no workable solution. And they can't have, because there is no solution on a capitalist basis. At some stage the Netanyahu government will be removed and subsequent leaders will turn to peace talks, as has happened many times in the past. But while some kind of Palestinian entity will again be discussed, it will only be through removing capitalism that the Palestinians will be able to achieve a genuine, independent state that can meet their aspirations for security and decent living standards. This means it will not be achieved through negotiations involving the world's imperialist powers and the region's Arab elites but only through building democratically run mass organisations of Palestinians that adopt socialist ideas and that can come to challenge and remove capitalism.

In Israel too, workers will need to remove their ruling capitalist class and bring in democratic socialism based on public ownership of the main industries and services, guaranteeing full rights for minorities. Only on that basis can they meet their own aspirations and live in peace and security, in a socialist confederation, alongside the peoples in neighbouring countries.

### The Socialist Party and CWI is fighting for:

- An immediate end to the attacks on Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem
- Withdrawal of all Israeli military forces from the Palestinian territories
- Immediate lifting of the blockade on Gaza
- Release of all Palestinian political prisoners and Israeli hostages
- The right of Palestinians to resist repression and aggression. A mass Palestinian struggle to fight for genuine national and social liberation. The establishment of popular, democratically controlled committees to lead the struggle, with the right to provide armed defence
- The right to national self-determination for the Palestinian people, including forming an independent Palestinian state
- Building of direct links between workers on both sides of the national divide
- Building of democratic and independent workers' parties in both the Palestinian territories and Israel
- There will be no peace and liberation under capitalism and imperialism! Real national and social liberation can be achieved on a lasting basis through socialist change. For a socialist Israel alongside a socialist Palestine, with two capitals in Jerusalem and full rights for minorities, while recognising that workers' and oppressed peoples' organisations will democratically negotiate and decide the state boundaries and forms
- A struggle by the masses of the Arab states against the dictatorial capitalist Arab ruling elites. For a voluntary socialist confederation of the Middle East



HELEN PATTISON

SOCIALIST PARTY LONDON REGIONAL SECRETARY

The current housing crisis is dire. 300,000 people are homeless and over a million families live in overcrowded homes. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. Almost all working-class people have their own housing horror stories, or have friends and family who do.

Nick Bano's book *'Against Landlords: How to solve the housing crisis?'* is full of hard-hitting statistics, detailing how British capitalism's dependence on property wealth has devastating consequences for millions of working- and middle-class people.

Even for people who have homes which on paper they can afford, there are huge issues with housing being run down, mouldy, or just not fit for purpose. Over 2 million people live in homes with significant damp.

Two-year-old Awaab Ishak tragically died in 2020, from respiratory illness due to mould in his home - his family were living in social housing. There is a huge number of stories of families facing the crisis of being made homeless.

When people are looking for affordable places to rent, competition is fierce, with queues around the block of people waiting for viewings. The ever-increasing rent leaves people having to cut back in other vital areas. Potential tenants are ripped off with agents fees, and deposits, making the whole renting process more expensive and stressful.

### Students

Students too face a similar crisis. The number of students has been growing, demand for purpose-built student accommodation has risen by 20%, quicker than it is being built.

In London for example, student housing costs 150% of the maximum student maintenance loan. So students are broke before they even start. The University of the West of England made headlines after it 'built' tiny temporary homes for its students. These were actually shipping containers. Students described them as "unfit for human habitation".

The housing crisis doesn't only impact physical health, but people's mental health too. One study found that 1 in 3 renters felt it was impacting their mental health.

And while some big cities and commuter towns can feel like never-ending building sites, the crisis continues. Hundreds of thousands still struggle to find an affordable, decent-quality home.

One thing is certain. It is not the supply of land for housing that is the problem. Planning permission exists for 1 million new homes, but the small number of dominant big housebuilding companies prefer not to build on it. They control the supply of homes to keep prices up and await the chance to build on green (or grey) field sites

# HOW TO SOLVE THE HOUSING CRISIS?

rather than disused inner-city land, which can be expensive to build on. The government has swallowed the lies from big building companies, that new homes are being delayed simply by council planning departments.

House prices have increased by around 500% in the last 50 years and continue to grow. Today, more than half the country's net worth is made up of land value.

More recently in particular, wages have been largely been stagnant in real terms. UK workers are around £11,000 worse off a year today than had wages risen at their pre-2008 rate.

While house prices and rents have risen, there has been a concerted attack on the provision of council housing, attacks on rent controls and the cutting back of tenants' rights. Rent controls existed up until the late 1980s, tenants' rights have been whittled away since with the aim of making housing and land more attractive for capitalist investors.

Today, even where limited protections still exist for tenants, the existence of Section 21 'no-fault eviction' notices means that tenants are often scared to demand landlords make repairs. The constant movement of tenants and renewal of tenancies provides an ideal climate for forcing up rents.

Housing has always been commodified, often of poor quality, with huge sections of the population living in difficult conditions. But fear of growing working-class anger and organisation, has meant that throughout history, huge concessions on housing have also been won.

In 1919, in the wake of the Russian revolution, King George V said: "If unrest is to be converted into contentment, the provision of good houses may prove one of the most potent agents in that conversion".

*'Against Landlords'* tracks the political shift over decades from the period when both Tory and Labour had programmes which supported rent controls and defended tenants' rights, to the situation today which Bano describes as an era where big businesses attempting to speculate on housing "no longer have anything to fear from a government of either stripe".

Bano fails to analyse the context in which this change took place. It included the end of the unprecedented capitalist boom in the aftermath of the

World War Two, the attacks on social reforms and working-class organisation that followed, and the ideological setback internationally with the fall of the Stalinist planned economies of the Soviet bloc.

It was against this backdrop that capitalist politicians privatised, and sold of huge sections of industry and council housing.

According to Bano, one-third of Britain's private rent bill is paid by the Department for Work and Pensions, in the form of housing benefit or housing portion of Universal Credit. It totals over £23 billion in 2022, meaning more is spent on subsidising rents than on whole number of government departments.

During the period of austerity since the 2008-09 banking crisis, increasingly huge sums have passed straight from the government, through the hands of tenants and into the bank balances of private landlords, and a portion of that to mortgage-lending banks.

There has also been a whole period where local authority 'Housing Allowances', which determine the level of housing benefit, have not kept up with rents.

### Landlords

During the pandemic, as ministers saw that millions could default on their rents, the government took action and Universal Credit recipients were given a small weekly uplift of £20. But as Bano explains, because of short-term tenancies, and the weakness of tenants' rights, as soon as landlords saw there was more money to be made, they simply increased the rents.

Bano looks at past struggles, such as the 1915 Glasgow rent strikes, as proof that working-class organisation can force huge concessions and win tenants' rights. What's missing from Bano's analysis though, is that growing working-class confidence to fight on issues like housing didn't happen in isolation. Glasgow rent strikes were just one feature of the whole period of 'Red Clydeside' - years of heightened industrial struggle and increasing working-class confidence from 1911-19 (see 'Lessons of Red Clydeside 1911-1919: Workers' potential power on display' at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk))

Strikes were at a 30-year high in 2023 - low compared to levels of the



PHOTO: OLLIE AUVACHE

1970s and 80s, but capitalism has been in crisis for over 15 years. Living and working conditions continue to fall, and even bigger working-class battles are on the horizon. This will give confidence to communities to fight on all kinds of social issues too, including against the housing crisis.

Bano is dismissive of rent strikes, as being difficult to organise and with potentially the risk of tenants losing their homes. He explains how even the limited protections around industrial action do not exist for rent strikes. There are also other differences between organising in the workplace against a single employer and as tenants against any number of landlords.

Tenants today pay their rent to as many as 2.5 million different landlords, an increase of 2 million in the last 30 years. On the backdrop of cuts to pensions, care and provision, many will have taken on a buy-to-let property as a contingency for the future. Others have become landlords by accident, as an elderly relative dies. Fighting to ensure no-one lives in poverty in their old age means fighting to fully fund social care, free at the point of use, and increasing state pension provision.

### Tenants fighting back

Tenants can and are organising to fight back, for example the many 'service charge strikes' that have taken place against unscrupulous housing associations, in many cases with the involvement of the Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC).

It is tenants being organised collectively that is the most important factor, above the specific tactics that are pursued.

On paper, Butterfields tenants in east London in 2016 had limited legal rights when their landlord chose to sell up, and the new buyer wanted to evict the families and massively increase rents. But by organising with the local community and using the tactic of refusing to leave their homes, they were able to win and remain in their homes.

Council housing has been so underfunded for decades, with thousands-long waiting lists, that many feel that council housing, with decent tenancies and security, is out of reach.

Housing associations are increasingly pushed to act like any other private landlord or business, run for

profit. To be useful in protecting tenants' interests, instead of their hedge fund and big-business owners, they must be brought under the democratic control of tenants' groups and trade unions.

To give tenants the real ability to choose how their homes and communities are run, means fighting to transform the housing landscape against the interests of profit, through democratic public ownership of housing.

This would give tenants' groups the ability to decide whether their housing should be organised under the local authority, as council housing, or through co-op structures. Either way, the building of tenants' committees to give all tenants a democratic voice is needed.

Given the state of the rental market, it's no wonder people aspire to homeownership as a route out of this mess. But with high mortgage rates, large deposits and low wages, homeownership is increasingly out of reach for working-class people.

Bano believes that mainstream politicians have aimed their policies at homeowners and those who want to own their homes in the future with policies like the failed 'help to buy' scheme.

Many people will hope that, even if they are struggling today to find housing, at some point there will be a transfer of wealth from an older generation who own their homes to their children. But even that is increasingly unlikely with attacks on social care provision and cuts to pensions.

Empty homes are also a part of the picture, particularly in the short term. The Socialist Party raised how, in the aftermath of the tragedy of the Grenfell fire in 2015, the movement could organise to requisition empty homes to house homeless families. As leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn raised this possibility at the time.

There are an estimated 500,000 empty homes in Britain. Councils could act to bring these into council ownership to alleviate the housing crisis.

That said, this alone will not fix the totally unplanned nature of the housing market currently run in the interests of profit. A long-term plan is needed to build environmentally friendly homes, which are cheap to run, under tenants' democratic control and publicly owned.

Where building has taken place, it doesn't mean this helps relieve the crisis. These companies build with the aim of making profit, not meeting the genuine housing needs of people in the area. Too often we read about 'rabbit hutches in the sky' as another 'monster block' is planned.

Profit-driven developers will not solve the crisis. The large building companies and land should be nationalised so that a plan can be drawn up to build good-standard council homes, in the variety of sizes and with any extra accommodations that people need. Nationalised banks under the democratic control and management of the working class could provide finance and cheap mortgages.

Where rental homes are of poor quality and the landlords are unable or unwilling to bring them up to scratch, councils should take over those homes, with compensation paid only where there is proven need, to ensure that small landlords and tenants' needs are both met.

Bano concludes his book: "By methods as prosaic as law reform, we can work towards de-commodifying housing, and drive landlords and house-price speculators from the face of the earth."

Legal reforms of the past have been won through struggle, explicitly on the issue of housing as well as a product of wider working-class struggle.

The push-back on tenants' rights coincided with the pushing back of working-class political organisation. Part of that has been the capitalist class wholeheartedly gaining control of the Labour Party.

To fight to improve housing rights means also fighting for a political voice that can represent the interests of all working-class people. Bano says: "A timid Labour Party in office or opposition is a dangerous thing," but today's Labour Party isn't timid. It is unashamedly acting in the interests of big business and the rich.

Clearly building a new mass workers' party to challenge the many different capitalist interests that dominate the housing sector - corporations, building giants, banks, (even John Lewis is trying to get in on the building game according to Bano's book), - is an important part of the struggle to end the housing crisis.

Bano says it is possible to end the housing crisis on a capitalist basis - by leaving the banks, big housebuilders and big business in the hands of a small number of super-rich capitalists.

To 'solve the housing crisis' means taking on those profit interests. It means getting organised, in our workplaces and local communities, and fighting for a socialist programme.

● **Against Landlords: How to Solve the Housing Crisis** by Nick Bano, rrp £16.99, published by Verso books





# 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 £15-an-hour minimum wage for all, 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 and occupations!
- Take the wealth off the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need, not to the fat cats.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the EU bosses' club. Organise a campaign with European socialists and workers' organisations to use the talks on post-Brexit relations to tear up the EU pro-capitalist rules. For a real collaboration of the peoples of Europe on a socialist basis as a step towards a socialist world.

**Do you agree? Join the fightback! JOIN THE SOCIALISTS**

- Visit [socialistparty.org.uk/join](https://socialistparty.org.uk/join)
- or call **020 8988 8777**
- or text your name and postcode to **07761 818 206** to find out more today!

**Help fund the fightback! DONATE TODAY**

[socialistparty.org.uk/donate](https://socialistparty.org.uk/donate)



# Violence against women: invest in services to keep us safe



PHOTO: KARTIIV/CC

ALEX SAMPSON  
PLYMOUTH SOCIALIST PARTY

There has been a 20% rise in reported violent crimes against women on the transport network in the last year. Transport Police suggest that this is due to an increase in reporting and points to the use of apps such as Railway Guardian that have made reporting incidents easier.

Such an explanation is disingenuous and doesn't reflect the reality of many women's experiences. The figures actually show an increase in reporting of 50% over the last five years, and a separate survey found one-third of women had been subjected to assault whilst commuting.

But it is not just the transport system that has become increasingly dangerous for women. All of the police metrics show increases in reports of violence and harassment against women. This is against a backdrop of record low prosecutions for rape, and huge backlogs of cases waiting to be heard in court.

14 years of Tory cuts to police, courts, legal aid, finance for women's shelters and even cuts to funding, resulting in councils reducing street lighting, have made a perfect storm for huge increases in violence against women in every setting, not just on the transport system.

These rises in reported violent crimes are shocking but it's just the tip of the iceberg. The appalling treatment women are subjected to during

the legal process puts many more women off reporting their attacks.

14 years of Tory cuts have made this country a fundamentally unsafe place for women to undertake even basic tasks such as commuting. With Labour chancellor Rachel Reeves promising more 'hard choices' in the Autumn budget to plug a £22 billion 'black hole' in public finances, nothing is going to change any time soon.

At the same time, the government is cutting services, it is subsidising privatised public transport companies to the tune of billions of pounds of public money every year. And they still try to lay off large numbers of workers who are there to help and protect members of the public using the transport system, including train guards and ticket office staff.

The dangerous plan to close all ticket offices was overturned by industrial action and campaigning by rail unions, including the RMT.

Capitalism will always put profits above the safety of people, and both Tory and Labour governments have shown themselves willing to protect this system at all costs. This is why we must fight for a socialist future, which will nationalise transport industries and fully fund them, creating a well-staffed system which works for all, including the protection of women and vulnerable people, to ensure that no-one feels at risk doing something as fundamental as travelling to and from work.

## The Socialist Party needs a new car!

The Socialist Party's car has no more revolutions in it and we need a new car to help our work. We use our car to help assist our demo interventions and travelling to visit party branches and regions where public transport isn't suitable. We are exploring our options and putting out an appeal for any offers out there! Contact [info@socialistparty.org.uk](mailto:info@socialistparty.org.uk) to help out!



# You won't get away with closing Blackwood Miners, Meals Direct and Llancaiach Fawr!

MARIAM KAMISH  
CAERPHILLY TRADES COUNCIL SECRETARY  
(PERSONAL CAPACITY) AND SOCIALIST PARTY

Caerphilly Council isn't broke! With £184 million in reserves, the Labour council doesn't need to make these cuts.

Meals Direct delivers 125,000 meals a year to 320 people. A lifeline to the elderly and those living with serious disabilities.

Even those assessed as 'in great need' have to pay. For £5 a day, they get a hot lunch and a small dessert – plus a sandwich in the evening. Those not subsidised pay £6.

Blackwood Miners' Institute is a key venue for live music, vital to the community. But the council says that the only alternative to closure would be finding a private operator.

Llancaiach Fawr is a grade-one listed building that's appeared in films and Dr Who. The council wants to close it as a living history museum – unless it can shunt it into the private sector.

Caerphilly Council Unison union secretary, Lianne Dallimore, has been spreading the news. The proposals are out to consultation until 10 September, but most people are only hearing about them now – and the reaction is shock.

These cuts don't have to happen. The money is there.

Get your friends to the rallies and public meetings. Take posters around for people to stick in their windows. Help build a massive campaign to save these pillars of local life.

**● Rally and march – 7 September. Meet at 11:30 opposite Blackwood Library**

- **The Socialist Party says:**
- No closures! Save Blackwood Miners, Meals Direct and Llancaiach Fawr
- Dip into the council's £184 million reserves as a temporary measure
- Band together with other councils to demand that the Welsh Labour government obtains adequate funding from the Labour government in Westminster
- Build a mass campaign of the community and trade unions to defend all services and jobs
- Make Meals Direct free – with two hot meals a day
- Councillors – represent those who elected you, or stand aside for genuine socialists prepared to fight for what our communities need

- Read what we've said before – 'Save Caerphilly Meals on Wheels, Blackwood Miners' Institute and Llancaiach Fawr Manor' at [socialistparty.org.uk](https://socialistparty.org.uk)



A mass campaign made the council think twice about closing Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre in 2018 PHOTO: MARIAM KAMISH

# Definitely a rip off, Maybe Ticketmaster should be nationalised?

If you managed to get to the front of the hours-long, crash-ridden online queue Little by Little to see Oasis next summer – which numbered hundreds of thousands – and you had enough money in the bank to pay for the expensive tickets, then you could have been in for a shock as you were given seconds to decide if you could afford to pay massively more than the advertised prices. Not exactly the Morning Glory many were expecting.

Ticketmaster advertised standing tickets at £150. Hidden behind that was the usual booking fees but due to the company's 'dynamic pricing' approach many had to pay much more. Four tickets for the band's

hometown show in Manchester for example cost £1,423.55. £73.55 of this is processing and service charges. Per ticket this came to £361.13. Well over double the original price and Half the World Away from what most can afford.

Dynamic pricing is when a seller does not set a fixed price for their product, but instead adjusts what they charge in response to changing demand. This is what leads to airline and hotel prices rising during school holidays and during large events. Apparently bands and artists are often told that dynamic pricing deters touts from fleecing fans. In theory, the higher face-value price decreases the margin on offer for

# We need energy renationalisation, not a little British energy company!



PHOTO: KENUEONE/CC

ALI COOKE  
DORSET SOCIALIST PARTY

The climate crisis is undoubtedly getting worse. And our energy bills keep rising. One of the new Labour government's aims is to lower energy costs. However, it has recently just raised the energy price cap, with it raising household bills by an average of £149 a year. Another aim is to deal with the climate crisis too.

According to International Renewable Energy Agency, the global cost to fix the climate crisis is \$131 trillion by 2050. Given the severity of the crisis and given the necessary funds needed, it would be expected that more would have been done. However, capitalism is incapable of meeting this level of cash injection.

This couldn't be better illustrated than by Labour's meagre £8.3 billion pledged investment in Great British Energy over the next five years, a fraction of the £28 billion of green investment that was pledged and is now scrapped, deemed 'unaffordable'.

The government is quickly moving legislation through parliament to create GB Energy, a new government owned company, but exactly how it will operate is not yet known. We

do know that after delegates to the 2023 Labour Party conference voted in favour of energy renationalisation, the Labour leadership responded: "We're not going to nationalise the energy system." The Labour leadership is talking much more about 'de-risking' private-led investment.

Currently the industry uses the Contracts for Difference Scheme (CFD), in which energy providers bid for contracts with a government-owned body. The contracts give energy producers long-term commitments to pay for energy within a fixed price range. In periods of economic instability and uncertainty, high inflation and interest rates, this could mean billions of pounds of subsidies for big business, or simply a refusal to invest. The 2023 CFD auction hit headlines when there were no bids for contracts to build new offshore wind developments.

Compared to the scale of the predatory energy companies like Shell and BP, the government's promised level of investment is tiny. Instead it hopes it will act as a 'catalyst' for private investment. If GB Energy simply takes minority stakes in private development projects, it would not be a decisive decision-making force. And the vast majority of investment would continue to be made on the

basis of what's profitable, not what is needed to protect the environment.

Britain has a vast energy infrastructure, much of which used to be in public hands. We need to renationalise the whole industry. As part of a wider socialist planned economy, investments and developments on the scale and speed needed to stop climate change could be drawn up democratically in the interests of the working class, while protecting the environment.

Despite its conference voting in favour and the majority of the public supporting the policy, the Labour government does not have energy renationalisation on the agenda. It's not surprising that it has opted for such a market approach, it is in-keeping with the approach of the Blairite Labour leadership that cannot fathom anything other than a capitalist future. We need socialist change to stop climate change and make sure that the working class and poor internationally aren't made to pay the price.



PHOTO: ANIRUDH KOUL/CC

# Donate to build working-class fightback

CHRIS NEWBY  
SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND ORGANISER

SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND					
AREA	\$ RECEIVED	£ TARGET	Q3: JULY-SEPTEMBER 2024		DEADLINE: 30 SEPTEMBER 2024
South West	1,837	2,100	■	■	87%
North West	790	1,200	■	■	66%
Southern & SE	1,412	2,400	■	■	59%
Northern	321	800	■	■	40%
Wales	920	2,400	■	■	38%
London	1,818	5,000	■	■	36%
Yorkshire	809	2,650	■	■	31%
East Midlands	543	2,050	■	■	26%
West Midlands	598	2,700	■	■	22%
Eastern	284	1,300	■	■	22%
Other	5,731	2,400	■	■	239%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>25,000</b>			<b>60%</b>

The pages of the Socialist are full of what is happening to workers and working-class communities. It's what makes the Socialist different.

What also makes us different, is that we put forward a clear socialist alternative and strategy to challenge what is happening to working-class people. For example, we're campaigning for a trade union-led mass movement to oppose racist attacks, and to build a mass campaign to win jobs, homes, and services for all.

You may have seen Socialist Party members campaigning across England and Wales against racism and austerity, as well as many local issues, such as our members in Caerphilly campaigning against local council cuts (see page 11). We will also be alongside Socialist Students groups during freshers fairs providing a fighting strategy to take up the issues that students are facing.

We do not have any super-rich backers, unlike all the establishment parties. When you stop at one of our campaign stalls, you will see a petition sheet with a column for donations where we ask all the people who support us campaigning to donate to our fighting fund.

On our most recent campaign stall in Cardiff, our members raised £38 this way, campaigning for nationalisation to save steel jobs at Tata.

When you attend one of our meetings, we ask for donations. In our recent London public meeting, discussing how we can build an effective campaign to fight racist attacks, we raised £330.

We do this because we rely on donations from people like you to fund our party. Every three months, we have a target to raise £25,000 for our fighting fund.

So far this quarter we have raised £15,061. It is vital that we smash our

target by the end of the quarter on 30 September.

Could you donate an amount yourself? Could you help out on one of our campaign stalls?

Could you organise a social event, such as a meal or a film night? Or could you sell items at a car boot sale?

Everything you raise will help make sure that we reach our target. It will ensure that we can continue to produce our leaflets, posters, and placards that give a clear socialist programme to develop the struggle against racism, austerity, and capitalism.

## Give us resources to fight back

At the London public meeting about smashing the far right, Tower Hamlets Socialist Party member Emily Lyndon had this to say:

The Socialist Party is involved in campaigns, demonstrations, and trade union action. From the national demonstrations for Palestine taking place in central London, to the general election campaign, where the Socialist Party stood candidates across the country under the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

target by the end of the quarter on 30 September.

(TUSC). We have attended London Pride, Trans Pride, and Black Pride.

In the recent weeks, The Socialist Party has participated in many of the protests that have countered the far right across the country. Our members have spoken on platforms, discussed our programme with the public, and given out material to support our strategy to fight back. The quick mobilisation of our party was made possible by the finances raised by members and supporters, and has allowed us to have an impact at each event we attended.

An important part of what we do is the material that we distribute. This aids us in discussions, but allows the public to see our presence and engage with what we say.

At every event, it is essential for us to have the resources we need – ranging from gazebos, flags, placards, and leaflets specific to the campaign, putting forward a socialist programme for change.

As we continue to build our party, and oppose far-right activity in all of our communities, we ask for fighting fund donations to support us being able to do so.

Help fund the fightback

**DONATE**

socialistparty.org.uk/donate

# Carlisle socialists campaign for energy nationalisation



Like what you've read?

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE SOCIALIST**

socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe

**Selling the Socialist**

Just some of the events where the Socialist newspaper was sold in the past week...

Carlisle Socialist Party members were campaigning for the nationalisation of energy companies to keep bills down on 31 August.

Our leaflet said: "The privatised energy companies are increasing our bills by another 10% in October, costing an average family another £150. In January, when we can't do without heating, they will put their prices up even higher."

Our campaign stall was covered by local paper News and Star. It quoted Socialist Party member Brent Kennedy: "Two-thirds of the population are in favour of nationalising all the privatised utilities."

"When it comes to water, for instance, 82% want water renationalised. But the Labour government stands on the side of the minority who want privatisation."



## ● Pride Hastings – "Keir Starmer, shame on you"

Socialist Party members marched as part of the 'Pride is a Protest' bloc in Hastings. The bloc included representatives from the National Education Union (NEU) and Palestine protesters.

We put forward the message that Pride must act as a political movement to defend and advance LGBTQ+ liberation, and to do this we must resist the corporatisation of Pride that waters down that political message. 70 people were involved with the bloc.

There was a strong mood that Keir Starmer's Labour cannot be trusted to defend LGBTQ+ rights, with many chants attacking Labour's complicity in anti-trans politics. Close to the end of the parade, a section of the bloc split off to put this message across to Labour's section, with chants of "Keir Starmer shame on you".

Our involvement in the bloc felt very positive, the message we put forward was that we believe the best way we can rise above the hateful and divisive politics that scapegoats

LGBTQ+ people is to provide a political alternative to the mainstream capitalist parties, a new mass party that is grounded in the working class, united against oppressive politics.

We distributed a fair amount of material, and had some excellent conversations with people both inside and outside the bloc. The conversations we had will be reflected on in an upcoming meeting we have on 'socialism and liberation'.

DAMIAN COSGROVE  
SUSSEX SOCIALIST PARTY

## Reading – Labour closed to debate

Pride marched through the town, creating a lovely and joyous atmosphere. Our Socialist Party leaflets on LGBTQ+ rights were well received by those in the crowd.

Green Party members seemed interested in the leaflet, took some, and were invited along to our weekly meeting to discuss this issue. Reading Labour Party were also at the event, but unsurprisingly, not so welcoming.

In all, a positive way to spread our visibility and Socialist Party message. SAMUEL FISHER  
READING SOCIALIST PARTY



# Nigerian socialist charged with treason

## ● Defend democratic rights in Nigeria

Youth Rights Campaign is a campaign platform of the Democratic Socialist Movement, the Socialist Party's sister party in Nigeria. Here is its latest statement.

Urgent action is needed to support those challenging the Nigerian government's disastrous policies, demanding change to prevent the catastrophe the country faces.

The government is pressing serious charges, including 'treason' and 'terrorism', against organisers and activists from the #EndBadGovernance protests at the beginning of August. Also, the president of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) – the country's largest trade union federation – has faced police questioning over "criminal conspiracy, terrorism financing, treasonable felony, subversion, and cybercrime", and has been called in again to face more investigation.

Amnesty International summed up the process: "Another round of the government's unrelenting efforts to punish protesters and demonise protests."

"Some of the charges... ranging from treason, which carries the death penalty, to allegations of a 'plan to destabilise Nigeria', shows how far Nigerian authorities can go in manipulating the criminal justice system to silence critical voices. These blatantly trumped-up charges must be immediately withdrawn."

## Absurd

"Attempts by President Bola Tinubu's government to charge those who protested against widespread poverty and rampant corruption with treason is beyond absurd and baseless. We condemn these sham trials even before they begin, and call for an end to these endless, bizarre attempts to deprive people of the right to peaceful protest."

Nigeria's deep economic, social and political problems were plunged deeper into crisis when new president Tinubu launched an unprecedented neoliberal programme last year. That has undermined living standards and the economy.

Nigeria's naira currency collapsed. Food prices have risen by 39.5% in the last year. 32 million Nigerians suffer from acute food insecurity.

The situation has been far worsened by last year's sudden withdrawal of 'fuel subsidy'. A measure which meant that transport, cooking, and running electricity generators at work and home was somewhat affordable.

There is mass unemployment and underemployment. The economy is stagnant. Millions survive on a day-to-day basis.

Foreign companies are ending production in Nigeria, because of high input costs, extremely weak infrastructure, and social breakdown. Nigeria's foreign debt repayments are up 54% since last year.

In this situation, naturally, protests have developed as anger has

mounted. Early August saw the first #EndBadGovernance protests, organised by a broad front of different forces opposing the government's neoliberal policies, and the corruption gripping the country.

The possibility of widespread protest terrified the government. ITUC-Africa (International Trade Union Confederation) said there has been a "heavy-handed response by the government to legitimate and peaceful assembly and protests". The British Trades Union Congress (TUC) has said the Nigerian government is seeking "to crush the protests".

The reason? The regime feels weak and fears protest. President Tinubu was elected last year with just 8.8 million votes, less than 10% of Nigeria's registered voters – in a country of 230 million.

Tinubu also faces anger over corruption, which the ruling elite are infamous for. Billions of dollars from oil and gas revenue have disappeared. There is even secrecy over what members of the national assembly are actually paid. One Senator recently told the BBC that he received 21 million naira – over \$13,000 a month in salary and expenses. In comparison, the Nigerian minimum wage is \$43 a month!

Against this background the regime is lashing out, trying to intimidate opposition. It has made wild accusations as justifications for repressive measures, like raiding Labour House, the NLC secretariat.

The Nigerian Police has spoken of the discovery of plans to "mobilise the public to violently storm police facilities and military barracks, anticipating a bloodbath that will instigate international condemnation of the Nigerian government". The British TUC correctly said that the police actions against the NLC are an "intimidation of trade unions".

## Fear working-class power

Fearful of the potential strength of the trade unions, the Tinubu government is desperate to pile on pressure to avoid a repeat of 2012's nationwide revolt, which included a general strike. That forced the then government to backdown from ending the 'fuel subsidy'.

Repression is spreading in Nigeria. Journalists are being assaulted and detained. More significantly, there has been widespread brutal suppression of #EndBadGovernance protests, which left over 30 dead, and well over 1,000 protesters arrested.

Adamamoye Michael (Lenin) is the national coordinator of the Youth Rights Campaign (YRC), a member of the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), and one of the key organisers of the #EndBadGovernance protests in Abuja, the federal capital. The case against him shows how this regime is operating.

He was arrested at 2am on 5 August at home, and held incommunicado in a secret venue, with no legal or family visits. Then, 17 days later, on 22 August, he, along with 123 others, was remanded in detention for a further 60 days at a secret court hearing at which neither defendants or defence lawyers were present.



Adamamoye Michael Lenin raises his fists in defiance after being charged. SOURCE: SOWETO



Lagos protest. DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

To no surprise, the court did the government's bidding, with no apparent enquiry as to the detainees' wellbeing. News of this secret court decision only came out when the state news agency reported it on 24 August, revealing the charges on Michael and his co-defendants.

Only on 29 August, over three weeks after he was seized, was Michael able to see a lawyer. And then, on the following weekend, he was told he would be charged in court on 2 September.

## International protests

There have been international protests. After the security services' raid on the NLC headquarters, and the police summoning the NLC president for questioning, the International Confederation of Trade Unions protested, with its general secretary saying: "The situation in Nigeria is deeply concerning. These latest events come on the back of a sharp rise in intimidation and repression of trade unions."

"This includes the harassment of activists, the violation of collective bargaining rights, and the violent

participating in protests against economic collapse.

It is necessary to support those struggling to change Nigeria. It is not a question of foreign interference in Nigerian affairs, but giving support to the mass of Nigerians achieving a better life. The workers' movement and socialists do not have to apologise for that.

## WE SAY:

- Drop 'treason' and 'terrorism' charges against protest organisers
- Defend the right to protest, and free the hundreds detained for protesting
- Fight to defend Nigerians from economic and social collapse

## ● Add your name to the statement



**THESE TRADE UNIONISTS HAVE ALREADY SIGNED:**

DAVE SEMPLE (PCS VICE-PRESIDENT), MARION LLOYD (PCS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE), FIONA BRITTLE (PCS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE), PADRAIG MULHOLLAND (NIPSA DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY), TANYA KILLEN (NIPSA PRESIDENT), PAUL DALE (NIPSA VICE-PRESIDENT), MARIA MORGAN (NIPSA DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY), CARMEL GATES (NIPSA GENERAL SECRETARY), APRIL ASHLEY (UNISON NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, BLACK MEMBERS SEAT), SUZANNE MUNA (UNITE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL), SHEILA CAFFREY (NEU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE), ADAM HARMSWORTH (NAPO NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE), DUNCAN MOORE (UCU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE), ANTON MCCABE (NJU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL)

## ● Pass the motion in your union



Committee for a Workers' International

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## Germany - how to fight the rise of the far right



Afd election poster in Thuringia PHOTO: PANTHERAL/EO139531/CC

The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) has come first in a state election in Thuringia, giving the far right its first win in a state parliament election since World War Two. It follows tensions over immigration in Germany, including a terrorist attack in Solingen. Tom Hoffmann, of the Sol (CWI Germany) National Executive, has written an article about that and the fight to resist racist propaganda and the restriction of democratic rights, as well as analysing the threat of the far right and the struggle for an alternative.

• See 'Germany: After the Solingen terrorist attack - resist racist propaganda and the restriction of democratic rights'

## France - day of protest against Macron

La France Insoumise, the left-wing force in France, headed by Jean-Luc Mélenchon, has called a day of protests on 7 September against President Emmanuel Macron and his actions following the election in July. Macron is attempting to block a New Popular Front government, despite its formation and election victory in the face of the far-right National Rally threat. Gauche Révolutionnaire (CWI France) is supporting the protests and has written about the situation and way forward.

• See 'France: LFI Calls Anti-Macron Protests for 7 September'

## Iran - international solidarity with striking nurses urgently needed

Against a background of growing protests, August saw Iran gripped by a nurses' strike that swept across the country.

These strikes, started after public protests by nurses and medical staff, began on 5 August following the death of a nurse in Fars province three days earlier.

Due to the devastating situation of nurses in Iran, the strike spread very quickly. Nurses were on strike in the following cities: Tehran, Karaj, Tabriz, Isfahan, Kermanshah, Rasht (Gilan Province), Dehdasht, Marivan, Ahvaz (Khuzestan Province), Mashhad, Hamadan, Qazvin, Yasuj, Arak, Shiraz, Mamasani, Yazd, Jahrom, Abadeh, Fasa, and Zanjan.

• Read more: 'Iran: International solidarity with striking nurses urgently needed'

# Scotland: Ten years on from independence referendum

## Resist Labour and SNP austerity

SOCIALIST PARTY SCOTLAND

Scotland First Minister, the Scottish National Party's (SNP) John Swinney, at his August Bute House meeting with Labour Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, stated: "Scotland faces the most difficult financial circumstances in the devolution era". Swinney's pleas for major investment in public services are being unheeded by Keir Starmer's Labour government. Chancellor Rachel Reeves, citing the "£22 billion black hole left by the Tories", states bluntly: "If we cannot afford it, we cannot do it".

Starmer's government bases itself firmly on the needs of the British capitalist market, hindered as it is by historically low productivity and stagnant growth.

Finance Secretary Shona Robison, taking her cue from Reeves, announced emergency spending controls on government departments. This comes after the largest cuts since devolution passed in the last Scottish government budget, before the agreement with the Scottish Greens was ended.

Every part of Scotland's public services, from local authorities to affordable housing to arts funding, faces major financial pressures. Several universities even face going bust, councils are cutting teacher numbers. Pay disputes with local government, rail and college workers' trade unions are ongoing, with many other public sector workers expectant and impatient about pay rises that meet the cost of living.

### Fiscal deficit

Swinney will announce the SNP's new programme for government in September, hoping to begin to recover from its big losses in the general election and present a coherent strategy for campaigning for independence. He and the SNP's case for an independent capitalist Scotland is further undermined by the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) report showing Scotland's net fiscal deficit at £22.7 billion, 10.4% of GDP.

Revenues from the North Sea have halved. The report's result shows Scotland's vulnerability to shifts in global oil and gas markets, including cost increases because of the Russia-Ukraine war. It is now more than double that of the UK deficit.

The Holyrood opposition Scottish Tories, themselves in a leadership crisis, point to decades of higher social spending, using devolved powers, by the SNP. They and capitalist media commentators are now more

vocal in raising questions over the long-term viability of free NHS prescriptions, baby boxes and child payments, subsidised rail fares, no university tuition fees and council tax freezes in Scotland. Insiders from the SNP government are mooring in the press about delaying the roll-out of further free school meal provision.

The SNP points to the higher revenues Holyrood receives than the rest of the UK from its "progressive" use of devolved income tax powers, which can be aligned in a fiscally responsible way with higher spending. Swinney and Robison also point to the UK government keeping the majority of Scotland's revenues under the devolved Barnett funding formula, claiming their capitalist vision of independence would mean having greater fiscal flexibility to increase revenues. This is utopian given the current state of the world capitalist economy; they even claim a return to the bosses' European Union (EU) would be part of this. An independent capitalist Scotland would be an indebted state like the poorer EU countries.

The SNP has only ever utilised Scotland's devolved economic powers to enact limited social protections that allowed them to pose to the left of the Tories, for a period. It hasn't even made the changes to taxation the Scottish Trades Union Congress recommended in a 2023 report, including a proportional property tax and tax on private jets which would raise an extra £3.7 billion. There is money in society. While currently Scotland's major cities have declared housing emergencies, there is a boom in investment by private housing providers and in commercial property, including the builders of student accommodation.

Even faced as they are now with the closure of Grangemouth oil refinery and major questions over the future of the North Sea hydrocarbons industry (previously a bedrock of their case for independence) the SNP, while claiming it will "fund net zero", is not prepared to step outside the confines of the capitalist market and raise public ownership of Scotland's most revenue generating economic capacity.

Starmer's GB Energy, to be based in Scotland, is also a market-based solution. Only a workers'-led transition based on the socialist nationalisation of oil, gas and the entire energy industry under democratic workers' control can possibly guarantee the livelihoods and income of workers and communities.

The SNP has fundamentally never been prepared to take the wealth off the richest or to mobilise the working class for more funding from the Tories, and now Labour. Socialist Party Scotland and our activists in the trade unions have consistently called not just for changes to the income



Neither Labour or the SNP - both based on crisis capitalism with its ten-month, bloody slaughter in Gaza, its climate crisis, its economic inequality and stagnation - can offer anything to workers struggling to feed their families or the hundreds of thousands of young people leaving school

tax bands to hit the 1% by the Scottish government, but for fighting no-touts needs budgets from Holyrood and councils, utilising all financial powers, including borrowing and reserves, cancelling PFI/PPP projects and mobilising the trade unions and working-class communities to demand back from Westminster the billions stolen in austerity.

### The national question

Starmer and Swinney's initial overtures and discussions suggest they want a more 'collaborative' approach to the relationship between Westminster and Holyrood, rather than the instability seen under the Tories. But neither capitalist party will be able to solve the national question. This September it is a decade since the mass politicisation around the 2014 independence referendum that turned into a nightmare for the British capitalist class and its allies internationally. The 'Yes' vote, 1.6 million strong, was based on the rage of workers and youth against capitalist austerity and a yearning for social change.

This was most explicitly expressed in the last weeks of the campaign as the polls narrowed and tens of thousands attended 'Hope over Fear - the Socialist Case for Independence' rallies that Socialist Party Scotland played a crucial role in. Our activists in this mass audience explained the need to answer 'Project Fear' with demands for nationalisation of the banks, big industries and major parts of the economy under a socialist plan rather than market chaos. Then, as we do now, we called for a struggle for an independent socialist Scotland as part of a voluntary socialist

confederation with England, Wales and Ireland.

It was only the SNP's inability to answer the economic fears stoked by "Project Fear" - the Tories, Labour, the US president and the EU campaigning together which raised the prospect of pensions disappearing, rocketing energy bills and even more austerity fuelled by debt - that got 'No' over the line. The SNP's white paper for capitalist independence was of course drafted by the then Finance Minister Swinney.

July's general election saw the issue of independence ebb with the cost-of-living crisis to the fore. The SNP, with successive crises, its record of implementing Tory austerity and its inability to challenge the British capitalist state over self-determination, is now no longer seen by wide layers, critically by radical workers and youth, as the natural leadership of an independence movement. Support for independence however still hovers around 50% in the polls.

Discontent with a pro-capitalist Starmer government will no doubt be expressed in trade union-based class struggle, and struggle against cuts in communities, but also potentially over the issue of self-determination, with Starmer, reflecting the wishes of the majority of the capitalist class, refusing to negotiate over the right to indyref2. With the SNP's pro-capitalist leadership now discredited, after it was widely perceived to be anti-establishment in 2014 by sections of workers and youth, the trade union and workers' movement has an opportunity to link the struggle for our class interests to democratic rights on a mass basis.

It also cannot be ruled out that Labour's gains in the 2024 general election will not be repeated to the same scale in the 2026 Holyrood election. Starmer and Scottish Labour's Anas Sarwar already point to the SNP's dismal record that by then will be just under 20 years in power. But by then there will be rising anger at Labour, and workers having experience of struggle under Starmer.

### Demands on Starmer's Labour

There is an opportunity this autumn for the trade unions and the wider working class and youth to come into struggle and make demands on Starmer's Labour and the SNP. Workers and youth can have no truck with the idea of 'waiting' until what we need can be 'afforded'. Not just over pay rises and investment into public services but also for the repeal of anti-trade union laws, including the ballot thresholds contained in the 2016 legislation.

This would open even more opportunities to take effective strike action nationally, mobilising the power of workers in areas like local government to force pay demands as Westminster, Scottish government and councils set their forthcoming budgets.

Socialist Party Scotland was alone in standing against the surge to the SNP to which much of the left succumbed in the aftermath of 2014, calling for a new mass workers' party based on the trade unions that could draw in the participation of the youth and the best of the anti-war, climate and other movements. This idea, which we have raised consistently by standing as the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), will now

SNP leader John Swinney and Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar PHOTO: FIRST MINISTER OF SCOTLAND/CC

likely become a major element in the ferment of discussion that is likely to develop in the trade unions of how workers can get political representation under Labour.

We call on those Labour MPs suspended by Starmer for daring to vote for the SNP's amendment on the two-child benefit cap to discuss with Corbyn and the left independents, but most crucially with the trade unions about steps towards a new workers' party, including drawing up workers' demands in a manifesto and a conference. A force that began to develop into a mass workers' party, utilising trade union power would also cut across the development of the far right.

The sustained crisis of the SNP stems from its attempts to reassure big business and the ruling class, in Scotland and internationally, that it is a reliable partner for government and the viability of independence, while at the same time holding on to the electoral support from sections of workers and youth. Witness the fallout over Gaza, with Swinney giving secret permission to External Affairs minister Angus Robertson to meet Israeli diplomats while the SNP has positioned itself as a pro-peace party against Starmer's Labour and the Tories.

Neither Starmer's Labour or the SNP - both based on crisis capitalism with its ten-month, bloody slaughter in Gaza, its climate crisis, its economic inequality and stagnation - can offer anything to workers struggling to feed their families or the hundreds of thousands of young people leaving school. Capitalism needs to go, it's time to join us in the struggle for a socialist future.



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# the Socialist

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# Mass workers' struggle to

# END MASSACRE OF PALESTINIANS



**TOM GIBSON**  
BRADFORD SOCIALIST PARTY

**W**e are nearly 11 months into an ongoing slaughter of over 40,000 Palestinians. The capitalist politicians' responses to the horror we have seen on our screens has only exposed how rotten and hypocritical their capitalist system is.

As a student, I have seen first-hand how many young people are invested in the protests. Friends share news and images from the conflict on social media, bypassing the biased major capitalist

news outlets that are increasingly discredited.

Prime minister Keir Starmer said he thought Israel had the right to starve Palestinians in Gaza, and ex-PM Rishi Sunak told Israel PM Benjamin Netanyahu he "wanted Israel to win", even after it became clear that Netanyahu's goal was to inflict maximum destruction of Palestinian lives.

So-called 'human rights' are being ripped apart for everyone to see. Working-class and young people internationally are horrified and refuse to simply look away, many defying repression to protest.

It is the pressure of mass protests

and working-class anger internationally, including across the Middle East, that has forced politicians such as Starmer to back a ceasefire, even if he has yet to actually try and genuinely push for one, and forced the Labour government to limit some arms exports to Israel, even if the vast majority are still in place.

Strikes of workers erupting in Israel, against the Netanyahu regime, is another example of how working-class struggle can have an impact.

I'm proud of how the Socialist Party has gone to the countless demonstrations all across Britain arguing for a democratic mass movement of Palestinians to fight for national

self-determination and socialism, and for that struggle to link up with movements of workers across the region and internationally, including in Israel.

Only socialist change can bring about a future for the Palestinian masses, free from oppression and where the needs of all are met. The need to fight for an end to the horrors of capitalism internationally has never been clearer. Join us in the fight for a socialist future.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY IS FIGHTING FOR:**

• End the siege - for the permanent withdrawal of the Israeli military from the occupied territories

- For a mass struggle of the Palestinians, under their own democratic control, to fight for liberation
- For the building of independent workers' parties in Palestine and Israel and links between them
- For an independent, socialist Palestinian state, alongside a socialist Israel, with guaranteed rights for all minorities, as part of the struggle for a socialist Middle East
- No trust in the capitalist politicians, internationally or in Britain. Fight to build a workers' party in Britain that fights for socialism and internationalism

WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN DEMANDS >>> see column on p10

