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# BORIS OUT!

# GENERAL ELECTION NOW!



Boris Johnson - the right-wing Thatcherite, private school-educated millionaire - is prime minister. But not for long. The civil war inside the Tory party looks set to explode as the Halloween date for leaving the EU approaches.

In all likelihood a general election is on the way. Johnson could be brought down by a vote of no confidence at Westminster. Jeremy Corbyn has said he's prepared to replace

him to prevent a capitalist no-deal Brexit and then call a general election.

But working-class people cannot rely on Blairite Labour, Tory and Lib Dem MPs to remove BoJo. Many of them would rather cut off their right hand than allow Corbyn into No.10.

Therefore it's vital that Corbyn and the trade unions mobilise support in the streets, workplaces, communities,

schools and colleges to drive the Tories out! The trade union movement should call a day of strikes and mass protest. This could pile the pressure on even big business supporting MPs to remove Johnson as prime minister.

Then the key question is who can defeat the Tories and on what policies?

If Jeremy Corbyn was to stand clearly on a socialist platform to end and reverse

austerity. For an immediate introduction of a £10 an hour minimum wage as a step to a real living wage.

For public ownership of the big banks, manufacturing, transport, the privatised utilities and all companies threatening closures and job losses, he could win by a landslide

To win he must also stand for a left and workers' exit from the bosses' EU. And for socialist policies for workers'

rights to end EU rules that benefit the big corporations.

Corbyn must allow Labour members the chance to remove the pro-capitalist Blairites in his own party who are fighting to remove Corbyn as Labour leader.

Corbyn must also defend the right of the Scottish people to a second indyref.

If he fights on socialist policies, Corbyn can win and drive the Tories out.

# BREXIT CRISIS: BUILD A MASS CAMP TORIES OUT - CORBYN CAN WIN WITH



## What we think

The election of Eton-educated toff Boris Johnson by the ageing, aloof and shrinking Tory membership came as no surprise. For the capitalist elite, however, it escalates the political crisis in Britain, leaving them without a safe pair of hands to carry out their interests.

Johnson's pledge that the UK will leave the EU "with or without a deal" by October 31 threatens the stability of their profit agenda.

Boris as prime minister will inflame the irreconcilable conflict in the Conservative Party, whose only unifying factor was former prime minister Theresa May's appeals that they unite to Stop Corbyn!

Corbyn's limited program alone is not their main fear, but the aroused expectations his government entering Downing Street would trigger among workers and youth.

When parliament returns in September he is likely to be met with immediate no confidence votes. Labour but also by remainder Tory MP's, Liberals, the SNP and others have pledged to bring him down if it becomes clear the trajectory of the Johnson government is for no deal.

Sections of the capitalist class, supported by as many as 60 right wing Labour MP's, pro EU Tories, the Liberals and even the Greens and the SNP, are looking at the option of forming a national government to block a no deal, keep Corbyn out and even reverse Brexit.

Such a government would be a tool to attack the working class. But it would also run the risk of the capitalists running out of alternative options and fuelling support for the left



Corbyn and McDonnell must allow Labour members to remove the Blairites from the Labour Party and fight an election on a clear socialist platform

and Corbyn. The danger for the capitalists now is that, if Corbyn stands firm in resisting attempts to install a government led by Harman, the former Tory chancellor Ken Clarke or any other figure, they can only achieve a national government by splitting the Labour Party before the advent of a Labour government.

While this would, at least initially, leave Corbyn at the head of a smaller parliamentary group - possibly only the third-largest in parliament - the vomiting out of the Blairites would create new opportunities for Labour to develop as a mass workers' party within which the ideas of socialism could find an ever-wider audience.

If no withdrawal treaty is agreed by 31 October, the default position is that the treaty obligations between Britain and the remaining EU27



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**A mass working class movement could bring down the government. The mass anger is there to be mobilised, if a lead was shown.**

countries will no longer apply. To obtain a further extension the UK government needs to request one, and an EU summit agree to it and its terms unanimously.

The EU27 countries, at the time of writing, are maintaining a unified position. The current 'Brexit-in-name-only'

585-page legal withdrawal treaty agreed with May is not up for renegotiation.

But the more ambiguous, non-binding political declaration could be recast, they say. The EU27 leaders do not wish for a disorderly Brexit or for 'Brussels' to be blamed if the whole process collapses.

Cosmetic changes are unlikely to satisfy the hard Brexiteer European Research Group (ERG) of Tory MP's. All of this points to Johnson facing a vote of no confidence or going for an early snap election to try for a 'personal mandate' to pre-empt the inevitable collapse of his government.

Such a general election would take place amongst international volatility and worsening economic outlook.

Over the next few weeks there are opportunities to push the needs of our class

onto the agenda. Opportunities that the left Labour leadership and the trade unions must grasp.

## Corbyn's approach

The approach adopted so far by Corbyn and McDonnell of constant unrequited compromise with the capitalist wing of the Labour Party, who have the whole establishment behind them, must cease.

For the belligerent Blairites, the issue on which to undermine the left Labour leadership is fighting to shift the party into supporting a second EU referendum and reversing Brexit.

If Corbyn is seen to want to reverse the result of the referendum, it would massively alienate important sections of the working class for whom voting leave was a protest against being forced to pay for

# CAMPAIGN TO DRIVE THE H SOCIALIST POLICIES



manifesto

the capitalist crisis of 2007-8.

This would give space to Boris Johnson to run a right wing populist, seemingly anti-establishment, campaign in defence of the Brexit vote which could even see the Tories win a general election.

It is urgent to launch an all out campaign to deselect pro-capitalist Labour MPs and call on Labour councillors and MSPs to fight Tory cuts as part of a program to transform Labour into a real workers' party.

Corbyn and McDonnell should stand up to Tom Watson and the cabal of right wingers in the Scottish parliamentary Labour party and clearly defend the right to a second independence referendum.

If Corbyn and the Labour left fail at this critical time to represent the interests of workers and trade unions,

they will rightly be compelled to act to organise their own political representation.



Honda Swindon, the Caley rail-works, British steel, Ford Bridgend and bringing Royal Mail and the

## Build the fightback

It is a mistake to solely rely on parliamentary no confidence votes alone to inflict defeats on Johnson's Tories. A mass working class movement could bring down the government. The mass anger is there to be mobilised, if a lead was shown.

The National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) is calling on Corbyn and the TUC to call for mass demonstrations, rallies for socialist polices and nationally co-ordinated strike action against poverty pay, austerity and the bosses offensive and for a general election.

A bold call for a fightback could bring together the strikes and working class action already taking place; the Harland and Wolff occupation in Belfast, Bradford hospital strikers, postal workers walking out against bullying and striking Sainsbury's distribution centre workers.

Correctly, the young school student climate strikers have chanted Tories Out on their demonstrations and would join such a mobilisation.

Nationalisation of the shipyards in Belfast and Greenock,

railways back into public ownership would receive mass support. As would policies such as a immediate £10 an hour minimum wage for all workers, the scrapping of cruel universal credit and an end to all cuts to council services. On such a manifesto Labour could win by a landslide.

With a concrete chance that their lives would be transformed after a dire decade of austerity, workers, the poor and young people would be enthusiastic to struggle.

Of course the bosses and the capitalist class would engage in a bitter campaign of sabotage. That's why it's crucial to go further. A left government would need to nationalise the major corporations and banks to take the power out of the hands of the 1%.

A Corbyn government would then be in a stronger position to negotiate a Brexit deal in the interests of the working class.

While making an appeal to workers and youth across Europe, Corbyn could demand a deal that clearly ends all pro-privatisation, anti-worker EU laws and stands for a socialist Europe.

## Edinburgh Sick Kids exposes SNP failure to tackle PFI scandal

**Alan Manley**

*Unison member and  
health care worker*

Edinburgh was due to have a new state of the art hospital to look after sick children and young people in 2013. It was going to cost around £250m and be publicly funded.

NHS Lothian has now postponed the opening of its new Edinburgh Sick Kids Hospital, indefinitely.

The hospital, which has now cost upwards of £520m, cannot receive any patients into its 233 beds because of systemic problems with ventilation and drainage which risk patients and public safety.

There is no sign of these issues being fixed anytime soon. One leading Lothian NHS trade unionist has stated it would be better to tear the building down and start again!

## private finance

At the heart of this crisis is the use of private investment to fund public projects. Having been told by the Scottish government in 2010 that they had to find different funding arrangements to build the new hospital, NHS Lothian turned to the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT), a £2.5bn fund set up by the SNP as an alternative to the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), which New Labour had used to build a range of public facilities across the UK.

Under PFI, private companies built facilities, provided services and then leased them back to the public sector, who then paid over the odds for these contracts on deals stretching into the millennium.

NHS Tayside alone sits on contracts worth £14m a year until 2043. In Lanarkshire,

Hairmyres hospital, built with private investment in 2001, has cost twice as much as it would've done using public money. Investment of £8m gave the private consortium a return of £145m in 2008.

The Scottish Futures Trust has proved to be, at best, a pale imitation of PFI. Profit returns under PFI stood at 16% per annum. SFT would peg them at 12%, with "surpluses" being recycled into the public finances.

Projects would still rely on private investment under so called Non Profit Distributing models. It wasn't PFI so the perception grew that the SNP had abolished private involvement in Scotland's NHS.

However, existing PFI contracts were left untouched when this new model was introduced. Yet PFI's have become central to the indebtedness of Scottish health authorities. Hundreds of millions are being re-diverted from patient care to private profits.

The scandal of Edinburgh's new hospital highlights how the SNP have kept to finding market solutions for deficits in public funding, instead of fighting austerity and the cuts.

As it stands, the financial crisis in NHS Lothian because of this dreadful deal that they have with IHSL (Integrated Health Solutions Limited) will impact patient care across the region. £1.4m per month is being paid for a hospital that they cannot open. The necessary work to get the facility open has added at least £80m to a project that will cost £432m over the next 25 years.

Socialist Party Scotland calls for the nationalisation of all PFI/SFT contracts with no compensation for the profiteers who have been allowed into our NHS.

A full democratic trade union-led inquiry into this scandal is needed.

# Brexit crisis and capitalist austerity are driving

The tumultuous Brexit crisis under Boris Johnson's leadership has opened a new phase of instability for British capitalism. Increasingly, it's the threat of a break-up of the UK that is exercising mounting concern. **Philip Stott** examines the prospects for Scottish independence.

Gordon Brown, co-architect of New Labour, has opined that Johnson could be "the last prime minister of the UK".

Writing in the Observer newspaper on 11th August, Brown commented: "We must recognise that nationalism is now driving British politics", the UK is now "devoid of a unifying purpose powerful enough to hold it together and to keep four nationalisms – Scottish, Irish, English, and also a rising Welsh nationalism – at bay."

While heaping responsibility for this onto Boris Johnson, Brown seems blind to the role his and Tony Blair's big business policies played in driving support for Scottish independence.

A decade of "New Labour" neoliberal policies was marked in 2007 by the election of the first SNP government at Edinburgh. The SNP have been in power ever since. The 45% vote in favour of Scottish independence in the 2014 indyref was also, in large part, the legacy of Brown and Blair.

In truth, the centrifugal forces that are tending to the pulling apart of the UK are rooted in the failures of capitalism.

Years of austerity, ruined public services and rising in-work poverty have all laid the basis for mass opposition to the capitalist political establishment.

For the working class in particular, demands for democratic rights for Scotland and Wales are, at root, a desire to break from the nightmare of life under a system run for the billionaire-elite.

The same factors drove the vote in favour of leaving the EU in 2016 among large swathes of working class communities across the UK.

What is needed, but is still missing, is a mass working class and political force to fight for and articulate socialist ideas. This can and should be done while standing in defence of the democratic rights

of the people of Scotland and Wales to self-determination.

The August 2019 poll on Scottish independence underlined the systemic threat to the capitalist union. The poll in early August showed a 52:48 split in favour of independence.

Moreover, support for a second independence referendum in the next two years had also increased significantly in the last weeks to 47%, with 45% opposed.

It was both this poll and the imminence of a general election that encouraged Labour's John McDonnell to announce in an interview in Edinburgh that a Labour government, if faced by a request from the Scottish parliament for an indyref2, "would not block something like that."

We would let the Scottish people decide. That's democracy." Referencing himself and Jeremy Corbyn, he went on to say: "There are other views within the party but that's our view." Jeremy Corbyn confirmed the week after that this was indeed his view.

## Blairites in revolt

All hell then broke loose. The Scottish Blairites launched an immediate attack. A statement from the majority of the Labour group in the Scottish parliament said: "We deplore any attempts to undermine the official policy position of the Scottish Labour Party... Scottish party policy is very clear – that is opposition to a second independence referendum."

They cited Richard Leonard, the Corbyn-supporting Scottish Labour leader, who had in March said that if Labour won a Westminster election the party would refuse to grant a Section 30 order.

Indeed the 2017 Labour manifesto said the same thing. Which was to double-down on Labour's abysmal collaboration with the Tories and big



Above: The independence referendum was a working class uprising against austerity. Opposite: The front part of the crowd at a Scottish independence rally.



**For the working class in particular, demands for democratic rights for Scotland and Wales are, at root, a desire to break from the nightmare of life under a system run for the billionaire-elite. The same factors drove the vote in favour of leaving the EU in 2016 among large swathes of working class communities across the UK.**

business as part of the 2014 Better Together debacle. This record, along with their pro-capitalist policies, has been decisive in reducing Scottish Labour to a shadow of its former political self.

The May 2019 European election saw Labour lose both their MEPs, dropping to just 9.3% support. They came fifth behind the SNP, Brexit Party, Tories and the Lib Dems. Recent Westminster polls have shown Scottish Labour MPs could face a potential wipe-out in a general election.

To Corbyn and McDonnell's credit, at least they have taken a more sensitive attitude to the

growing support for independence and demands for an indyref2.

No doubt they are calculating that if a no-deal exit from the EU is attempted by Johnson, that support could grow even further and Labour should be responsive to that.

A minority Labour government might be faced with the need to have a "confidence and supply" arrangement with the SNP at Westminster.

Nicola Sturgeon would make a second independence referendum a key negotiating plank. A Corbyn-led government could agree to a section 30 order while pledging (mis-

takingly) to campaign for a No vote in any subsequent referendum. The Labour leadership also believe that the progressive left policies that they are pledging to implement would undercut support for independence.

## Blackmail

If Corbyn in power was to stand up to the inevitable blackmail and sabotage of the bosses and carry through the necessary measures against capitalist interests, the nationalisation of the major sectors of the economy in particular, this would have huge appeal among the working class in Scotland.

Even then it would be crucial to stand for the right of Scotland to be independent, on the basis of majority support.

An independent socialist Scotland could form a free and voluntary confederation with a socialist England, Wales and Ireland to end poverty, low pay, austerity and for a living

# g support for independence



ge of the Socialist in September 2014

wage for all. As it is Tom Watson, Ian Murray and other leading Blairites have used McDonnell's pledge to ratchet up the civil war against Corbyn. A further split away by a section of the Blairites prior to a general election is possible.

This could be linked to the formation of a government of "national unity" – which is being promoted by the Labour right, Tories, Lib Dems, and the Greens to stop a no-deal EU exit and a Corbyn government coming to power.

Corbyn and McDonnell are paying a heavy price for allowing the capitalist wing of the Labour party to remain in situ. By blocking the majority pro-Corbyn membership from having the right to de-select right wing MPs, the opportunity for big business to sabotage the possibility of left government, either before or after a general election, has been strengthened.

Corbyn's concessions to the Blairite wing, including the continued opposition by a majority of MSPs and MPs to Scottish independence and



indyref2, will be an obstacle to a Labour recovery. That has to end now.

## General election

Boris Johnson is preparing for a general election. By running on a right-wing, racist and populist platform, while pledging to be the only politician prepared to implement Brexit, the danger is he could win significant support. That would only be possible if Corbyn did not clearly advance a fighting left manifesto.

Included in that would be a pledge to leave the EU on policies that would benefit the working class majority. By standing for massive investment in housing, public services, jobs and wages, to end Universal Credit and for public ownership of the economy, Corbyn could win easily.

He could also expose his pro-rich, elitist and reactionary policies and win over many who voted to remain in the EU, including in Scotland where a majority did so.

A recent poll that showed 54% (after removing those who did not know) want to leave the EU by any means, including a no-deal, underlines the dangers if Corbyn was to advocate staying in the EU and a so-called "people's vote.

The same poll found 88% thought parliament was out of touch with the public. 89% felt MPs "ignore the wishes of voters and push their own agendas" on Brexit.

This reflects a rage against the capitalist establishment that a mass working class party with socialist policies could base itself on to offer a future to millions whose lives are being destroyed by a profit-driven economic system.

Corbyn and the Labour left must act to help create such a party. The Blairites have to go, along with any Labour councillor and MSP who votes for cuts and austerity. A Labour manifesto that stands unequivocally on the side of the working class and points to the need to break with capitalism is also vital to win a general election.

If Corbyn fails and continues to seek compromise with the capitalist class inside the Labour Party, then a mass working class socialist alternative will still have to be built. Indeed given the role of SNP and Labour councillors and MSPs in carrying out cuts in Scotland it is a pressing need.

The mass membership of the trade union movement will have a central role to play in that task.

# SCOTLAND'S DRUG DEATH SCANDAL



By Lynda McEwan

Scotland has the highest drug-related deaths in the EU. Over 1,100 people died in 2018, up a massive 27% on the previous year with the vast majority, almost 900, being men over-35.

It's no coincidence that the highest levels are concentrated in the poorest areas such as Glasgow, Dundee and parts of Lothian and that in comparison more affluent areas such as East Dunbartonshire have the lowest levels.

Elinor Dickie of Public Health Scotland said that problematic drug use is 17 times higher in Scotland's poorest areas compared to the wealthiest.

Poverty is the driving force behind most social ills and this sharp rise in drug use and death is no exception.

The Scottish government has taken its usual progressive-appearing stance and has appointed a Drug Death Taskforce which is calling for the introduction of drug consumption facilities based on the Portuguese model of tackling illegal drug use.

Whilst any policy that would reduce these needless deaths is welcome, more must be done to prevent people turning to drugs in the first place.

This is also a startling display of hypocrisy from the SNP who were warned by experts in 2016 that the £15 million cuts to drugs services they were implementing would result in this increase in deaths.

They also closed needle exchanges in Dundee, leaving addicts at risk of infection and all of the complications which arise from sharing needles.

The SNP-led Scottish government has repeatedly de-

layed taking full responsibility for the welfare system in Scotland meaning vicious Tory policies like universal credit and benefit sanctions continue to push already vulnerable people further into poverty, debt, homelessness and, in many cases, worsening drug use.

Tory, Labour and SNP councils in Scotland have made huge cuts to social work and addiction services over the years. Some areas such as Alexandria in West Dunbartonshire have seen their social work department closed and moved to a neighbouring town, making it almost impossible for addicts to access services.

## end austerity

A mass mobilisation linked to the trade unions and working class communities could demand an end to Tory austerity by setting no cuts budgets to win the increased funding needed to tackle not only this immediate problem but to also fund the building of really good council housing, free, fully-funded education, provide skilled jobs on a living wage and overhaul the benefits system to provide fairer and more dignified benefits.

Massive public investment is needed in the NHS and in addiction research also.

All of these measures are urgently necessary to remove the conditions created under capitalism which pushes people into drug use in the first place.

Decriminalisation might save some lives but without a determined fight against the root causes of drug addiction, combined with compassionate treatment options, Scotland will continue to witness drug related deaths.

# Royal Mail workers to ballot for national strike action

**Gary Clark**

*Branch secretary,  
Scotland No. 2 branch CWU*

Postal workers represented by the CWU are heading for strike action against a newly installed, openly anti-union management. A strike ballot is being held with the result known in early October.

Just over a year ago, the Four Pillars agreement was signed. It was viewed by almost everyone as a victory for the CWU. One that would lead to a period of reasonable stability in a newly privatised Royal Mail and which included a path to a 35-hour week.

In addition there was a review into the culture within Royal Mail, with joint visits to units to review what was going on in the workplace.

But what has become clear to every single postal worker is that the bullying culture within Royal Mail has past breaking point.

Hardly a week goes by without a workplace across the UK not taking some form of action – either official or unofficial – to defend our members against the extremes of management actions.

It's not uncommon for them to push our members beyond breaking point. Some of the

behaviours of management are beyond contempt.

It was reported this week that one member was signed off sick and on their second day off he was visited by a manager. When the member said he was too ill to speak this was met with: "You Fucking Liar". This is not an uncommon type of behaviour around the country.

It is not a case of one or two rogue managers, it is widespread. It's more unusual to find a reasonable manager than it is to find a bully. As such, the time for us to fight this on a unit by unit basis is now over. It must be taken up on a national level.

Since the Four Pillars was signed we have seen a complete change in the national senior management team who signed off on the agreement. The old CEO Moyà Greene has been replaced with Rico Back, who came from GLS – a parcel company in Europe owned by Royal Mail.

He has never recognised trade unions and was paid £6 million as a welcome, despite already being employed by the Royal Mail group.

Some of his first actions were to replace the so-called "doves" who negotiated the Four Pillars, with the so-called "hawks" who were sidelined



during the dispute. Even they have now been removed from the company and a new group of senior managers have come in. None have any history of dealing with a trade union, so it look like the vultures have replaced the hawks

## Job losses

Royal Mail have announced their 5 year plan. The new parcel plan and the building of three new parcels hubs will mean around 20,000 job losses across the UK. Parcelforce is to be a new separate limited company.

The membership are to be TUPE across to the new company. This is clearly a major danger to the whole of our membership as it will mean, if not overturned, the start of the

complete break-up of Royal Mail. It therefore must be fought. If Parcelforce was to go, what's to stop the breaking up of the company piece by piece?

In the words of Deputy General Secretary Postal Terry Pullinger, the mood and words are showing all the signs that we are heading towards a national dispute.

Royal Mail want the postal worker to work at 100%, 100% of the time. This is completely impossible and would mean running our members into the ground.

We are heading towards a dispute. A fight that will be about whose interests the business is run. Is it for big business and the vultures of capitalism or about providing a public service?

We now must be visiting

every single workplace, speaking to our membership and preparing them for the fight ahead.

We must make it clear to management they too are heading for a fight where there will be only one winner – and that will be the union.

We took on all the previous CEOs and chased them away. We should prepare to hit them hard right away, if we require to, with action over and above a 24-hour stoppage

It's not enough for us to campaign for Labour to renationalise Royal Mail, we must go further and call for all the senior management to be completely removed as they have no interest in running a public service.

We need complete workers' and community control of the once great Royal Mail.

# Asda workers reject Martini contract

**Alistair Tice**

*Yorkshire Socialist Party*

Chanting "No ifs, no buts, no Asda cuts", around 1,000 Asda workers, members of the GMB trade union, marched on Asda House in Leeds on 14 August to protest against imposition of a new contract called Contract 6. (see picture opposite)

Workers came from as far as London, Bristol and Scotland to demonstrate against what they described as management intimidation to force them to sign up to a 'Martini' contract, allowing bosses to

force staff to work "any time, any place, anywhere". In return for being forced to work bank holidays, paid breaks being scrapped, cuts to holiday entitlement, slashing of night shift pay, and shifts being changed at four weeks' notice, workers are being 'bribed' with a wage increase to £9 an hour and report being threatened with the sack if they don't sign up!

The Walmart empire, the biggest company in the world that made £129 billion profit last year! However, for the predominantly part-time, low-paid and mainly female workforce, it is the threat of

shift days and hours being changed that is the main worry when so many have built their work lives around family, children and caring responsibilities.

The door to the imposition of this Contract 6 was opened last year when the union did not oppose the introduction of the very similar, supposedly voluntary, 'Your Choice'.

But with only three months to go to the imposition of Contract 6 in November, the union has not even started an industrial action ballot of its 30,000 members. While only 20-25% of Asda workers are in the union, many stores have 80-



90% union membership where a ballot could be won and strike action would leave shelves empty and check-outs unstaffed. In the cut-throat

world of supermarket wars, it wouldn't be long before Asda was losing customers and profits and could be forced to back down.

# After the equal pay victory fight the new round of Glasgow cuts



**Chris Sermanni**  
Glasgow City Unison

The dust is finally beginning to settle in Glasgow after thousands of working-class women beat the bosses in the City Chambers and secured a long and hard-fought victory in their historic battle for equal pay. (see picture above)

All but a handful of claimants have now returned their paperwork and been paid, with thousands receiving life changing sums.

At the root of Glasgow's shameful pay debacle was the botched implementation of a job evaluation scheme in 2006. In order to address the injustices of the past, Glasgow City Council has to roll out a new

pay and grading scheme that is equality proofed, and makes the necessary adjustments to the pay of thousands of its workers.

It is estimated that this will cost the council millions of pounds more to address. One way to offset some of this would be to 'rob Peter to pay Pauline' or, in other words, lower the pay of workers in predominantly male roles to increase the pay of those workers in predominantly female roles.

The continued austerity agenda of Westminster, passed on without a fight by the Scottish Government, means that local authorities are faced with budget cuts year-on-year.

Rather than set no-cuts

budgets and fight for increased resources for the city as advocated consistently by Glasgow City Unison, among others, Labour, SNP and Green councillors have slashed tens of millions of pounds from its spending for numerous years. This is scheduled to continue, with no end in sight.

Consequently, the council are faced with the prospect of an increased wage bill, repayments on the debt taken out to repay the workers, and their usual slice of Tory austerity on top.

The precedent set by Birmingham City Council highlights the very real danger that workers' terms and conditions will be attacked to offset the financial burden.

Birmingham have had to pay out £1.25 billion to settle thousands of equal pay claims. This initially led to selling off assets – and leaving workers to the mercy of the private buyers – but then led to an assault on services, most notably the 'reforms' the council tried to impose on the bin workers in 2017.

This led to a largely successful strike by Unite and UNISON members, which forced the bosses back.

Trade unionists and socialists in Glasgow will redouble our efforts to hold off any attack on workers' terms and conditions, any proposal to slash services and continue the fight to build a genuine no-cuts, anti-austerity and socialist alternative in the city.

# Pharmacy workers' strike



Unite picket line at Ninewells hospital, Dundee

**Wayne Scott**

Around 40 Unite members who work as Pharmacy Support Workers for NHS Tayside have begun an all-out strike today. These heroic workers voted 100% on a 90% turnout to strike for grading and pay justice.

The dispute centres on the scandalous fact that this key group of workers are the lowest paid in NHS Tayside.

They are fighting for their band two grading to be increased to a band three. For more than a decade, the support workers have been taking on increased roles and responsibilities in the dispensing and delivery of prescriptions.

In part, this also reflects the "filtering down" of roles from higher paid grades to lower grades as part of NHS cost-cutting by health bosses. Their role is unrecognisable from 15 years ago when under Agenda for Change they were banded amongst the lowest paid.

For ten years the workers have been fighting for justice, yet time and again been refused a re-grading. Even though it's obvious to all that they deserve to be paid more for the work they do.

As the Unite strike leaflet the pickets were distributing explained: "We want Tayside to acknowledge our duties, pay us a fair wage, and fix their process so no one will have to go through what we have."

We brought the 100% support and solidarity from Socialist Party Scotland and Young Socialists - Young

Workers Rights' campaign to the picket lines.

Our members in the trade unions locally and nationally have already been raising this issue and will do all we can to build solidarity for the strikers. Our solidarity leaflet was also enthusiastically received by the pickets.

One of the points we made in the leaflet was how reminiscent this strike is with the Dundee hospital porters strike in 2015. Then it was a regrading issue and again Unite was the union involved.

An all-out 13 week-long strike concluded with a win for the porters who were regraded after a bitter struggle with NHS Tayside bosses.

As we commented: "Their victory was one for determined and resolute working-class action and militant trade unionism. It is also a defiant challenge to the so-called "partnership working" model advocated by right-wing trade union leaders in the NHS."

Today the Unite members taking action are facing the same hard-nosed attitude by a health board and top managers who are trying to axe almost £200 million from the NHS Tayside budget over the next four years.

This will mean large numbers of NHS staff facing attacks on pay, increased workload and ongoing chronic under-staffing. Coordinated strike action by NHS unions across Tayside and indeed Scotland to fight the onslaught against the NHS should be built as a matter of urgency.

## Have you got some news for us?

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By Niall Mulholland

*Committee for a Workers' International*

August 2019 marked fifty years since troops were deployed on the streets of Derry and Belfast by the British Labour government of Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

The capitalist establishment described it at the time as a temporary measure to stop widespread riots and pogroms. Yet troops would patrol the streets of Northern Ireland for the next 28 years.

Establishment commentators marked the half-century by wringing their hands over the impossible situation facing the army trying to keep apart two 'warring tribes' - the Catholic pro-Irish unity nationalists and republicans, and the Protestant pro-UK unionists and loyalists. But the road to August 1969 shows that the possibility existed of successful united working-class struggle.

Following the bloody partition of Ireland by British imperialism in the early 1920s - carried out primarily to cut across national and social revolutionary movements - the minority Catholics in the new Northern Ireland state found themselves second-class citizens. They suffered systematic discrimination in jobs and housing, the repressive 'Special Power Act', and were partly disenfranchised by Unionist gerrymandering of electoral constituencies.

By the late 1960s, Catholics were no longer prepared to accept the half-century of Unionist misrule. The youth were inspired by the black civil rights struggles in the United States, as well as the global anti-Vietnam War movement and revolutionary events in France in May 1968. At first, a few hundred took to the streets of Northern Ireland, demanding an end to discrimination, and jobs and housing for all.

### October '68

In Derry, on 5 October 1968, a protest - mainly made up of left-wing organisations, including the Derry Labour Party, and its youth wing, the Derry Young Socialists - ignored a Stormont government ban on demonstrations. It was brutally attacked by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

The baton-wielding police were caught by TV cameras, igniting fury among Catholics across the North. Overnight, the civil rights struggle became a mass movement.

# 50 YEARS SINCE TROOPS WERE August 1969: the 'ba



Local residents in the Bogside, Derry defended their communities against police and Loyalist attacks

Left and socialist ideas were strong in the Derry Labour Party and Young Socialists. They not only opposed Unionist misrule, but also the conservative Nationalist Party that had failed to win any meaningful reforms for mistreated Catholics.

The Derry Labour Party and Young Socialists recognised that while Catholics suffered from institutionalised discrimination, the Protestant working class also faced widespread poverty and joblessness, and also suffered from the extreme shortage of public housing.

In the months leading up to August 1968, the labour and trade union movement had the opportunity to lead the civil rights struggle on a clear class

basis, uniting Catholic and Protestant workers. But the timid, conservative leadership - including that of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, which attracted Protestants and Catholics - stood aside from the gathering maelstrom of mass protests and riots.

They merely called for calm and welcomed the too little, too late 'reforms' by the rotten Unionist government. This handed the initiative to middle-class nationalist forces in the civil rights movement, who opposed socialist and working-class ideas and slogans.

Allowing the civil rights struggle to be cast largely in terms of rights only for Catholics was a boon for bigoted demagogues

like Ian Paisley. Diehard loyalists would always oppose the granting of any civil rights, but Paisley and his cohorts were given room to whip up wider sectarian hatreds by depicting the civil rights movement as against the interests of Protestants.

The potential for developing the left wing within the civil rights movement was exemplified by the courageous figure of the young Bernadette Devlin. She defeated a Unionist in 1969 to win the Mid Ulster Westminster MP seat.

Her People's Democracy party, formed by left-wing students at Queens University Belfast, attracted thousands of young Catholics including working-class youth, and a layer

of middle-class Protestant students.

However, many of the left civil rights leaders were beset with ultra-left and confused ideas. They tended to adapt to rival leaders' policies and vacillate under pressure, rather than consistently put forward a clear class position and tactics.

Some agitated for the capitalist-dominated UN to send 'peace forces' to the North. But like the British Army, UN troops would primarily be there to protect big business, private property and capitalist law and order.

Supporters and future supporters of Militant - the then name for Committee for a Workers' International groups in Ire-



# SENT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

## 'Battle of the Bogside'



British troops stayed in Northern Ireland for decades after 1969, photo Jeanne Boleyn



**It was not the army but the actions of working-class people taking to the streets across the North that stemmed conflict and stopped a descent into full-scale civil war.**

king of idealists and do-gooders presented a broader facade. This has now largely been shed, however, apart from an element of radical Socialists and Communists.

"At grass roots the Movement has now crystallised into the familiar 'green' composed of Republicans and Nationalists, but still, as I have said, containing a vociferous minority grouping of Trotskyites or Revolutionary Socialists."

As 1969 wore on, especially in the lead-up to the Protestant Orange 'marching season', a backlash against the civil rights struggle led to sectarian tensions. The prospect of the annual 15,000-strong Protestant 'Apprentice Boys' parade marching past the Catholic Bogside in Derry raised the spectre of a pogrom and sectarian fighting spreading across the North.

In Derry, a citizens' defence committee was established. In areas of Belfast, local 'vigilante' and 'defence' groups sprung up, often involving both Catholics and Protestants in 'mixed areas' aiming to keep bigots out of their communities.

The right-wing trade union and labour leaders failed to capitalise on these grassroots initiatives. They made no effort to bring together genuine defence groups with organised labour, community groups and tenants' associations into a powerful anti-sectarian force.

On 12 August, Derry Labour Party and Young Socialists attempted to restrain Bogside youth, but inevitably stones were thrown at Apprentice Boys marchers. Fighting ensued, and the RUC launched a full-scale attack against the Bogside.

### Uprising

What became known as the "Battle of the Bogside" was a two-day uprising by the working class and youth of the area. They erected barricades and rained down a hail of stones and petrol bombs on the RUC's repeated attempts to invade. Catholics in other parts of the North took to the streets to stretch the police.

Under pressure from mass anger in the South, the taoiseach (Irish prime minister),

Jack Lynch, said his government would not "stand idly by." Irish military field hospitals were to be set up across the border from Derry in Donegal. Although a token act, this was enough to enrage Protestant feelings in the North.

With the ill-trained and ill-equipped RUC facing defeat, the Unionist Northern Ireland government called up the notorious B-Specials, an armed, bigoted Protestant police reserve. This posed the prospect of a bloodbath in the Bogside leading to civil war.

Britain's Wilson government decided to act to stop this possibility, deploying troops onto the streets of Derry. Given the historic crimes visited upon Ireland by British imperialist rule, it is clear this was not done on humanitarian grounds.

Civil war would have destroyed trade, private property and the economy in Ireland - and with it, bosses' profits. Conflict would have spread to British cities with sizeable Irish populations. Anger among the large Irish-American population would have led to demands for a damaging economic boycott of Britain.

As it became clear that troops were not going to invade the Bogside, a temporary uneasy calm descended on Derry. In Belfast it was a different matter, with fierce sectarian rioting erupting.

The RUC fired machine gun rounds indiscriminately in the Catholic Falls Road. Seven people were killed in the fighting and over 700 injured. Entire streets were burnt out and residents forced to flee their homes. British troops were also then stationed in Belfast.

Many civil rights leaders welcomed the deployment of troops. Many on the Left, in Ireland and Britain, gave way partially or fully to the mood of support for the army's presence. In contrast, Militant gave a clear class position and took a principled stand.

The headline of the September issue of the monthly Militant newspaper demanded the withdrawal of the troops. Militant warned: "The call made for the entry of the British troops will turn to vinegar in the mouths of some of the civil rights leaders. The troops have been sent to impose a solution in the interests of British and Ulster big business."

It was not the army but the actions of working-class people taking to the streets across the North that stemmed conflict and stopped a descent into full-scale civil war.

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land and Britain - played an important role in the Derry Young Socialists, but our forces were too small to influence events.

A recently declassified police file, published in the Derry Journal of 2 July 2019, shows the RUC was quite accurate in its assessment of the political balance of forces in the civil rights movement.

In a 4 July 1969 intelligence memo requested by Northern Ireland's home affairs minister, Robert Porter, RUC county inspector David Johnston surmised that three elements vied for control of the movement: "the Nationalists; the Derry moderates of the Action Committee; and the People's Democracy Trotskyites."

Notably, Johnston found "Betty Sinclair & Co" - Sinclair was a leading member of the reformist Communist Party of Northern Ireland - a "reckonable force."

Although the IRA hardly existed at the time, following the failure of its armed 'border campaign' in the 1950s, Johnston added that the "official Republican Movement... IRA, Sinn Féin and the Republican Clubs," were playing an "active role."

Albeit disparaging, the RUC officer showed the class potential of the civil rights' struggle: "In composition the Movement was and is Catholic, but in the beginning a Protestant sprin-

# Join Socialist Students and fight for a future

**William Campbell**  
*Aberdeen Socialist Students*

This autumn many students from across the UK will be starting their higher and further education in colleges and universities. The news of students earning lower pass rates in Scotland in Highers is a symptom of the larger problem of SNP cuts to the education system and pressure on teaching staff to keep up with demands arising from increased workload.

This coupled with the cuts to youth services, jobs and widespread usage of zero-hour contracts have meant narrower prospects for students who haven't been given a place in already limited courses in higher education.

Clearly when left to the Tories, the Scottish government and private companies, none of them are up to the task of offering a brighter future to young people.

Only a radical socialist programme that orientates to the needs of workers and young people rather than profit, backed by a mass movement of workers and youth, can deliver much-needed prospects for those wanting to learn a trade or enter education.

Students in Scotland on average leave university with a

debt of £13,000. The reformation of higher education into a money-making racket by managements has led to universities and colleges using other means to increase the overall cost of attending higher education, thus students having to apply for the maximum loans offered to cover living expenses.

Increases in the cost of rented accommodation owned by the university can be more expensive than private rented sector in some areas of the country, with Edinburgh and Aberdeen being the highest.

This also led to the number of students having to work longer and longer weekly hours to cover these costs, which often erode the recommended studying time of 35 hours a week.

## privateers

Privateers profit on many campuses such as UWS, where staff face hundreds of redundancies. Students and staff need to fight together against these cuts.

The ever-increasing financial burden from both fees and living costs continues to squeeze out students from working-class backgrounds out of higher education. For as

long as the current system of marketisation of higher education continues, the total student debt in the UK will continue to rise.

To fully combat this broken system would firstly require a mass mobilisation of workers and young people in support of socialist policies which took power away from corporate, capitalist-controlled minority and handed to working class and young people.

To rebuild society under a centrally planned, democratically controlled economy, including that of public services such as higher education.

Where education is democratically run by teaching staff and students to lift people out of poverty and transform society from a profit-driven circus for the 1% to a socialist society that meets the needs of all workers and young people.



Socialist Students campaigns to end cuts and to build a mass student movement that links up with the trade unions to fight for socialist policies.

### Socialist Students Scotland demands:

- For the Scottish government to implement 'living grants' for all, scrap the loan system and write off all student debt.
- Rent control in university owned accommodation, as well as across public and private rented accommodation. Kick the private vultures out of education.
- Abolish tuition fees for all, free, fully publicly funded education from nursery to university. No to a graduate tax.
- Build a mass campaign of workers, students and youth organised through student's unions and associations linking up with the trade unions to bring down the Tories. For a Corbyn government with socialist policies.

## August 1969: 'The battle of the Bogside', 50 years on

.....continued from page 9

Shop stewards in the large factories and workplaces followed the lead of shipyard shop stewards, who called a mass meeting which voted for a brief strike opposing conflict. In this context, Militant advocated armed trade union-based defence forces.

### labour

Rather than support these initiatives and coordinate them, the labour and trade union leaders applauded the Unionist regime's measly re-

forms and called for the street barricades to be taken down. This abdication of leadership helped provide space for other emerging forces.

The Provisional IRA ('Provos') split from the Official IRA a few months later, citing the failure of the leadership to offer any widespread defence of Catholic areas in August.

Loyalist paramilitary organisations like the UDA and UVF soon set about their murderous sectarian campaigns.

The failure of Northern Ireland Labour Party leaders to offer a socialist alternative, instead taking a one-sided, pro-



**The labour and trade union movement had the opportunity to lead the civil rights struggle on a clear class basis, uniting Catholic and Protestant workers... but stood aside.**

Unionist position, saw the effective demise of that party in the 1970s.

New sectarian-based parties came to prominence. A British

army curfew of the Lower Falls in the summer of 1970 marked the end of any lingering Catholic honeymoon with the troops.

Many on the Left who previously supported British troops being deployed became cheerleaders for the Provos' armed campaign.

From the start, Militant warned that the Provos' divisive campaign of individual terror, based on a minority within a minority of the population, would alienate Protestant workers, deepen sectarian divisions, and fail to achieve republican aims.

August 1969 was a serious

setback for the working class. Half a century on, the 'peace process' sees society still divided along sectarian lines, and the power-sharing Northern Ireland Assembly suspended for over two years. Brexit, the 'backstop', and a possible future 'border poll', all indicate how overcoming sectarian divisions remains insoluble under capitalism.

As in 1969, only by building a mass party of the working class with socialist policies can workers defeat the Green and Orange bosses, overcome sectarianism, and lead the fight for a socialist transformation of society.

# Is the world economy heading for a crash?



Recessionary fears are stalking the world economy

**Ronnie Stevenson**  
Glasgow

A recent editorial in the Economist began with: "Looking for meaning in financial markets is like looking for patterns in a violent sea. The information that emerges is the product of buying and selling by people with all their contradictions".

The overwhelming mood of these people - the bankers, the investors, the so-called finance experts - is anxiety.

The lowering of interest rates means now that some lenders are using negative rates, meaning the borrowers have to pay less back than they borrowed - madness to you and me.

The interest rates on government bonds for a ten-year period are now below the two-year rates, a phenomenon which has been a precursor to recession in the US over the past 100 years.

The markets, depending as they do on people's reaction to their reading of the signs they observe are complex and, because of the comparison with gambling, just as hit or a miss.

Meanwhile despite what some political leaders seeking votes in elections say, none of the richest economies in the world are reporting strong economic growth. In fact they report economic prospects which are far from rosy.

There are also tensions between governments, the cen-

tral banks, the stock exchanges and big business about what is the best way forward.

The markets are reflecting the uncertainty and often show a retreat away from investment, despite the low interest rates being set by the Central banks.

Recent reports in the serious journals of big business around the world tell a different story from the politicians.

Germany, the powerhouse of the European economy, recently reported that imports climbed more than expected in June whilst exports were almost flat. This and the trade surplus falling and other poor data have signalled that the world's fourth largest economy may be teetering on the edge of recession.

A similar picture is emerging in France. Industrial production dropped 2.3% month-on-month in June. Billions of Euros of tax cuts have failed to stimulate household consumption, causing a dip in the economic growth. The net result is that fears for a recession in Europe are deepening.

## trade wars

In the US, Trump's increase in tariffs with all the major trading blocs around the world have set off trading wars, particularly with China.

These conflicts have set off sharp falls in financial markets around the world. It has increased prices for the Ameri-

can people which contributed to lower spending. In turn this puts pressure on US business which invests less. Despite Trump's claims about continuing growth in the American economy a trade war will have the opposite effect.

We should remember Trump's claims about increasing the income of people in America really only applies to the richest 1%. The vast majority in the US have seen no increase in spending power. In fact taken with all his other policies, cutting welfare, education spending etc, has led to a fall in living standards.

In Britain, the threat of recession hangs over the economy despite Johnson's declared intention to put "rocket boosters" under the economy.

The uncertainty of a no-deal Brexit or the current negotiated deal plays its part. The recent contraction in Gross Domestic Product reflected a weaker than expected performance in almost every part of the economy, with a sharp fall in manufacturing and construction output, a renewed slump in business investment and barely positive growth in the service sector.

In Britain, Brexit has driven a wedge between big business and the Tories - the party which they see as their safe pair of hands to run the country. In the US, the economic policies of Trump are in direct conflict with the Federal Reserve.

We could go to virtually any

country in the world and similar types of conflicts between the "leaders" is present. Even in China the rate of growth of the economy has fallen dramatically.

Into this economic stagnation has been thrown the Trump initiated imposition of tariffs and the breaking of decades old trade agreements between the US and major trading blocs throughout the world.

Trade wars introduce another major source of uncertainty for business in the decisions they make about investing, the engine of economic growth.

More importantly workers are the major victims of trade wars. In the US and China they are suffering increased prices but also actual job losses and wage cuts. (More on the US-China Trade war at [www.socialismtoday.org](http://www.socialismtoday.org))

There is nothing more that big business dislikes than uncertainty. It can add to the mood of anxiety and the greater chance of a recession in the next few months/years.

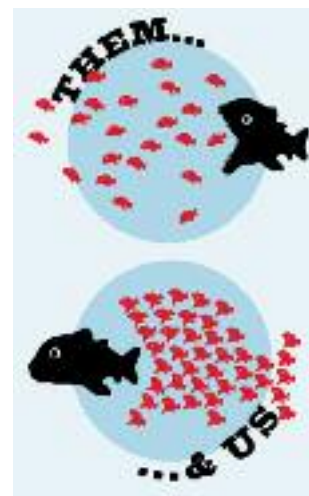
## joyless recovery

The "joyless recovery" experienced by the working class globally since the 2007/08 crisis could just be the precursor to a new downturn before long.

The victims will be the working class and the beginnings of fightback we are already seeing could intensify. In addition the numbers seeing capitalism - the private ownership of the global productive forces - as the problem will increase in the wake of new world crisis.

The future of humanity and the planet depends on the political character of that fightback. Clearly the insipid reaction of a majority of the leaders of the trade unions to the crisis, and the various political parties to which the working class give their allegiance, is no match for the depth of the crisis.

Fighting socialist policies that offer a complete rupture from the capitalist market are essential. Public ownership, democratic workers' control and socialist planning is crucial. It will become increasingly obvious that only fundamental socialist change is the key to a decent future for humanity.



## A Royal Eviction

The Crown Estate, a property portfolio owned by the Queen, has been evicting people. It wanted to sell the properties for profit.

Since 2014, she's made £1.1 billion in property sales. Over 100 tenants were evicted 2014-18.

And there have been 100 complaints about the state of her stock since 2017. She even received £250,000 paid via housing benefit.

We need rent control to cap rents. The construction companies and massive landlords should have their resources nationalised under the democratic control of the working class, so everyone can be given somewhere cheap and suitable to live.

## School Students can strike....once a year

In a profoundly undemocratic move, Edinburgh council, a Labour/SNP coalition, has voted to restrict school walkouts to once a year.

Since March, school students in Edinburgh have been taking part in monthly walkouts to protest the threat to the environment and government inaction. Now the council has said striking for more than one day a year will mean young people are taking an "unauthorised absence" from school.

Quite rightly young activists have responded with a defiant message: "We will keep striking no matter what and we will keep challenging the council on this."

## Scottish Green membership drops

Scottish Green membership has fallen by 30% since 2015, despite the growing movement on the environment.

Scottish Green MSPs have supported SNP cuts budgets at Holyrood years. The result is deep cuts to council budgets and the slashing of public services. The "anti-austerity" Greens are being exposed by their inaction.

# END UNIVERSAL CREDIT NIGHTMARE

Lucas Smith Grant

Aberdeen

A few weeks ago, I conducted an interview in order to gain insight and a personal experience of being on Universal Credit. This personal testimony does not simply apply to Mr. X but is also a story of many different people and their experiences with the system.

Mr. X left Job Seekers Allowance in January and applied for Universal Credit, which proved to be an absolute nightmare. Mrs. X, who is also on Universal Credit, found it extremely demanding as she struggled with technology, a qualification that is ultimately required to operate within the system.

Some of the documentation required included a passport, a driving license, a household bill and any other form of identification.

The first time these documents were submitted they were not accepted or recognised by the system, the second time these were met by little success also.

Mr. X had to set up a second account, which still met with little success, he eventually had to go to the job centre in order to find help. In these early days, he talks about the intense feeling of getting the run-around by this system, it

was a pure nightmare.

When Mr. X finally got through and was accepted, then the work really began for him. When a person is on Universal Credit, they must prove they are searching for work perpetually while they are on the system, uploading CV's seemingly constantly and must prove by method of creating logs which must account for 35 hours a week of job seeking.

They must provide constantly up to date records of day to day activity. Mr. X, in particular, has to do a lot of his wife's job seeking due to a lack of confidence on computers and a wrist injury sustained earlier this year, this means that Mr. X has to prepare 70 hours of logs per week. During her recovery time, the Department for Work and Pensions assessed her as fit to do part-time work, something that was out of the question at the time, this happened even with a doctor's line.

Skills Development Scotland, Scotland's national skills agency, has been a great help to him and his wife in building these crucial skills. Along with other public services such as libraries most people on Universal Credit would run into serious trouble, as many cannot afford computers due to the situation of unemployment, and with the small sum of money available to those on

universal credit, buying such an item is not feasible for most.

Mr. X stated categorically just how much of a strain it is for him, the people he knows and everyone else working through the trials and tribulations of this system in order to gain the means to live, not to mention people with advanced and serious forms of poor health that are struggling to keep afloat.

## sanctions

He speaks about the tasks that must be carried out on UC with updating every day and seeing a coach every few weeks. He recalls a man in the Job Centre who had not kept up to date with his log who had to be restrained as he had become desperate for money because it had been sanctioned, which can be some of the money or all of it.

The sheer amount of job seeking he undertakes every day for him and his wife is huge. He showed me the materials he uses, he has an almost full notepad of A4 paper just for Universal Credit. He also showed me a piece of paper with 30 websites that he uses for jobseeking that he accesses daily, as well as jobs pages in local newspapers.

People are cracking under the pressure and quite a few



people have committed suicide.

Socialist Party Scotland campaigns for the scrapping the Tories' rotten Universal Credit, replacing it with a more humane system that fully covers the cost of living and does not require people to jump through hoops in order to receive the most basic of living requirements, one that

does not penalise the poor for being unemployed.

We fight for a massive programme of public investment to create jobs, paying a living wage and trade union rights from day one.

We must strive for a socialist world providing jobs that will be readily available in a democratically structured and centrally planned economy.

# YOUNG SOCIALISTS INSPIRED BY MARX FIGHT FOR UNIONS

Oisín Duncan and

William Campbell

Young Socialists, Scotland

Members of the 'Young Socialists - Young Workers' Rights' campaign met for a national day of action in Dundee city centre on 6 August.

We demanded a minimum wage of £10 an hour and the scrapping of zero-hour contracts.

Our call on young workers to join trade unions was met with a warm response.

We teamed up to talk to workers inside JD sports, Subway, Burger King, McDonald's and Home Bargains.

One young worker in Subway asked for a further handful of leaflets to hand out to

other members of staff and hang up in the break room. We then marched through the city centre calling on young workers to join the Young Socialists and the fight for a proper living wage.

After our activity we held a discussion on the fundamentals of Marxist economics, introduced by Dundee Socialist Party Scotland members Maddie, a fast food worker, and Wayne, a factory worker.

We can see parallels with "primitive accumulation" - Marx's description of how capitalists came to own the means of production in the first place - in Brazil's far-right president Jair Bolsonaro opening up increased logging in the Amazon rainforest.

And we can see a new global

capitalist crisis on the way in both the trade war between China and the US and the related stock market fluctuations over the past days and weeks.

But of course the most central finding of Marx was that of "surplus value."

While at their job, workers create more value through their labour than they receive back in their wages.

Where does this "surplus" go? To the boss - who in Marx's time might have reinvested some in expanding production. Nowadays the capitalists are reluctant even to invest.

This relationship between boss and worker creates a tension in the workplace which expresses itself through class struggle.



Campaigning in Dundee

The Socialist Party views Marx's economic theories not as academic pieces but as a call to action, for the working

class to take hold of the economic levers in society and turn them to a democratic plan of production...

# THE BATTLE TO SAVE THE PLANET: SOCIALIST CHANGE OR CLIMATE CATASTROPHE



School students have been striking since February to defend the planet against climate catastrophe

## Patryk Krayczuk

*Glasgow Young Socialists*

July 2019 was the hottest month ever recorded. That's the word from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which tallied up global land and sea temperature recordings from July and compared them to its 140-year data set, stretching back to 1880.

We are living through a climate catastrophe. That is the stark conclusion from the recent IPCC report, which shows how big business control of land means production for the sole goal of short-term profit.

And how this corporate control of land means the continuation of the dominance of fossil fuel industries, which are dependent on the raw materials that lead to deforestation and desertification.

The IPCC show Agriculture, Forestry and other land use activities accounted for around 13% of CO<sub>2</sub>, 44% of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and 82% of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from human activities globally

during 2007-2016. This means increased global heating is caused by endless pollution that is a consequence of the capitalist system. This endless pollution is destroying the local environment and ecosystem as well as increasing greenhouse gas level, destabilising both the local, and global climate.

This destabilisation is leading to droughts, soil erosion, wildfires and the shocking images of permafrost thawing in the poles.

This will directly cause outbreaks of famine and hunger as crop yields drop, increased extreme-weather and natural disasters, as well as the increased inability to respond to them. Reduced production and profit will also hit the capitalist economy, driving economic crisis as the world burns around it.

The increased control over the Amazon rainforest as a result of loosening regulations by the far-right Bolsonaro in Brazil has led to massive amounts of destruction of the

Amazon rainforest. The loosening of regulations has led to control of land by mining and agricultural corporations which clear-cut the forest, invade indigenous villages, murder the indigenous people, increase wildfire risk and destroy the rainforest, and then seep all the valuable resources out of the land in their pursuit of profits.

The drama of record temperatures this summer is epitomised by the shocking NASA satellite images of an 84% increase in forest fires in the Amazon. At the time of writing, the Amazon is ablaze as São Paulo is plunged into darkness in the middle of the day. Bolsonaro looks on happily at our burning future - more forest burned means for him and the multi-national corporations only more land cleared for mining and agriculture, and more profits.

The report urges drastic changes in land use and food production in order to reduce emissions but in reality you cannot control what you do not own in a capitalist system

based on private ownership.

Capitalists are rapacious in accumulating land, in effect future wealth at as low cost as possible, to create the conditions for investment, to quickly exploit for profit.

This is the driving force behind right wing populists Bolsonaro plans to destroy large swathes of the planet's lungs in the Amazon rainforest and even one reason behind Trump's crazed proposal to buy Greenland from Denmark to exploit mineral wealth and drill away the natural resources of Alaska.

The IPCC reference the climate crimes of the bosses but mainly outline individual solutions including urging a reduction in food waste in the advanced capitalist world. But it is the working class families struggling to survive who are responsible for the cheap, mass packaging of food items in the supermarket giants?

How could we really radically change food production sustainably? Under capitalism the drive in agriculture has been to 'get big or get out'.

This has been hugely environmentally damaging from being a net producer of greenhouse gases, soil erosion, pollution from agrichemicals and damaging biodiversity.

Eco-friendly 'cover cropping' and 'no-till farming' techniques can often build soil quality while making farms a carbon sink rather than emitter. But as long as short-term profit and the dictates of the main food processing industries and retailers reign supreme, the most eco-friendly methods will not be a priority.

## socialist plan

Socialists advocate taking the big landed estates and tracts of land owned by agribusiness into public ownership, along with the big food production companies and retail firms. This would allow the development of sustainable agriculture.

Under public ownership the supply chains could be opened up to link up a publicly owned supermarket distribution network to corner shops, etc. This, combined with a nationalised financial sector that could supply cheap loans would massively relieve some of the pressures on small business owners in the sector and would encourage fuller integration with a socialist plan.

Such a plan would attempt to source as much produce and goods in local areas in order to reduce 'food miles', meaning fresher produce and less environmental impact.

Decisions on what to stock would be made by local elected committees representing shop workers, consumers and representatives from the wider food supply network, with data on purchasing habits, etc, used to help guide discussions.

This would eradicate much of the wasteful duplication that currently exists in the food industry and give people real, informed choices about what we eat. Undoubtedly, our relationship to food would continue to develop once free of the shackles that capitalism places upon our lives.

# Kashmir: Stop the attack on democratic rights

The scrapping of Jammu and Kashmir's 'special status' and imposing brutal direct rule by Narendra Modi's right-wing Hindu-nationalist BJP government, has significantly increased repression in Kashmir and ratcheted up tension between the Indian and Pakistan governments. **New Socialist Alternative**, CWI section in India, and **CWI supporters in Pakistan** have issued a joint statement condemning the BJP government's latest repressive move and calling on the working class to defend democratic rights, including self-determination for the people of Kashmir - a right that cannot be realised under capitalism but requires a socialist transformation of the sub-continent. A shortened version of the statement is carried below.

The ruling BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) regime in India has once again displayed its contempt and aversion to democracy. This regime had been increasing its armed forces to the tune of 35,000 in the Kashmir valley (which is already one of the most militarised regions in the world), citing bogus 'terrorist' threats.

When the Rajya Sabha (upper house of Indian parliament) convened, Home Minister Amit Shah announced from the floor that their regime had decided to scrap Articles 370 and 35A.

These articles gave 'special status' to the region of Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP government also went on to propose splitting the Kashmir state into two Union Territories (UTs) - Kashmir and Jammu as UTs, with legislatures, and Ladakh as a UT without a legislature.

This decision comes at a time when the democratically elected government of Jammu and Kashmir has recently been scrapped and Indian Presidential rule imposed.

This regressive move was also supported by other regional parties like the Uttar Pradesh-based Bahujan Samaj Party (which claims to be a party of the oppressed), Andhra Pradesh's Telugu Desam Party, etc.

The opposition, led by the Indian National Congress with the left parties - People's Democratic Party in Kerala, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam also in Tamil Nadu, and various other parties, all protested against this blatant attack on the constitution. The Communist Party of India announced protests in Delhi and burned effigies of BJP leaders.

However, none of these parties, including the Communist Party, has stood for the national rights of Kashmiris. Some of these parties are now using the situation to oppose BJP rule as nationalist tensions in many states, particu-



Solidarity with Kashmir protest in London

larly in the south, have been mounting over recent years.

These tensions flow from the attempt of the BJP government to create 'one country' - introducing a sectarian national citizen registration for 'checking genuine Indian citizenship', one taxation system and one language - which has faced huge opposition. But the BJP's attempt to 'integrate India' is destined to fail as India has never been one nation state.

The support for the government's move by a section of the liberal media also exposes the deluded stance of Indian liberals who believe Kashmir 'belongs' to India.

This lays bare the fact that even after 70 years of independence, Indian politicians have only replaced the British rulers with local rulers who have utter disregard for the people.

While the present crisis has been created by the ruling BJP, Congress created the mechanisms that the BJP is using now to suppress the national rights of the people of Kash-

mir. The confused stance of the various left parties and their failure to address the national question of this country has also to an extent contributed the current crisis.

The people of Kashmir have lost thousands of lives in this long drawn out conflict. The BJP-led Indian state is now preparing for the brutal suppression of any opposition that may emerge in Kashmir.

## Renewed war

Of course they will also blame this on Pakistan. The Pakistani state in turn will use this opportunity to whip up patriotic support to cut across the opposition to the ruthless International Monetary Fund demanded privatisations that they are carrying out. Existing tension at the border is likely to escalate further, even into an outright war between the two nuclear-armed powers. This could cause the loss of lives of tens of thousands. India is a prison house of na-

tionalties. Various regions that were brought together under British rule by force have never established a real union. The Congress party, became the main culprit in the recent past behind the brutality that exists in Kashmir. It's significant that various regional parties and the so-called left parties have come forward to oppose the attack on Kashmir. However, their opposition is very limited.

Historically, both 'communist' parties - the CPI and CPI (M) - have opposed the nationality rights of the Kashmiri people. Article 370 is defended as it is part of the Indian constitution. They never stood for the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination despite that right being included in the initial pact of 1947.

## self-determination

As socialists, we stand for the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people. Of course this demand cannot be applied mechanically to the

whole region. Due to past history and the policy of divide and rule - Kashmir is now divided into many regions with varying interests. The ruling BJP government is trying to further divide the region to control and plunder wealth.

The fate of this region should be determined by the people living in it. This can only be realised by linking up the struggle of the workers, peasants and poor in Kashmir, India, Pakistan and other countries in the region to end the grip of capitalism and landlordism once and for all.

The socialist transformation of society will emancipate the masses from oppression.

Defending the national rights of all oppressed peoples in the region - whether it be in Kashmir, other parts of India and Pakistan or in Sri Lanka - means struggling for a voluntary confederation of socialist states on the basis of public ownership and democratic control to be able to plan and share the resources in the region to the benefit of all.

# CWI re-founded

Hannah Sell

*CWI International Secretariat*

At an historic meeting held in London between July 22nd and 25th over 200 delegates and visitors to an international conference of the International Faction, 'In Defence of a Working Class Trotskyist CWI' took the decision to re-found the Committee for a Workers' International.

Present at the meeting were delegates and visitors from England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, Austria, Finland, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Chile, South Africa and the USA. Unfortunately, comrades from South Africa and Nigeria who had planned to attend could not due to visa problems.

This decision has followed an intense debate and political struggle in the CWI over the last seven months. This political struggle has been fought between those represented at this meeting who defend the Trotskyist method and programme the CWI was founded on in 1974 and a petty bourgeois opposition.

This opposition has taken a right-ward opportunist turn, buckled to the pressures of identity politics, turned away from conducting a systematic and consistent struggle in the trade unions and blunted the revolutionary socialist programme that the CWI and its sections have fought to defend.

The conference in London had lively discussions on the world situation and the tasks facing the working class and socialists, the revolutionary and counter revolutionary upheavals taking place in the neo-colonial world and also a balance sheet of the recent debate in the CWI and tasks for building the re-founded CWI in the coming period.

The re-founded CWI was constituted on the basis of the first four congresses of the Comintern, the founding documents of the IV International in 1938 and the congresses of the CWI. The determination and confidence of those present and represented at this conference was reflected in the collection which raised over £25,000.

The conference agreed that the International Secretariat will seek to convene a world congress in 2020 of CWI sections and groups that defend the programme of the CWI and also invite revolutionary socialist organisations which are committed to building revolutionary socialist parties based on the working class and which are prepared to discuss and collaborate on an honest and principled basis.

The International Secretariat of the CWI will publish a fuller report of this crucial meeting in London and material related to the debate which has taken place in the coming week which has crucial lessons for all workers' and revolutionary socialists.

On Sunday 21 July over 200 delegates at a special conference of the Socialist Party in England and Wales voted overwhelmingly, 84% to 16% (173 – 35 with 0 abstentions) to sponsor the refounding conference.

We defend the programme and approach of the Socialist Party which historically, in an era of heightened working class struggle, enabled us to lead the struggles of Liverpool City Council and the battle against the poll tax, the latter bringing down Maggie Thatcher.

We were also central to numerous struggles against racism and the far right. At the present time our methods have allowed us to orientate effectively to those mobilised in support of Jeremy Corbyn, campaigning for the removal of the Blairites and the transformation of Labour into a workers' party with a socialist programme.

Most importantly, we are building a party based on a clear socialist programme, currently over 2,000 members strong, which will be able to play a vital role in the mighty struggles of the working class which are ahead.

Socialist Party Scotland participated in the re-founding conference of the CWI. Our delegates and visitors fully supported the decisions taken to ensure the continuation of a serious revolutionary international organisation based on the ideas of the CWI since its creation in 1974.



## what we stand for

Socialist Party Scotland fights for a socialist society, democratically run for the needs of all and not for the profits of the few. We oppose every cut and austerity measure by fighting in the trade unions, communities, colleges and schools for every possible improvement in the lives of working class people. Organised, we, the working class and the 99%, have the potential to change society. Socialist Party Scotland is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a socialist organisation that organises in over 40 countries.

[www.socialistworld.net](http://www.socialistworld.net)

### work and income

- For trade union action for an immediate £10 an hour minimum wage. No age exemptions. For an annual increase in the minimum wage, linked to average earnings.
- Reject Workfare; for the right to decent benefits, training or a job without compulsion.
- A maximum 35-hour week without loss of pay.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, sickness and holiday rights from the first day of employment. End zero-hour contracts.
- Scrap the anti-union laws. Build fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time officials should be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstate the link with average earnings now.

### environment

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy. End the problems of early obsolescence and unrecycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy industry. No to nuclear power. No to Trident
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly owned transport system, to protect the environment.

### public services

- Fight all cuts. No to privatisation. Renationalise all privatised utilities and services.
- Free, high quality education for all from nursery to university; with a living grant.



New pamphlet available now

No to the return of tuition fees in Scotland. Cancel the student debt and end the cuts in education funding.

- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out the private contractors from all parts of the NHS.
- Keep council housing public. For a massive programme of publicly owned housing to provide good quality homes at low rents.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of workers and service users.

### rights

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

### A mass working class party

- For a mass workers' party that draws together workers, young people and activists to build a political alternative to the big business parties.
- Trade unions should play a central role in helping to build a new workers' party.

### socialism and internationalism

- Tax the rich. For a socialist government that takes the major companies in Scotland into public ownership. Run them under democratic working class control and management. Compensation should be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- For an independent socialist Scotland. A free and voluntary socialist federation of Scotland with England Wales and Ireland.
- A democratic socialist, environmentally secure plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority.
- No to the bosses European Union. For a socialist Europe and a socialist world free from poverty.

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## CAPITALISM IS DESTROYING THE EARTH

# FIGHT TO SAVE THE PLANET



## SOCIALIST CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE

**Patryk Krayczuk**  
*Glasgow Young Socialists*

Socialist Students and Young Socialists are building across colleges and schools for the Climate Strike on September 20. We are also working with trade unionists to build an even stronger movement.

Tens of thousands of young people in Britain have participated in the Climate Strikes and protests since February, with many school students walking out.

We welcome this important movement and on Sept 20 the chance to link up in joint action with the most powerful

force in society, the organised working class and trade union movement is a step forward.

Glasgow City Unison, who played a key role in the successful mass Equal Pay strike in October 2018, are supporting the strike day and have passed a motion calling on council workers to support the

action. The motion says that "climate is a trade union issue, the future of our planet is at risk if we don't organise now... we recognise the capitalist system driven by profit over human need is incapable of solving the climate crisis.

"Fundamentally the pollutant industries need to be

brought into democratic public ownership and workers control with a socialist plan to transition to renewable energy and create green jobs".

It's now an urgent task for us to fight for a socialist future to stop the climate catastrophe that is engulfing the planet.

....See Page 13 for more