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THE COMMUNIST



TOWARDS A REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY!

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FOR A NEW ARAB REVOLUTION!



WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

If you are a communist, and you want to overthrow this rotten system, then it's time to get organised! We are founding a new party: the Revolutionary Communist Party. And we appeal to you to join us!

Communism is not just a good idea or an identity. It means replacing capitalism, based on private profit and exploitation, with a new classless society based upon the principle "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need".

We put forward a communist programme to answer the problems faced by the working class:

- **Drive out this hated Tory government! No confidence in Starmer's Labour**, who intend to continue with the same Tory policies! The working class must resist all attacks, from whatever quarter.
- **Fight for a £20 per hour minimum wage, rising with prices.** If the capitalists say they can't afford this, we say: to hell with capitalism!
- **No to job cuts and redundancies.** Share out work without loss of pay, immediately lowering the working week to 30 hours or less.
- **For a fully publicly-owned and free health service**, under workers' control and management. Reverse all privatisation and outsourcing.
- **Nationalise the energy, rail, and water monopolies**, and the big supermarket chains and distributors, without compensation.
- **Build a million council homes a year.** Nationalise the land, construction companies, and banks to provide the resources to accomplish this. Expropriate the parasitic landlord class.
- **Repeal the anti-trade union laws.** No to class compromise. All union officials to be regularly elected, with the right of immediate recall by the members. Officials should receive no more than the average wage of a skilled worker.
- **For the real emancipation of women.** End all forms of discrimination. Equal pay for work of equal value. For free, quality public nurseries and social care.
- **Abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords.**
- **Scrap tuition fees and student rents.** For free education and full maintenance grants for all.
- **No to austerity! Reverse the cuts! Expropriate the bankers and billionaires!**
- **Nationalise the 100 biggest banks and monopolies** – under workers' control and management – without compensation, as part of a socialist economic plan

The capitalist system cannot be reformed. It must be overthrown. We fight for world revolution: for a Socialist Federation of Britain, linked to a Socialist United States of Europe and a World Socialist Federation, in order to plan resources internationally for the benefit of all.

To be victorious, we need a fighting, communist leadership in the working class. That is what we are building. We have made outstanding progress in the recent period, growing by leaps and bounds. But we still need to massively expand our forces.

That is why we are calling on you to join us. The revolution needs you! With your help and sacrifice, we can succeed! •

FORWARD TO THE RCP

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newsdesk@communist.red
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"Whoever expects a 'pure' socialist revolution will never live to see it.. Inevitably, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and backward workers will participate in it – without such participation, mass struggle is impossible – and they will bring into the movement their reactionary prejudices. But objectively they will attack capital, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley, and outwardly fragmented, mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, capture power, and overthrow the bourgeoisie."

Lenin, *The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*



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GALLOWAY'S ROCHDALE WIN: A KICK IN THE FACE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT

Adam Booth,
The Communist editorial board

George Galloway's victory in the Rochdale by-election has left the ruling class trembling.

The establishment are fearful of the potentially explosive impact that the veteran anti-imperialist agitator could have on British politics, as anger mounts over the war in Gaza – anger directed against all the Westminster warmongers and their rotten system.

The government's response to the Rochdale results reveals their panic. Within hours of Galloway's win, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, standing outside Number 10, was warning the nation of the "threat to Britain's democracy" posed by "extremists".

And how are the Tories going to protect our cherished 'democracy' – by attacking our democratic freedoms!

Humiliating defeat

The outcome in Rochdale reveals the discontent towards all the traditional political parties. The combined vote of the Tories and Labour was less than half of that secured by Galloway.

There is no doubt that the main loser was, however: the ruling class' coiffured champion, Sir Keir Starmer.

The Labour leader was left with a bloody nose in Rochdale. His party was left trailing in fourth place, as Galloway romped home with almost 40 percent of the vote.

"Keir Starmer: this is for Gaza," Galloway declared, beginning his victory speech. "You have paid, and you will pay, a high price for the role you have played...covering for the catastrophe presently going on in occupied Palestine."

But this defeat is only the beginning of the troubles for Starmer – a harbinger of further shocks for the Labour leader, and for the future government he hopes to head.

Striking contrast

The question of Gaza clearly played a key role in Galloway's victory. Throughout his campaign, he correctly attacked Starmer's Labour for its complicity in Netanyahu's murderous crimes.

But this by-election was about more than just this burning issue. It was a rejection of the entire establishment and their arrogant antics.

At a time when out-of-touch MPs have been locking

themselves in an ivory tower, complaining about the threat of "mob rule", or decrying an "Islamist takeover", Galloway has been making every effort to connect with ordinary people and their daily concerns.

The liberal press paint him as a loony lefty, who has simply duped the people of Rochdale with his boisterous charisma. But what these elitist hacks fail to understand is that it is precisely because he stands out against the backdrop of carbon copy capitalist politicians that Galloway strikes a chord with ordinary people.

Parliament is stuffed full of crooks and charlatans. Every day brings to light new scandals, revolving around degenerate MPs and their abuses, lies, and corruption. By comparison, figures like Galloway – speaking in plain language – appear down to earth.

While the Tories are planning further savage cuts in their latest Budget, with Starmer piping in to say "me too!" to austerity, Galloway is pledging to "Make Rochdale Great Again", with promises to reopen local healthcare facilities and restore the high street.

The contrast is striking, and will not have been lost on the residents of Rochdale – or on workers across the country.

Anti-establishment

Galloway has been a perennial thorn in the side for the Labour right wing. He vocally attacked the old Blairite leaders for their imperialist adventures in Iraq, taking seats off the party in the process: first in Bethnal Green & Bow in 2005, and later in Bradford West in 2012.

Now, as MP for Rochdale, in the context of the nightmare playing out in Gaza, he could become a rallying point in Parliament for the Palestine movement, denouncing both Sunak and Starmer, and exposing the blood on their hands.

Just at a time when MPs are attempting to hide from the public's view, Galloway will be using every opportunity to shine a spotlight on them and their crimes.

And his victory could embolden other pro-Palestine independents to run – and win – in other constituencies, adding to the anti-war opposition in the House of Commons.

"Yes it's true that every Muslim is bitterly angry," Galloway explained, "but you would be very foolish [to think] that millions of other citizens aren't too."

And that is precisely the point. This was not just a protest vote over Gaza, but an indication of the intense indignation that exists everywhere towards the status quo, and the ruling class that upholds it.

Malaise and anger

Galloway's by-election win is the latest symptom of the deep malaise in society; of the anger that exists across Britain. But none of this finds an expression in the traditional organisations of the working class.

In fact, as Galloway himself has asked: why have the other 'lefts' failed to galvanise public anger against the political establishment? Why haven't Jeremy Corbyn and co. been agitating more stridently over Palestine?

The trade union leaders, meanwhile, have been noticeable by their absence. In many cases, they have actively kept their members at bay from the Palestine solidarity movement. And on the industrial front, as at Port Talbot, they have consistently dragged their feet when it comes to fighting back against the Tories and the bosses.

In effect, they are waiting for a Labour government to save them. But Starmer is certainly no knight in shining armour for the working class. And to sow such illusions is criminal.

Storm the palaces!

The Tories have a clever new strategy: to sweep their problems under the carpet by banning unruly demonstrations; to turn Fortress Britain into Fortress Westminster, and erect ever bigger walls around Parliament to keep the masses at bay.

Netanyahu is reducing Gaza to rubble. The Tory government is slashing public services to pieces. Conservative MPs are whipping up racism against Muslims and migrants. Yet, according to Rishi Sunak, it is not these scoundrels, but those fighting against his reactionary programme who are the real "extremists".

In reality, however, workers and youth have only just started to flex their muscles. Much more explosive events are yet to come.

So MPs locked away in their castle had better start digging a bigger moat. And for those looking to break down the gates, storm the palaces, and kick out these lords and ladies, we say: join the communists, get organised, and help us in the fight for revolution. •



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WORD ON THE STREET

From a schoolteacher in Hackney, London:

"I am a school teacher, I have completely lost faith with the left and reformism. Keir Starmer and his cavalry will never get a vote from me. I cannot walk into my classroom to teach young children when I have voted for Keir – it would kill me."

From an RAF airman in Lincolnshire:

"I'm quitting my job soon because of the Gaza genocide. Another RAF airman killed themselves because of the genocide and the papers hushed it up. On the bases you're either considering quitting or a far-right nutter. We aren't legally allowed to speak up but it's getting to a breaking point."

From a retired teacher living on benefits in High Wycombe:

"I don't intend to vote in the next election when every politician has repeatedly failed me. With the state of the country as it is, is it any wonder people are looking to figures like Lenin?"

WHY I'M A COMMUNIST: ONE SOLUTION - REVOLUTION!

I come from a working-class background. I've seen poverty – both personally and for many others close to me. These conditions for myself and my loved ones have led to some things being done that no one should have to do.

It became apparent to me at a young age that the system is failing. It causes wars and famine; it poisons our planet. This developed in me a desire to fight for change.

I began to understand that a successful revolution requires a strong understanding of Marxism. Communism is the only way for workers to truly escape

the crumbling system of capitalism. Without this, we will be dragged down too.

I contacted the IMT and met some comrades at a paper sale. These comrades were clearly knowledgeable, inspiring me to read more and develop my political level.

This is why I am a communist: to learn – and to help others learn – more about the theory of Marxism. This is crucial for building the Revolutionary Communist Party.

There's only one solution – revolution!
Anonymous



TORIES' SPRING BUDGET: FIDDLING WHILE BRUM BURNS

Jack Tye Wilson

Tory Chancellor Jeremy Hunt unveiled his Spring Budget on 6 March. You'd be forgiven for not noticing.

Hunt's headline announcement was a 2% cut to National Insurance (NI), costing £10bn of public money per year – a feeble bid to shore up support from the Tory right.

For most ordinary workers, this latest trim to NI will make little difference. Only those who earn more than £27,000 will feel any benefit. Those earning less than £19,000 will be up to £500 worse off! As always, the poorest in society are being pushed further into misery.

Falling apart

On top of workers' wallets being squeezed, public services are at breaking point. The NHS waiting list for non-emergency treatment has ballooned to 7.6 million, amounting to more than 10% of the UK population. A&E waiting times have skyrocketed to 12 hours in many places.

With the housing crisis showing no signs of abating, homelessness is plaguing the country. Makeshift encampments are an increasingly common sight in cities across Britain.

In the legal system, the backlog for Crown Court cases is up by 50% compared to previous years – the highest on record. It now takes over a year to process a criminal offence.

Some UK police forces have also announced that they will no longer be responding to mental health

emergencies, adding more pressure to a strained social care sector.

Alongside this smorgasbord of austerity, however, one government department that is being ring-fenced is defence. While schools and hospitals crumble at home, for want of public investment, the ruling class happily lavishes cash on bombs and missiles to destroy schools and hospitals abroad.

Local government

Dominating the news recently, however, is the massive austerity package planned for Birmingham Council, the largest local authority in Europe.

In order to fill a gaping hole in its balance sheet, the council has voted to axe £300m in spending and sell off £750m in assets – all while hiking council tax by a whopping 21%.

This all paints a dark picture of a society in decay. Ordinary people are being pushed to the brink. The crisis can be felt in every aspect of our daily lives.

And Birmingham is just the tip of the iceberg. Almost 1 in 5 council leaders expects bankruptcy in the next 15 months.

Many local councils, egged on by the Tories, are holding fire sales of public land and buildings to cover their running costs. This amounts to pawning the family silver to pay the heating bill.

This insane short-sightedness will come back to bite the establishment, with explosive consequences.

Coffers empty

Scratching away the verbiage of 'Sir' Keir Starmer and his wooden

sidekick Rachel Reeves, it is clear that Labour's programme stinks just as much as the Tories'.

Starmer's Labour are going to inherit the same crisis-ridden economy. And their agenda is already plain to see: balance the books, no matter the cost.

The state's coffers are empty. And despite the fact that everything is falling apart, public debt and taxation levels are the highest they've been since WW2.

No amount of tinkering around the edges will suffice. British capitalism is staggering around like a diseased dog, no longer able to provide living standards available to past generations.

In effect, workers are being asked to choose between death by a thousand cuts, or death by asphyxiation.

But there is a third option: to put this wretched system out of its misery. •



CITY OF A THOUSAND TRADES FACES DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS

The day before Hunt's latest Budget announcement, Birmingham City Council unleashed a devastating blow to residents, rubber-stamping the largest local authority cuts in history.

A toxic cocktail of austerity, inflation, and mismanagement has bankrupted the city. Consequently, a monstrous 30 percent slashing of the council's budget is now being prepared.

600 workers across the council are facing the sack. Everything from care for the elderly, to local art and culture is being reduced to rubble.

The lights are literally being dimmed, as darkness descends upon the city. Social care is being gutted to feed annual interest payments of £150mn to the big banks. And £1.25bn of council assets – such as buildings, land, and services – are being pawned off and privatised.

Yet none of the establishment politicians raise the idea of seizing the property of big business or the profiteers in order to pay for the welfare of the many.

Democracy has been suspended. Birmingham is now under the *de facto* dictatorship of eight

government commissioners, hand-picked by Michael Gove. They are here to implement the Tories' austerity agenda. And they will receive the tidy sum of £1000 per day for their loyal services.

This is a direct assault upon the working class of Birmingham – backed by both Sunak and Starmer, in the interests of the capitalists.

Labour councillors bemoan the dire state of the budget and shed crocodile tears. Yet they vote the cuts through regardless, doing nothing to organise a fight back.

The trade unions are beginning to organise. But without a fighting programme or strategy, the capitalist criminals will get away with social murder.

Militant action is needed. Occupying buildings; blockading streets; and unleashing the power of striking workers. Such tactics would resonate across the city, and across the entire country.

This could lay the basis for a city-wide general strike, to send the commissioners packing, and to implement a bold socialist programme that makes the bosses pay.

Thomas Soud,
Birmingham Communists

TORIES CLAMP DOWN ON 'EXTREMIST' PROTESTS – SWEEP OUT THE CAPITALIST CRIMINALS!

Olive Ruadh

As Israel's war on Gaza rages on, and the death toll rises, bourgeois politicians are busy distracting themselves with debates about parliamentary procedure.

No wonder workers and youth are taking matters into their own hands, and are confronting their elected 'representatives' over their failure to act.

Recently, for example, more than 60 protesters surrounded the home of Tory MP Tobias Ellwood, calling for "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire" in Gaza.

Heightening tensions between working-class voters and capitalist politicians have frightened the establishment. These respectable ladies and gentlemen can feel their grip on society loosening, as they and their system are brought into disrepute.

Luckily, Rishi Sunak has come to their rescue. Alarmed by Galloway's Rochdale win, and by the hostility towards out-of-touch MPs, the Prime Minister recently gave a hypocritical sermon outside Number 10 on the dangers threatening Britain's "democracy".

Performing for his party's rabid ranks, the Tory leader promised to crack down on "extremists" who "hijack protests".

This comes on top of a new "democratic policing protocol" announced by

the PM. This gives police greater powers to disperse protests outside public buildings and MPs' offices, to prevent any "distress" to the country's lawmakers and local authorities.

Tory ministers have also promised to utilise an arsenal of repressive measures – including the government's 'anti-radicalisation' Prevent programme – against those who dare to oppose their reactionary policies.

The message is loud and clear: the full force of the British state will be used to silence anyone looking to fight back against the warmongers and their system. Sunak alleges that "mob rule" has replaced "democratic rule".

We fully agree: there is an unelected, undemocratic mob of 'extremists' in charge of the country. Sunak was not elected by anyone – neither by UK voters, nor by his own party. If he wants to crack down on unruly antics, he should look to the Conservative benches, not to Britain's streets.

Stripping away all this cynicism and hypocrisy, the subtext of Sunak's recent statements is this: capitalist politicians wish to vote through imperialist policies in peace and quiet, without any accountability from the masses – for whom they hold nothing but contempt.

The Tories howl about the need to protect 'British values' such as 'liberty' and 'democracy'. Yet they happily pass laws to

restrict basic democratic freedoms, such as the right to protest and the right to strike.

The intention is evident. The ruling class can feel the class struggle intensifying. And they are sharpening their weapons in preparation for war.

It is up to the working class to mobilise in defence of democratic rights. But we must wage this battle on the basis of our own class interests, and with our own class-struggle methods – not by appealing to bourgeois institutions like Parliament, relying on the capitalist courts, or hoping for any improvements under a Starmer government.

Instead, this stinking setup must be done away with entirely, and replaced with workers' democracy, as part of the revolutionary transformation of society. •

PREVENT, 'EXTREMISM', AND COMMUNISM

Support for communism and socialism were recently added to the Prevent list of warning signs. This comes as no surprise. The capitalists are clearly terrified of the growing radicalisation amongst the youth.

This is not a new phenomenon. In 2020, the Tories banned anti-capitalist material from the curriculum. And in the 1970s, the police spied on anti-fascist student groups in schools.

It is telling that the British ruling class sees more danger in young people organising against fascism than fascism itself.

Prevent is hailed as a programme to stop terrorism and safeguard children. In reality, it is a tool to stir up Islamophobia and xenophobia, and

to intimidate and keep tabs on those involved in movements that threaten the status quo.

In a system where scandal-ridden MPs, royals, and police officers have been actively protected by the state, politicians' hypocrisy over Prevent is clear.

The Tories accuse us, the communists, of being 'extremists'. Yet 14.4 million people in the UK live in poverty. Up to 500 people die per week due to underfunding in the NHS.

Over 30,000 Gazans have been killed since 7 October. Meanwhile, the super-rich get richer, and the rest of us get poorer. Isn't this the real 'extremism'?

Ben Berry,
Chelmsford Communists

TORIES' FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PALESTINE SOLIDARITY

Following another disgusting attack on Palestine solidarity, Tory minister Michelle Donelan was recently forced to retract false allegations against two academic researchers accused of 'supporting Hamas and extremism'.

Donelan acted on the basis of a press release from Policy Exchange, a right-wing think-tank, which equated the academics' concern about the British state's clampdown on Palestine solidarity with supporting terrorism. After

jeopardising the careers and reputation of these researchers, Donelan escaped by paying them damages with taxpayers' money.

In a similar tragi-comic episode, Tory baroness Jacqueline Foster was forced to apologise and pay damages to a Muslim student at Oxford University, after accusing her of antisemitism. This smear was levelled after the student and her team chose the 'antisemitic symbol' of an octopus plush mascot on a TV quiz show!

For months, these shameless attacks have been churned out by the Tories and their press, in an effort to slander the Palestine solidarity movement. They represent yet another desperate attempt to discredit protestors, and to deflect the volcanic anger against the British establishment and its complicity in Israel's genocide.

To combat their lies, we need a revolutionary press. That is what we are building with *The Communist*.

Bogdan Farcas

SNP SPLITS AND DIVISIONS: SCOTLAND'S RULING PARTY IS RUNNING ON EMPTY

Shaun Morris, Glasgow Communists

The Scottish government is in a desperate situation. The meagre reformist platform it has stood on for more than ten years is beginning to fall apart.

The SNP has nothing left to inspire the independence movement. And renewed austerity is tearing at the party's credibility. Political splits and fragmentation are on the order of the day.

Opinion polls show a stabilisation for the SNP, which is no longer predicted to slip behind Labour. Nevertheless, the next election will likely be punishing for Humza Yousaf and his party.

Unless he can somehow reverse the party's decline, the knives will be out for the First Minister. His attempts to do this so far, however, have only dug him deeper into a hole.

Budget black hole

This year's Scottish Budget illustrates this.

Last year, the Holyrood government discovered a billion-pound hole in its financial plans. So Yousaf conjured up a proposal to raise the higher rates of income tax and freeze council tax.

This policy has proven to be a political disaster, however, drawing strong opposition from councils across Scotland.

For many local authorities, like Glasgow, Yousaf's plans leave them financially crippled.

Internal opposition

The SNP's budget woes have provoked internal opposition – not from the left, but from the right.

The SNP's Green coalition partners ultimately swallowed these austerity policies. Those on the right of the SNP, however, such as one-time leadership hopeful Kate Forbes, have called for the party to shift to the right.

Echoing business groups, Forbes argues that "continually increasing taxes is ultimately counter-productive" and will harm economic growth. This will sound familiar to anyone who has listened to any of Tory

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's recent speeches.

Indeed, Forbes has implied that the Scottish government shouldn't diverge too greatly from Westminster policy. The thinking is that greater alignment with the rest of the UK would be preferable to the 'good old-fashioned rammy' with the Tories that Sturgeon often sought.

Faction fight

Forbes' socially conservative views are well-known. Humza Yousaf, meanwhile, insists that the SNP will remain a 'progressive' party. But last year's leadership election proved that not all in the SNP agree.

Any future faction fight will not just be over questions like LGBT rights, however, but also over the Scottish government's economic policies – and over the overall direction of the SNP itself.

The 'Tartan Tories' never really left the SNP. And after the failure of the 'social-democratic' turn that the party made in the early years of devolution, they may be in the mood for a comeback.

Yousaf is already feeling their influence. Sturgeon's successor recently came out against Labour's proposed increase to the windfall tax on energy companies, for example, which he condemned as an attack on the Scottish oil and gas sector.

If the SNP suffers significant losses at the next Westminster election, there is a real possibility of civil war breaking out inside the party. This will only turn more working-class supporters away from the SNP, in search for a genuine opposition to capitalist decay. ●



NATO AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS: SNP PREPARES FOR AN IMPERIALIST TURN

Nishwal Gora, Edinburgh Communists

The SNP's latest pantomime proposal, 'An independent Scotland's place in the world', zeroes in on the party's aspiration for Scotland to one day join the thieves' kitchen that is NATO.

In effect, this is a pledge of loyalty to US imperialism. But in pursuing this path, the SNP leaders are either tying themselves in knots, or are preparing for a huge U-turn over their long-held opposition to nuclear weapons.

For decades, the SNP has promised to dismantle Trident, Britain's nuclear arsenal, which is based at Faslane in Scotland, and has campaigned for nuclear disarmament.

Yet this is incompatible with membership of NATO: a nuclear-armed military alliance of the world's most rabid warmongers, led by the only country to ever deploy weapons of mass destruction in war (twice!).

Faslane is Britain's only naval base capable of sustaining a nuclear-armed submarine patrol. It is therefore militarily indispensable to the UK's nuclear capabilities, and essential to NATO's collective nuclear defence strategy.

Britain and NATO would never allow Faslane to be unilaterally shut down. To join NATO and maintain their pledge, then, the only option for an independent Scotland would be for Holyrood to allow a

nuclear Guantanamo Bay to be carved out on the mouth of the Clyde.

Amid this mockery, the SNP's report also pledges to fulfil NATO's requirement of allocating more than 2% of GDP to defence spending.

This means effectively pouring over £4 billion of public funds into the coffers of major arms manufacturers – jettisoning the popular pro-independence slogan of 'Bairns Not Bombs'.

The bellicose language employed by Humza Yousaf and his cohort of inept compradors marks an absolute decline for the SNP – a party once known for its anti-war stance.

The SNP actually reversed its opposition to NATO back in 2012, causing only a minor split. Now there can be no doubt that it is a pro-imperialist party.

As long as the capitalists remain in charge, imperialism and war will persist.

Workers and youth must therefore forge a new path: eradicating the world of the parasitic ruling class and its lackeys, and striving for a communist future. ●



WELSH FARMERS RISE UP – MAKE THE BILLIONAIRES PAY!

Lee Davies, South Wales Communists

The recent mass movement of farmers in Wales – inspired by similar protests in France, Germany, and Poland – is unprecedented.

Like their European counterparts, Welsh farmers have taken direct action to make themselves heard. This includes organising slow-downs across the M4, using tractors to bring traffic to a halt, and forming barricades around the Wrexham office of the Welsh rural affairs minister.

The farmers are fighting against the Welsh government's agricultural policies. These are further examples of 'green austerity' – attempts to make everyone but the big capitalists shoulder the costs of tackling environmental problems.

Tata and the Tories have peddled similar greenwashing recently, in order to justify the closure of the Port Talbot blast furnaces.

According to a study by the National Farmers' Union (NFU), these policies could mean the loss of 5,500 agricultural jobs in Wales, alongside an 11% reduction in livestock numbers.

This would tip many small and medium-sized farmers over the edge. Entire rural communities would be devastated. The anger on display has been long in the making.

Many farms in Wales are small businesses. The farmers are frustrated at how they are treated by the supermarkets and politicians, considering that 50% of the food we eat is produced domestically.

They often work seven-day weeks, and are up to their eyeballs in debt.

This movement is therefore clearly the product of decades of difficulties and injustices finally bursting to the fore.

On 28 February, South Wales Communists joined a protest organised by the farmers' unions in Cardiff, attended by several thousand.

The most militant speeches got the biggest applause. One said that the farmers' struggle today is no different to the Great Miners' Strike of 1984, or the ongoing Port Talbot steelworkers' struggle.

There is some conservatism from the tops. Farmers' union leaders invited Plaid Cymru and Conservative politicians to speak. And Rishi Sunak has opportunistically sent the farmers a message of support.

But this is just a cynical move by the Tories, driven by concerns about their collapsing support in English rural areas.

The dominant mood at the protest was clearly against all these politicians. A number of farmers, for example, showed interest in our placards saying: *No trust in capitalist politicians! Make the billionaires pay!*

There is a danger of this movement being taken over by right-wing demagogues, or by politicians who'll try to defang it. But both are on the fringes for now.

Ultimately, none of these figures or parties can address the root of the problem: the capitalist system.

The Welsh farmers' movement, and the boldness it has displayed so far, just like those in Europe, should serve as great inspiration for workers across Britain.

The farmers haven't waited for their union leaders to give a green light for militant action. This should assure steelworkers in Port Talbot that a bold fightback is possible. A united mass movement of all these forces could go far. ●

RENT RISES FOR TENANTS, JUICY PROFITS FOR THE LANDLORDS

Orla Thomas, Edinburgh Communists

On 31 March, the Scottish government's cap on rent increases will end. But Edinburgh tenants are already beginning to see increases of up to 60%.

This is because there is little-to-no enforcement of the rent cap, and no consequences for rogue landlords – certainly nothing comparable to punishment tenants face for not paying rent.

There are no bailiffs busting down the doors of Morningside mansions, demanding that landlords cough up their stolen cash.

At most, cheating landlords face ineffective civil tribunals and appeals – a proverbial slap on the wrist!

This situation appears to suit the landlords quite nicely. But apparently they are enraged by the SNP-Green rent policy,

believing themselves to be innocent victims of the housing crisis.

Speaking to the *Financial Times*, one poor, downtrodden landlord said that he tragically had to sell two of his eight inherited (!!!) properties in Edinburgh's New Town, due to concerns about rent controls.

Similarly, Oxfordshire-based (!!!) energy consultant Tony West had to sell his only Scottish property in Granton. Poor Tony will now have to rely solely on his salary, and on rents from his English properties. How will he get by?!

This is not all. Landlord groups have been pathetically crying over their increasing mortgages, warning us that they are being pushed out of the Scottish market.

To this we say: forget a push – what these parasites need is a firm kick up the backside! ●

PALESTINE: A POWDER KEG IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Fred Weston

While all the leaders of the imperialist powers have been shedding crocodile tears about the "excessive civilian death toll" in Gaza, in practice they have all been collaborating with the Israeli government.

They have helped create the conditions upon which no feasible Palestinian self-administration is possible. They are openly collaborating with Netanyahu and his far-right Zionist friends, who are attempting to destroy what is left of Palestine.

Beyond the genocidal military campaign in Gaza and the constant expansion of the settlements in the West Bank, there is another war going on on the economic front.

It has included cutting funding to UN aid agencies, withholding tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority (PA), and denying over 100,000 Palestinian workers the jobs they had in Israel before 7 October.

In a situation where all reserves have been depleted, starvation has become rampant, especially in the north. People are drinking dirty water and eating whatever they can put their hands on, including animal feed. An explosion in child mortality is imminent.

Imperialists worried

The Palestinian people are being pushed well beyond what is humanly tolerable. We are looking at the threat of a complete collapse of the PA in the West Bank, on top of absolute devastation in Gaza.

All this is beginning to seriously worry the imperialists. They can see the time-bomb ticking, and that they could be faced with a generalised people's uprising.

The imperialist powers understand that to maintain some degree of stability in the region, the Palestinians must have a basic minimum of a civilised existence, and at least a thread of hope that one day they may have a homeland in which they can rebuild their lives.

The resignation of the Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh shows the political crisis facing the PA. This may be part of a move towards some kind of technocratic government, which would also govern Gaza once the war is over.

The term 'technocratic government' is a euphemism for an unelected government that will push through the programme of the ruling elite.

The PA is discredited in the eyes of most Palestinians, so they wish to impose on them the same collaborators, but behind a new mask. This is the programme of US imperialism for the Palestinians.

Temporary ceasefire

For now, however, Netanyahu is not listening. An all-out onslaught on Rafah would tip the situation over the edge. It could open up a scenario where up to a million spill over the border into Egypt.

It now seems that the Egyptian authorities are taking precautionary measures such as building a walled-off buffer zone for refugees.

This is all concentrating the minds of the imperialists. They are now bringing pressure to bear on Netanyahu to accept a temporary ceasefire and lift barriers to aid.

The US has drafted a UN Security Council resolution, calling for a "temporary ceasefire" in Gaza.

We should have no illusions here. US imperialism is not working for an end to the bombing of Gaza, but rather a temporary halt, to release some of the pressure that is building up.

Under pressure from the US, the Israeli government delayed its planned ground offensive into Gaza. But Netanyahu is determined to go ahead with it at some point.

Biden's optimistic hopes of negotiating an imminent ceasefire are not replicated inside Israel or Gaza. And even if such a deal were agreed, it would only give Gazans a temporary respite.

Netanyahu continues to insist that, even if there is a ceasefire agreement, he will push on with his preparations for an attack on Rafah, which does not bode well.

Destabilising the region

The war in Gaza has already destabilised the region, and risks destabilising it further.

In the context of the growing social turmoil in many of the countries of the Middle East, this offensive could lead to mass upheaval and movements of revolutionary dimensions.

This would dramatically undermine the surrounding Arab regimes, and send shockwaves reverberating around the world.

From the point of view of the interests of world capitalism, it is logical that the imperialists are seeking to pull Netanyahu back.

The problem is that the general interests of global capitalism do not match the interests of Netanyahu and his far-right cabinet colleagues, and also of a significant section of the Zionist ruling class.

To retreat and leave Hamas in place in Gaza would mark the end of Netanyahu's political career. The far-right would provoke the collapse of his government.

This would be followed by elections, in which Netanyahu would lose and face serious legal problems.

Netanyahu may at some point overstep the mark, opening up a wider conflict with Egypt and other Arab regimes. The increasing armed skirmishes on the Lebanese border could also lead to an escalation there.

All this would put a huge spanner in the works of the normalisation process that the imperialists had been so keen on between Israel and Saudi Arabia, as well as other countries in the region.

Important elements within the Israeli establishment could conclude at a certain point that Netanyahu must go. We are not there yet, but his days are clearly numbered.

Crisis of capitalism

The problem the imperialists are facing is that what is rational in the abstract may not always be possible in the concrete conditions on the ground.

We live in an epoch of an unprecedented crisis of the global capitalist system. The room for manoeuvre of the individual powers is severely reduced. This can give individuals in key positions a disproportionate power for a temporary period.

Conflicts over markets and spheres of influence, meanwhile, are becoming ever more acute, with situations being pushed to the limit, tipping over into open war where the contradictions are at their sharpest.

In this, it is the working people of all countries that suffer. The Palestinians are caught in this contradiction, but their intense suffering is also bringing into focus the impasse of the whole system.

And it explains why the overwhelming majority of workers and youth everywhere instinctively empathise with their cause. The class struggle runs like a thick red line through the Palestinian question and affects all countries.

It falls to the workers of all countries to resolve this contradiction by uprooting the whole capitalist system.

- For a new Arab revolution!
- Down with the imperialists!
- For a Socialist Federation of the Middle East! •



Manchester Communists, 9 March

REPORTS FROM ON THE GROUND

Leeds University occupation

On 7 March, student groups at Leeds University occupied the Parkinson building, the university's flagship building, in solidarity with Palestine.

The Leeds Communists are taking part in this occupation – in fact that's where these lines are being written!

The occupation's demands include:

- The removal of genocidal murderer (read: IDF volunteer) Rabbi Zechariah Deutsch from the University Chaplaincy.
- End the university's collaboration with weapons manufacturer BAE systems.
- Cutting all links with Israeli universities.

The communists are connecting these demands to the need for staff and student control of universities, and kicking capitalism off campus.

To nobody's surprise, this action – coinciding with a university open day – has angered university bosses. It has also ruffled the feathers of the vocal minority of Zionists on campus – the horror!

We have hung Palestinian flags, agitational posters, and banners inside the building. Currently the building remains open in the daytime, allowing students into the occupied space to participate in talks and discussion.

Every evening, there are discussions on the way forward, in which we have been arguing for revolutionary communist perspectives and fighting tactics.

So far, the bosses have refused any negotiations, and have threatened police action and arrests. So much for the university's 'compassion and inclusivity' and 'free speech' policies!

In order for its demands to be won, the occupation must become a launchpad for a wider campaign. This should include posterage, leafleting, door-knocking, lecture shout-outs, and rallies, to gain the support of the wider student body, and of workers and trade unions locally.

London national demonstration

On Saturday 9 March, Camden Communists intervened in the latest national Palestine demo.

We set up right across from the US Embassy. Dozens of people were drawn in by the front cover of *The Communist*, depicting Aaron Bushnell's martyrdom. And our shouts for revolution from London to Gaza made us stand out to

the most radical layers present.

One woman told us she had been to six Palestine demos now. When we asked her how she felt about having to come out so many times, she said it was necessary, but also that it felt like it wasn't enough.

Despite there only being four of us at this location, we sold out of our copies of *The Communist* (47 sold in total), alongside eight pamphlets on Marxist theory.

More than ever, people are looking for solutions – not just to the imperialist war against Palestine, but to the never-ending horrors of capitalism everywhere.

Manchester

We had a positive intervention in the Palestine demonstration in Manchester on 9 March.

The demo was bigger than it has been for some time, and there was a more militant mood – no doubt due to Aaron Bushnell's sacrifice, the bombing of aid trucks, and the looming invasion of Rafah.

We noticed a mood amongst the protestors; a feeling that the movement's leaders aren't doing enough.

It was interesting to hear other people using our chants about intifada and revolution. I don't remember this at all in the early Palestine demos.

Falmouth

We were all surprised at the militant energy of the protest in Falmouth on 9 March. The mood has changed profoundly.

The same activists that have initially been giving us a hard time for raising the need for revolution are now talking about this themselves.

After speaking at the rally, we were approached immediately by people wanting our paper. Despite the moderate turnout, we sold nine papers in total, with several signing up, enthusiastic to join the communists.

The people that are still attending these rallies are clearly desperate for a way forward. The extreme situation in Gaza no longer justifies empty talk about consumer boycotts or 'pressuring' local representatives. •



Joe Biden and Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. Embassy Jerusalem Flickr



Leeds comrades at the occupation



CLIMATE CRISIS

Children's word of the year

Ten years ago, with *Despicable Me* at the forefront of children's minds, "minion" was chosen as the first Children's Word of the Year (CWY).

Today, 6-to-14 year-olds are not afforded such innocence. Of the 3,000 children surveyed, one third stated that "climate change" was the word of 2023.

Children are fully aware of the danger of the climate crisis. And many are rapidly moving away from ideas about individual responsibility, and are instead blaming capitalist politicians for wrecking their futures.

This generation has only known crises: austerity following the 2008 financial crisis, collapsing schools, the pandemic, and of course war (the runner up CWY for 2023, with 31% of the vote).

As communists, we recognise that a socialist-planned economy is the only way to truly fight the climate crisis.

Let a new generation of youth join the fight for revolution, so that "climate change", "war", and "anxiety" are con-signed to the history books.

Zac,
Oxford Communists

Big business greenwashing

It was recently revealed that the World Wildlife Fund shelved a report about pollution in the river Wye to keep Tesco happy.

The supermarket chain is indirectly responsible for the poor practices of chicken farms that dot the riverside. But it is also a big sponsor to the charity.

Oh well! It's clear that charities and philanthropy are, at worst, a way for corporations to launder their reputation. At best, they are a sticking plaster that barely hangs onto the gaping wounds of our society.

We have no faith in these organisations. They are linked via a million threads to the ruling class. We must rely on our own strength, as workers, and organise to build a better world.

Tommaso,
Tooting and Balham Communists

Mass extinction

The first ever State of the World's Migratory Species report was released last month, followed by a UN-led international wildlife conservation conference in Uzbekistan.

The report is predictably bleak: 44% of species listed are showing population decline and 22% are threatened by extinction, rising to a staggering 97% of fish!

Extinction in itself is not unnatural. Our 'normal' extinction rate is somewhere between 0.1 and 1 species per 10,000 species per 100 years. Yet the World Wildlife Fund estimates that the current rate of loss is 1000 to 10,000 times higher!

The world's wildlife population has plummeted by two-thirds in the last 50 years. In the American tropics, it's up to 94%. 49% of all marine life has been lost in 40 years.

A 'mass extinction' is a rare, catastrophic anomaly, in which at least 75% of the world's species are wiped out in a small period of time.

Unlike mass extinction events of geological history, however, this one is unique in that the report suggests that the blame lies wholly on a single species – ours. (We would add that it is the richest 1% of our species that is to blame.)

Despite this stark warning, the Uzbek summit concluded with yet more milquetoast measures, resolutions, and guidelines.

The UN is incapable of enacting the fundamental changes necessary to tackle urgent issues. It is inseparable from the capitalist governments and institutions that make up its membership – all of which defend the economic system that exploits both the planet and the working class.

There are earnest attempts to channel profound collective anger around the climate through individualistic direct action. But, as communists, we have no

illusions in this strategy. Instead we base ourselves on the collective action of the working class, with the aim of overthrowing capitalism.

With a planned economy, under workers' control, we could immediately set about bringing our planet back from the brink, and bring about harmony between society and the natural world.

So much has been lost. But there is still so much to fight for. So young



environmentalists: Lose your thousand-yard stare! Join the communists and fight!

Ambika Bates,
Cornwall Communists

Fossil fuel lobbying

It's been found that the oil industry has been lobbying governments in Europe and the US for well over 50 years to stop subsidies for solar panels, electric cars, and heat pumps.

Fossil fuel firms have argued that such incentives would "distort the free market". All the while, they themselves benefit from generous state handouts in the form of subsidies and tax credits. *Quelle surprise!* Hypocrisy has always been the capitalists' strong suit.

This latest episode only underlines how these corporations – and the capitalist state that supports them – cannot be trusted to do anything to tackle the climate crisis.

Some researchers have defended the big polluters. They say it will take time to transition to green technology. After all, they say, "gas lighting companies...fought the arrival of electric street lights and canal companies, [and] protested against new railways", but we got there eventually.

But time is running out! This is the definition of fiddling while Rome burns – literally and figuratively.

The only solution is to fight for a planned system of production, incorporating the best clean technologies available, and replacing the anarchy of capitalism.

Diyar Albertsson,
North London Communists.

READ BETWEEN THE LINES

New York Lies

I recently read an investigation by *The Intercept*, which found that a *New York Times* reporter covering the Israel-Palestine crisis, Anat Schwarz, is actually a former Israeli Air Force intelligence officer.

Despite having little experience as a journalist, Schwarz was brought into the company by veteran *NYT* correspondent Jeffrey Gettleman, and was pivotal in their coverage of the conflict.

Notably, she was a key reporter on the story about "mass rape" by Hamas. Months later, these claims are yet to be verified. But that didn't stop them from being picked up and regurgitated as pure fact by all the big media outlets.

Schwarz was later found to have liked posts on social media saying Israel must "turn the [Gaza] strip into a slaughterhouse", and calling for the besieged territory to be levelled by bulldozers.

And yet the very same outlet sacked a staff writer for signing a letter opposing Israel's genocide in Gaza!

Showing how hard-and-fast these capitalist mouthpieces play with the truth, Gettleman openly remarked that it's not his role to verify evidence. Rather, "it's to present information, to give people a voice".

The so-called 'objective', 'free' press is enmeshed with the rest of the establishment. These rags will gladly manipulate

public opinion in support of the imperialists' agenda, often in direct collusion with the state.

Ben Cownley,
Harrow Communists

SAS war crimes

On 5 March, five SAS soldiers were arrested on suspicion of war crimes in Syria. Accounts suggest the soldiers planted weapons on corpses to falsely show their victims as a threat.

Britain's most elite troops are trained extensively. They are some of the most disciplined units in the world. They are well-aware when they are committing war crimes.

The Ministry of Defence won't comment on these allegations – allegations that are perfectly in-line with the track record of western imperialism. Government ministers are made aware of all that goes on. But they take no action to stop these crimes.

Johnny Mercer, for example, the Tory veterans minister, knew of 'rumours' of summary executions committed by the SAS in Afghanistan and Iraq, yet he intentionally concealed this information from the public.

One memo read by Mercer, written by a Special Forces commander, revealed "an unofficial policy amongst the [SAS unit] to kill [...] fighting aged males on target, regardless of the immediate threat".

The arrested SAS soldiers – who probably won't face prosecution – aren't just 'bad apples'. These crimes are a product of the whole bloodthirsty imperialist system, which is backed to the hilt by our government.

While workers and poor people are prosecuted for stealing food, and activists are arrested for protesting the genocide

in Gaza, the atrocities of our ruling class are swept under the rug.

Ben,
Bristol Communists

Identity politics

I recently saw an information board in my college library highlighting pioneers for LGBT rights.

This board featured a picture of Anne Lister, a lesbian woman who, we are told, "independently built up a financial portfolio including property, railways, and mining".

"Independently" is a curious word to use here. Lister was brought up in a grand hall in Yorkshire. Her father was an ex-army captain. Assuredly, she was a woman without a shortage of funds.

As a landowner, an industrialist, and a shareholder, Lister was directly involved in exploiting the wealth created by the working class.

I'm sure the adults and children – of all genders and sexualities – who toiled in terrible conditions in these mines and workhouses were extremely thankful for the progressive credentials of their exploiter.

Such figures are promoted in my school – and in many others across Britain – as 'radical', 'independent', and 'influential' people. But in reality, they uphold the system responsible for oppression and discrimination.

Lister didn't do a thing to advance the interests of LGBT people, just as Thatcher didn't improve working-class women's position in society, and nor did Obama improve the lives of racially-oppressed people.

This state-sanctioned identity politics is detrimental to the struggle against all forms of oppression.

SM,
Windsor

THIS FORTNIGHT IN HISTORY ...



Karl Marx's death

On 14 March 1883, Karl Marx – the father of scientific socialism – died peacefully in his London flat at the age of 64, following a bout of bronchitis.

In the words of his lifelong friend and collaborator Friedrich Engels, who spoke at Marx's funeral:

"Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute...to the overthrow of capitalist society...to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival..."

"Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time. Governments...deported him from their territories. Bourgeois...vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him.

"All this he brushed aside as though it were a cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when extreme necessity compelled him. And he died beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow workers...His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work."

Read more:
communist.red/marx4

Declaration of the Paris Commune

On the dawn of 18 March 1871, Paris arose to the thunder-burst of "Vive la Commune!" The Parisian working class, armed and organised in the Paris National Guard, had risen up and seized power.

Immediately, the Communards set about organising the first-ever workers' state. All state officials were subject to the right of immediate recall, and all their privileges were abolished. Rents were frozen, and abandoned factories were put under workers' control.

Though the Commune only lasted for weeks, it provided a heroic example of what is possible when workers take their destiny into their own hands.

This rich experience also helped clarify Marx and Lenin's understanding of the state, in works like *The Civil War in France* and *The State and Revolution*.

Read more:
communist.red/commune4

1919 Hungarian Revolution

On 21 March 1919, the Hungarian Soviet Republic was proclaimed. These events took place as a flood tide of revolutionary struggle swept across Europe in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution.

Though the Republic only lasted 133 days, this brief episode is full of lessons for communists today – particularly the fatal mistakes that were made by the inexperienced leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party.

Read more:
communist.red/hungary4

BRITISH PERSPECTIVES 2024

THESES ON THE COMING BRITISH REVOLUTION



The following document will be discussed at the founding congress of the RCP, on 3-6 May. If you are a communist, and want to be part of the historic launch of a fighting communist organisation in Britain, then scan to sign up below.

CLICK HERE

Instability

The strategists of capital are terrified of a new slump, as they have used up all their reserves in staving off a depression over the last 15 years.

The chief economist of the IMF warned that, given the mountain of debt, another bailout as in the past is now ruled out. The consequences of this for capitalism are calamitous.

Chinese capitalism, which previously played a key role in helping to bail out the system, is now facing its own crisis. From a factor of stability, it has become one of instability, as the Chinese ruling class' strategic interests collide with those of the USA.

In the war in Ukraine, which is a proxy war of the US and NATO against Russia, the tide is turning against western imperialism. While Russia has largely bypassed the West's sanctions, it has strengthened its position and placed its economy on a war footing.

At the same time, there are growing divisions in the West over further economic support for Ukraine. Given this outcome, the United States is facing another Afghanistan-style humiliation, which will send shockwaves through its allies around the world who look to the US for defence and leadership.

The Ukraine war has pushed up energy costs, stoked inflation, disrupted world trade, and has simply added to the increased turbulence on a world scale.

The war in Gaza has become a catalyst for all the accumulated discontent in society, and has resulted in a massive radicalisation everywhere, especially among the youth, with tens of millions taking to the streets.

Polarisation

Society has never been so polarised as it is today, as the centre ground disappears. In the United States, where there has been a revival of the class struggle, the situation has not been so socially polarised since the Civil War in the 1860s.

In an unprecedented fashion, in different countries, the ruling

class has lost or partially lost control of the situation. This is graphically illustrated in the case in the United States, where the maverick reactionary Trump has taken over the Republican Party, a key institution of US capitalism.

Given the growing disillusionment with Biden, Trump could be returned as president in 2024, with all the turmoil that would produce in America and internationally.

The establishment is desperately trying to block his path, but with little success. In fact, the more they attack him, the more his support increases.

By every measure, the ruling classes are hurtling towards disaster at a time when the working class is beginning to reawaken and move into action.

Most importantly, this objective crisis of the capitalist system is having a massive impact on consciousness. Never before have establishment institutions, in all countries, been so widely discredited and hated.

Large layers, mostly of the youth, are drawing revolutionary conclusions and are attracted to communism. This is the decisive feature of the period.

Crisis of British capitalism

The position of British capitalism is dire. The decline of Britain can be seen in our daily lives. This once mighty workshop of the world has been reduced to a shrinking third-rate power; a satellite of US imperialism.

The demise of British capitalism is truly astounding. The economy is growing more slowly than at any time since the 1920s: slower than in the Great Depression; slower than in the midst of a world war; slower than the period of post-war reconstruction; slower than the economic crises of the 1970s and '80s.

The long-term rot in the roots of British capitalism has now penetrated new depths. It is an existential, rather than a cyclical, crisis.

This collapse of British capitalism relative to its

competitors is largely due to the failure of the capitalists to reinvest their profits into modernising industry. They instead ploughed their money into financial services and various forms of speculation. In the 40 years to 2022, the UK's fixed investment rate was the lowest among 67 member countries. The OECD average of public investment is also nearly 50 per cent higher than that of the UK.

As a consequence, Britain has fallen further and further behind its rivals.

Permanent slump

According to the OECD, between 1993 and 2007, real GDP per head rose by 46 per cent in the UK, stimulated by a growth in world trade. By contrast, between 2007 and 2022 real GDP per head in the UK rose by only six per cent.

As a result, incomes have fallen well behind those in peer countries: by 2018, median household incomes were 48 per cent higher in Canada, 37 per cent higher in Australia and 20 per cent higher in Germany.

Low-income households were some 27 per cent poorer in Britain than in France or Germany.

Inequality surged in the 1980s and has remained high ever since. It is higher in the UK than in any other large European country.

According to James Smith, research director at the think-tank Resolution Foundation, whatever the debate about whether Britain is currently in a recession, "what's not beyond doubt is that Britain is a stagnation nation". He said that growth over the past 18 months was the weakest outside of a recession on record.

"The country's economic prospects remain quite bleak, frankly — we are treading water," said Jagjit Chadha, director of the *National Institute of Economic and Social Research*.

"Given the UK's low productivity, I suspect growth will be imperceptible for

the rest of the decade." In other words, the British economy will be in a permanent slump.

Political volatility

As Martin Wolf, chief economist at the *Financial Times*, explained:

"The resulting combination of low growth with high inequality is toxic. The young have never experienced the progress in pay that their parents did."

"Unfortunately, these difficulties are set to get worse. The combination of ageing, geopolitical tensions, Brexit, higher interest rates, and the energy transition will raise pressures on the economy and public spending at a time when the tax burden is already at historically high levels and public debt is already close to 100 per cent of GDP." (FT, 5/12/23)

This strategist of capital concludes: "The economy is not delivering the prosperity the great majority desires. As the country falls behind, unhappiness will grow."

But unhappiness and discontent is already widespread. This explains the political volatility: the rise of Scottish independence in 2014, the collapse of Labour in Scotland in 2015, the rise of Corbynism, the Brexit vote, the rise and fall of Boris Johnson, etc.

Britain has gone from being perhaps the most stable country in Europe just over 10 years ago, to possibly the most unstable today.

Schools are crumbling, the NHS is collapsing, councils are going bankrupt, services are being cut, wages are declining, the housing crisis is deepening and living standards are falling. There is a general malaise in Britain.

In particular, there is record disillusionment in capitalist politicians and institutions such as the police, the monarchy, and the media. All of this is a symptom of the general crisis of the regime.

In the past, Britain was regarded as very conservative. It was



where the religion of capitalist progress had sunk the deepest. But not anymore. Things have been turned on their head.

This long-term decline and demise of British capitalism will have earth-shattering consequences for the future and is preparing the ground for revolutionary convulsions.

Defeat of the Tories

With the degeneration of British capitalism has come the degeneration of the capitalist class and its political representatives. The Tory Party, once the most successful bourgeois party in Europe, has become a laughing stock.

The rise of the rank-and-file members of the Tory shires, who can now decide the leader, led to the calamity of Boris Johnson, then Liz Truss. The ruling class has lost control over the Tory Party, which is only adding to the crisis, as their support for Brexit showed.

The bourgeoisie managed to impose Sunak as leader without a vote in an effort to stabilise the situation. However, the Tory Party is plagued with factions, which throw their weight around and destabilise the party and government.

Sunak has to engage in a precarious balancing act, as witnessed over the Rwanda deportation scheme. But the likes of Suella Braverman and Kemi Badenoch are busy manoeuvring with an eye on the future leadership bid when the party is inevitably defeated at the next election.

With its electoral defeat, there will be a further shift to the right within the Tory Party, as with the Republicans in the US. We will witness a 'Trumpianisation' of the Tory Party, which is likely to suck in individuals of the Nigel Farage ilk. It will become even more reactionary, especially using the card of immigration and other 'culture war' issues to whip up division. The 'One Nation Tories' will be even more isolated. Some will desert to Starmer's Labour Party.

It is no accident that the likes of Rory Stewart, the former cabinet minister who ran for the leadership of the Tory Party in 2019, has declared he would be interested in serving in a Labour government led by Sir Keir Starmer.

Crisis Starmer government

A general election is set to take place in 2024. With the opinion polls putting Labour well ahead, it is most likely we will have a right-wing majority Labour government.

The ruling class have no alternative but to rest upon the right-wing Labour leaders, who in turn are keen to do their bidding. The scene will be set for class battles and rising radicalisation, as Starmer continues where the Tories left off.

A new feature is the reawakening of the working class, as witnessed by the waves of strikes over the past two years. New layers have been drawn into battle.

With living standards being eroded, and inflation still high compared to the past, there will be little willingness to accept further cuts. The pressures will mount in the trade unions to hold the line, pushing one sector after another into struggle.

The Starmer government will be a government of crisis. It will be under pressure from both the working class and the capitalists to deliver policies in their interests.

But given the crisis-ridden state of British capitalism, Starmer will offer not reforms, but counter-reforms. He has fully embraced orthodox capitalist economic policy, which means austerity and 'balanced budgets'.

It will in reality be a capitalist government, little different from the Tories.

« We must find our way to the first 10,000, and from there to become a mass party. On that basis the road to the masses is possible, which in turn will lay the ground for the conquest of power.

At the same time, there are few illusions amongst workers and youth towards a Starmer government, which will become increasingly hated.

Backlash

The crisis of capitalism is also a crisis of reformism.

As a result, the trade unions will be pushed into opposition or semi-opposition to the Labour government, given the pressure from below. It is important that our party finds a road to the young workers who will be pushed to the forefront and who want to fight.

On foreign policy, we have already seen how Starmer is firmly in the pockets of the imperialists, especially American imperialism. This too will cause a mighty backlash given the developing crises around the world.

The alienation and anger of the Muslim and Asian population towards Starmer's stance over Gaza is an indication of the upheavals to come.

In Scotland, the SNP are entering into crisis, rocked by scandals and forced to carry through massive austerity to balance the books. Their offer of 'independence', blocked by the Tory government and the courts, has run into the sand.

They are however likely to temporarily benefit from the unpopularity of Starmer's government. Nevertheless, having gone through the experience of reformism and nationalism, the banner of communism will become increasingly popular given the crisis, especially among the youth, as elsewhere in Britain.

In Wales, the Labour administration, in cooperation with Plaid, has presided over a declining economy, in which industry has been gutted. More budget cuts will push Wales further down the road of austerity and reveal the limits of reformism. As elsewhere, the Welsh workers will take to the road of struggle.

Communist ideas

With the growing discontent in society, the scene is being set for big class battles and great shifts in consciousness.

The 'lefts' in the trade unions and Labour Party will begin to raise their heads, but will offer no more than the stale outdated policies of Keynesianism. All

are wedded to the capitalist system and believe it can be 'reformed' by tinkering at the edges.

They have degenerated politically compared even to the 'lefts' of the past. They completely accept capitalism. They are characterised by vacillation, weakness, and capitulation. Inherent in reformism, explained Trotsky, is betrayal.

Meanwhile, the younger generation, who have known nothing but austerity and capitalist crisis, will be looking far beyond such piecemeal 'solutions'. The reformist politicians are increasingly exposed for what they are.

Figures like Jeremy Corbyn will not be a point of reference for this generation. Instead, the youth are completely open to radical, revolutionary, and especially communist ideas. Millions more will be open to these ideas. According to the *Fraser Institute* report, there are around 4.5 million open to communism in Britain alone.

This period of sharp and sudden changes will mean swings to the left and swings to the right. This is especially the case where there is no real alternative being posed by the official leaderships. But these will give way to even bigger swings to the left.

In such a period, in the past, the old so-called Communist Party would have grown substantially, given its name. But it is steeped in reformism and nationalism, and has been reduced to a shadow of its former self. It spreads illusions about the United Nations and offers pacifism instead of revolutionary politics. If people join, they quickly leave given the party's reformist politics.

Given this political vacuum, all sorts of phenomena and movements could appear in the

period ahead, as workers and youth look for an alternative to the hated traditional parties and politicians. But without any clear ideas or perspectives, these will necessarily be ephemeral in character. Nevertheless, our party should be prepared to respond to any such developments.

Revolutionary Communist Party

With its bold approach, the new Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) can become a pole of attraction for all those seeking a genuinely revolutionary road. But to do so we need to step up.

We are entering a pre-revolutionary period in Britain. This is likely to be protracted over many years. Under the hammer blows of events, consciousness will develop in a revolutionary and communist direction.

The extraordinary success of the *Are You a Communist?* Campaign we launched in 2023 is a clear example of the possibilities. We are the only ones who have recognised the potential to build a communist party by appealing to people on a directly communist basis. And yet we are only scratching the surface.

The RCP must adopt a bold approach and flexible tactics if it is to succeed. We do not write off the reformist mass organisations, which can be transformed by events.

In any case, the more rapidly we build the RCP today, the better we will be able to intervene in any future possibilities that do emerge in the mass organisations.

We must adopt the adage: full strength to the point of attack. We must therefore face towards those most open to revolutionary ideas and win them to the revolutionary party.

The youth, of course, is the key. As Lenin explained, he who has the youth has the future.

Revolutionary ideas

Most of the far left sects have over the past period watered down their ideas in an attempt to find a shortcut to building a revolutionary organisation. This has completely failed.

We turn our backs on these opportunist sects and look instead to the fresh revolutionary layers. In doing so, we reject wholeheartedly petty-bourgeois identity politics and declare war upon all alien class ideas.

We have the correct ideas. They are our most powerful weapon. Our aim is to assemble the forces to prepare the working class for power. The world is going to be convulsed with revolutionary developments, as is Britain.

We must prepare ourselves seriously – theoretically, politically, and organisationally – for this.

The British working class has a long and proud history of struggle. It must relearn its revolutionary traditions, beginning with physical force Chartism.

Scan below to read the manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist International, which will be launched from 10-15 June at the World School of Communism. See page 3 for further details.

CLICK HERE

Our tasks

We have made great strides forward. Yes, we have weaknesses, which we will overcome by common effort. We need to educate and steel ourselves for the events that impend.

We must set ourselves the goal of reaching 5,000 and then 10,000 members in a measurable short space of time. The objective situation demands it. This will allow us to build a base in every locality, workplace, and trade union.

In the revolutionary storms that lie ahead, a small revolutionary party can emerge onto the scene and rapidly grow amongst the working class.

Such was the case with the Spanish POUM, a centrist organisation (i.e. one that wavered between reformism and revolution), which grew from about 2,000 members to 40,000 or 50,000 in a matter of weeks in the heat of the Spanish revolution.

We can be faced with the same spectacular growth, but with a Bolshevik programme and leadership.

As Trotsky explained at the time:

"Ten thousand, with a firm and perceptive leadership, can find the road to the masses, break them away from the influence of the Stalinists and Social Democrats, the charlatans and loudmouths, and assure them not just the episodic and uncertain victory of the republican troops over the fascist troops, but a total victory of the toilers over the exploiters."

"The Spanish proletariat has shown three times that it is able to carry out such a victory. The whole question is in the leadership!"

The comrades of the RCP must face up to this challenge. If you have not yet joined us, we appeal on you to do so. Every member must raise themselves to the understanding that the key to the British revolution lies within our hands.

We must find our way to the first 10,000, and from there to become a mass party. On that basis the road to the masses is possible, which in turn will lay the ground for the conquest of power.

We are retying the knot of the revolutionary traditions of the old RCP. As Ted Grant wrote:

"Revolutionary audacity can achieve everything. The organisation must consciously pose itself and see itself as the decisive factor in the situation."

In this Year of Lenin, there has never been a more important task. •



HELP US LAUNCH THE



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY

We're founding the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). We're doing so because the world is on fire.

The bankers, bosses, and politicians are willing to sacrifice our health, housing, happiness, jobs, and the planet, for their profits.

We're angry at the capitalist system. It can't be fixed. We're going to overthrow it. We want a revolution. Most of the 'Left' in Britain today isn't interested in a revolution.

The RCP is a party like no other. If you're a communist, this is your party.

If you're a fighter against the rich and powerful, and for the rights of your work-mates or classmates, this is your party. If you shake with anger at every injustice around the world, this is your party.

Complaining isn't enough. It's time to do something. You need to join the RCP.

There are thousands of people who think like this. You need to find them and get them to join too.

We're going to organise everyone who wants to fight in their workplace, school, or campus. We're going to fight to change the world. •

7 WEEKS

...until the launch of the RCP

By the launch of the RCP on 3-6 May, our task is to recruit 300 new communists and raise £20,000 in order to establish the party on strong foundations. Help us reach our goals!



Membership



1,100

1,400

Party launch fund



£6,261

£20,000

Capitalism is in a profound crisis. Millions of workers and young people are drawing revolutionary conclusions, and are looking to the ideas of communism.

For this reason, we've decided to launch a new political party: the Revolutionary Communist Party. Our tasks are many but we need your help to make it a huge success.

We have already launched *The Communist*, and we're expanding the Wellred bookshop and running a campaign on the life and ideas of Lenin. We need to double

the size of our organisation by the end of 2024, which means we need 20 new full-time staff to support this growth.

With your support, we can build the revolutionary party ahead of the titanic battles that our class will face.

Therefore, we are appealing to our readers and supporters to help us raise £20,000 towards the launch of the RCP. We have already raised £6,261 towards this target.

If you want to fight for a communist future, then we appeal to you, comrade: donate what you can! •

Click here to donate to our party launch fund!

PLANT THE RED FLAG!

The communists are building in towns and cities across the country – and across the world. And wherever you are, you can help.

The building blocks of our organisation are our branches. It is in these that we educate ourselves in Marxist ideas and methods; and through these that we collectively conduct activity – in movements and struggles; in workplaces, schools, universities, and communities – to fight for these ideas.

Above all, we are always on the lookout for new members: for communist workers and youth who want to get organised, and help us further build up our forces.

Head to communist.red/join to see a full list of all our branches, and for information on how you can join and get involved right away.

If you can't see a group in your area, then get in touch and help us establish a new branch!

Join the communists today!



What can I do?

1. Join us!

...at communist.red/join or by scanning by clicking here

2. Get a starter pack



Containing copies of the latest issue of *The Communist*, the *In Defence of Marxism* magazine, and our Leninist Handbook.

The starter pack has everything you need to find other communists, as well as to educate yourself in revolutionary theory.



3. Subscribe to *The Communist* and *In Defence of Marxism*

4. Paint the town red

Plaster bus stops, lamp posts, construction boards, and more with posters and stickers.

Let everyone know the communists are here!



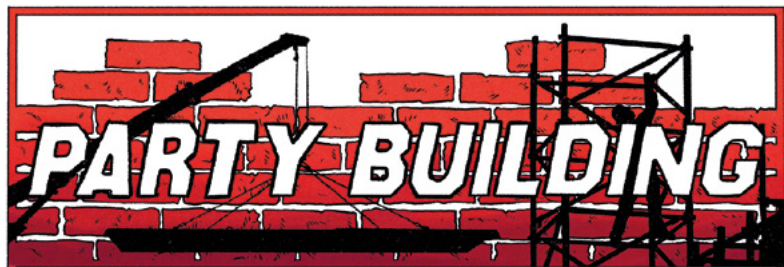
5. Start a local cell

A cell is made up of the communists in a local area who meet regularly, usually weekly. The goal of the cell is to find and train new communists in the ideas of revolutionary Marxism.

There are literally millions of young people and workers in Britain today who identify as communists, all we have to do is find them!

6. Come to the founding congress

3-6 May
Click here



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST METHODS

With the launch of the Revolutionary Communist International happening this summer, our comrades worldwide have been working tirelessly to build fighting communist organisations all across the globe.

The massive turn towards communist ideas by young workers and students is visible in not only Britain, but internationally. And the incredible work our comrades have been doing shows what we can achieve with boldness and enthusiasm.

Our US comrades posted a video which received 200M+ views! They were then inundated with hundreds of applications to join the newly formed Revolutionary Communists of America within days.

Since then they have been giving radical speeches on Palestine and International Working Women's Day directly to workers and youth on the New York subway. This is a method recently used by our Swiss and Canadian comrades too.

In Sweden a new young contact, who hasn't even joined yet, walked into a local factory with a red flag, some stickers, and 15 papers, and managed to make over 10 contacts! Even after being approached by security.

The comrades in Britain have followed these examples and have been giving radical speeches not only in tube and train stations across the country, but outside school gates and in university lecture halls and canteens.

One of our doctor comrades in Lancaster covered their medical school in our flyers after giving a radical speech about why the fight for women's emancipation means the fight against capitalism. People immediately began taking flyers and photographing them, as there weren't enough to go round!

RCP posters, stickers, and even graffiti have been seen up and down the country. Old pools of contacts and periphery have been contacted, and reactivated off the back of recent events. Everyone that interacts with our social media content is also being asked directly to join.

This is only the tip of the iceberg, and it's just a glimpse of what the RCP can achieve! If this sounds like your kind of party, get in touch now to help us build!

Branch initiatives

The Glasgow Central branch agenda was free-flowing and focussed on five contacts who attended. It included a discussion on the 'why, what, how' of the RCP, with short lead offs followed by questions.

The comrades gave out Leninist Handbooks to be read and returned next week by the contacts. All but one were ready to join straight away, no doubt as a result of the responsibilities given to them at branch. They are all helping out with poster and paper sales!

We've also seen branches such as in Birmingham prepare speeches to make to the public at recruitment stalls and demos.

Other branches have completely torn up branch agendas where necessary, opting instead to use *The Communist* as the basis for their whole branch meeting.

For example, the London Aldwych branch scrapped the usual format of a political discussion, followed by branch business. They instead went through the paper, page by page.

They therefore discussed a mixture of revolutionary theory and current events, with a focus on what branch activities flowed from these. In particular, the articles on IWWD, and the events in Palestine, were used to prepare comrades for upcoming recruitment stalls and rallies.

Swansea

The Swansea comrades, myself included, have been taking a page from the Swiss comrades' book and got bold: we've been doing speeches in public squares and on all of our paper sales.

So far we've had great results. Some people just came to listen to our speeches. One guy even bought two papers and gave a £6 donation. Our small branch has got seven contacts in the past two days!

These methods separate us from everyone else: we are bold!

London (Bloomsbury)

We held a speech delivery workshop in branch to prepare comrades for International Working Women's Day (IWWD). Not only did we practise speeches, but the whole meeting had a complete focus on politics.

Instead of having a routine discussion, the comrades discussed the political situation, the mood in society, and how to connect with it.

Six comrades from SOAS and UCL attended a rally to give speeches, selling five papers and making four contacts. There is now potential for a new cell at Birkbeck university.

Edinburgh

We organised an open-mic fundraiser in Edinburgh to raise funds for the founding congress of the RCP. We planned a lively night of music and stand-up by six comrades and supporters, as well as a

What initiatives are you taking to build the party? What lessons have you drawn from your successes and challenges?

Send in your reports for the next issue at communist.red/submit



On 2-3 March, the Central Committee - the leadership of the communists in Britain - assembled to discuss the perspectives and tasks confronting revolutionaries in Britain. Above all, we discussed our bold and direct turn to face the communist youth to whom we say: "You are not alone, there are millions like you. We want to organise you all into a fighting organisation, capable of transforming society. Can you help us?"

After a rousing leadoff and discussion on the *Theses for the British Revolution* (see centre pages), we took to the streets as the whole district and put on a flash sale. This quickly turned into a mini-rally due to the enthusiasm of the comrades.

We gave several energetic speeches, which grabbed the attention of many people passing by. One of these, by comrade Anthony, was recorded and posted online, where it has since reached nearly a million views. It has already led to someone contacting us and agreeing to join.

The newly formed districts are now ready to make the coming year a truly revolutionary one. Forward to the RCP!

School student work

In schools, students are being reported for selling the paper and banned from handing out flyers.

As communist students we discussed how repression will always happen to communists, and how this shouldn't deter us.

In fact Hereford school students recently discussed the need for personal sacrifice to build the Revolutionary Communist Party, as these are the sorts of efforts needed to overthrow capitalism.

Successful work in schools has included setting up 'debate clubs' and day schools; the Balham cell held one on the myths of Bolshevism. The Cardiff cell held an open discussion on Palestine. To prepare, there was a paper sale and flying.

All of this work has led directly to more contacts. ●



COMMUNISTS RECLAIM INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY

Friday 8 March marked International Working Women's Day.

This is a day which has been co-opted by the establishment and watered down to fit into their useless, liberal view of the world.

Company after company and politician after politician fall over themselves to show just how much they care about women.

They talk about how they are proud to live in a world where women can be CEOs and politicians. They talk about how we are breaking down barriers for women everywhere.

While they pat themselves on the back for investing in a female owned corporation, working women in Britain and abroad are having their rights wrestled back from them.

Childcare costs are becoming unmanageable, isolating more women in the home. High profile murder cases such as Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa are showing women they are not safe anywhere.

In Palestine, women are seeing their babies being pulled from rubble, being

sexually assaulted by IDF soldiers, and have no access to menstrual products (or any other basic necessities).

The Communists spent IWWD calling out this vile hypocrisy on the streets of Britain.

On campus

In Euston (UCL/SOAS campus), on KCL campus, UEA campus, Lancaster University campus and Cardiff University campus, comrades organised rallies, giving speeches and using the backpage of the last issue of *The Communist* to explain why women are oppressed under capitalism and how we can fight it.

At KCL, comrades gave speeches about the position of women in Palestine and the horrors they have faced. They used this to explain that capitalism can never create a real end to oppression of women.

In Lancaster, communists organised a meeting to explain the roots of women's oppression and that a communist society is needed to sweep away this oppression forever. Beforehand, they held a two hour stall on campus

with speeches so every student knew that the communists were there to talk about fighting misogyny.

In schools

In Balham, Leytonstone and Windsor, school student comrades took to the streets with *The Communist* and gave speeches about fighting sexism. In Balham, a 14 year old communist stood on top of a bin outside Balham station and gave an impassioned speech about how the crisis of capitalism has led to more oppression for women.

Revolutionary roots

These actions resulted in dozens of workers and youth asking to help us build the Revolutionary Communist Party.

International Working Women's Day is a day with roots in socialist and communist struggles. Those who first marched on 8 March would never have been satisfied with the bringing of a few women into the class of exploiters, while the majority of women's lives get worse.

The communists stand in their proud tradition. We will continue to call out the hypocrisy and callousness of the ruling class until every woman is free from oppression. ●





On 2-3 March, 350 communists from across Pakistan met for this year's congress of Lal Salaam. With Pakistani capitalism crumbling, it was a weekend that combined joyous revolutionary optimism with intense fervour and solemn preparation for a new stage in the class war.

Throughout the weekend, this fiery chant rang out in Urdu: "The darkness will pass, the red dawn is coming!"

Read the full report at communist.red/pakistan4

SHEFFIELD COMMUNISTS CAMPAIGN FOR SU PRESIDENT

Comrades in Sheffield ran a proudly communist campaign for Student Union president: for a fighting union, and against tuition fees, our university's ties with the massacre in Gaza, extortionate rents, and the culprit for these crimes: capitalism.

Using bold and enthusiastic methods of building, we've come out of the campaign in Sheffield with 15 contacts and over 30 paper sales! All of this from just under four days' of work!

We quickly realised that the SU campaign was a complete circus, with over 90 candidates, almost all of them being careerists or jokers. Seeing the opportunity before us we immediately went on the offensive and called out the election for what it was.

After a slightly tame first day, we decided to completely transform our methods. We gave agitational speeches in cafés, lectures, canteens, and study spaces. We plastered campus with over 500 posters, debated other candidates, went from table to table to talk

about our campaign and urge people to join our fight for a communist SU.

We pointed our fingers directly at high tuition fees, extortionate rents, bad courses, the mental health crisis, and made it clear that capitalism is to blame. And on this basis we directly appealed to students to vote communist! All contacts made were asked to help with the campaign.

The results party livestream was cut off as our candidate Will was denouncing Sheffield University's profiteering, but 'free Palestine' chants could still be heard. This showed everyone that we won't stop just because we didn't win, and we won't be deterred by SU sabotage.

Our campaign only starts here, and they've inadvertently provided us with an excellent clip to use on social media!

These bold methods can be adopted by every branch in the country, whether or not there is an election campaign. Our success shows the potential for massive growth in a short space of time. ●



A supporter from Rhondda Cynon Taff asks "Can I vote for the RCP?"

The Revolutionary Communist Party is a political party like no other.

Our aim is the overthrow of the capitalist system, the conquest of power by the working class, and the struggle for a world socialist federation.

Clearly, this aim goes well beyond getting a few people elected to parliament.

At the moment our priority is building our numbers, reputation, and knowledge.

There are loads of tactics we can use. We're beginning a major recruitment drive and we're selling thousands of copies of this newspaper.

Importantly we're getting stuck into the class struggle.

In Port Talbot we're fighting to save the steelworks. In Cambridge we're agitating among the delivery drivers. In Livingston we're building

links with construction workers. In Cardiff we're working to unite the struggles of doctors and bin workers.

In all these places we're winning people over to the RCP.

If, hypothetically, one of these struggles or one very like it erupted into a mass movement then standing for election as a revolutionary communist, as part of that movement, might be a good idea.

But even if we did, and even if we won, we're under no illusions that one or two RCP MPs would be able to achieve all the aims we set ourselves. Standing in elections would simply be a means to an end – a supplement to the struggle in the streets and the workplaces.

Right now, it doesn't look likely that the RCP will be standing in any elections.

Instead, you can vote with your feet, your wallet, and your time. Join us, donate to our founding congress, and help us build the RCP. ●

FROM OPPORTUNISM TO ULTRA-LEFTISM: THE CRIMINAL ZIG-ZAGS OF THE STALINISTS

Rob Sewell

The launch of *The Communist* and the planned launch of the Revolutionary Communist Party in May has met with great enthusiasm from our supporters.

However, as we reported in the last issue, the misnamed Communist Party of Britain (CPB) has clearly been stung by our successes, and attacked us as coming from an "anti-communist" tradition.

On the contrary, we have consistently defended genuine communism. But in doing so we reject the tradition of Stalinism, which has played, and still plays, a criminal role.

Opportunism

Lenin's last struggle was against the party and state bureaucracy. In his 'Testament' he demanded the removal of Stalin. Unfortunately, death prevented him from concluding this fight.

Then the troika of Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev suppressed Lenin's Testament, carried out a campaign to discredit Trotsky, and leaned on the apparatus to assume power themselves. Beginning from 1924, they swung sharply between opportunism and adventurism.

The CPB, which originally attracted the revolutionary elements, fell under the influence of the Stalinists.

From then on, they carried out the zig-zags demanded by Moscow.

This opportunist policy led to uncritical slavish support for the British trade union leadership, including the 'lefts', who subsequently betrayed the 1926 General Strike.

In China, this opportunism led to the communists to adopt a Menshevik policy. They trailed after the bourgeois nationalists, subordinating themselves to their party, the Kuomintang. This resulted in the bloody Canton massacre of communists by Stalin's friend Chiang Kai-shek.

'Third Period'

These defeats resulted in a sharp adventurous turn to the left.

This was the so-called 'Third Period', where those outside the ranks of the communists were denounced as 'fascists'.

In the case of the social-democratic workers, they were described as 'social fascists'. Stalin

stated that "social democracy and fascism were not antipodes, but twins." This policy led to deep splits in the workers' movement.

In Britain, the Labour Party was denounced as a form of fascism, namely 'social fascist'.

The *Daily Worker*, the forerunner of the *Morning Star*, was launched in early 1930, and carried vicious attacks on the Labour Party.

"The Party has taken part in the struggle as the independent leader of the working class exposing the social fascist role of the Labour government and the trade union bureaucracy..." (D.W. 9/6/30)

'Red unions'

Opposing everything Lenin had written in *Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder*, they adopted a sectarian approach to the trade unions and wrote them off. They instead argued for new 'red' trade unions.

They established the United Mineworkers of Scotland, and the United Clothing Workers, which remained tiny and did not last.

There were attempts to break away from the South Wales Miners' Federation, which the CPB called a 'social fascist union', but it failed dismally.

In fact Arthur Horner, the leading CPB member among the South Wales miners, opposed the line and was repeatedly denounced in the *Daily Worker*. As a result, CPB membership collapsed, and a large section were left unemployed.

Germany

Unlike the CPB, the German Communist Party (KPD) had mass support in the working class. The policies of the 'Third Period' applied in Germany bear a direct responsibility for the victory of Hitler in 1933.

The KPD pursued a criminal sectarian policy, refusing to call for a united front of workers' organisations against fascism. Instead they denounced the social-democratic (Labour) workers as 'social fascists', the same as fascists.

This went as far as the KPD forming a bloc with the Nazis against the Social Democrats!

In 1931 Hitler organised a plebiscite to overthrow the SPD government in Prussia. The KPD supported this initiative on the orders of Moscow. They called it 'the Red Referendum' to cover up their treachery.

Fortunately, the plebiscite failed, otherwise Hitler would have come to power in 1931 and not 1933.

The *Daily Worker* fully supported this line. "The bourgeois press is greatly perturbed at this brilliant piece of Communist tactics. Hard hit too are the Social-Democratic leaders who are now snivelling at what they term the Fascist Communist United Front." (D.W. 25/7/31)

The *Daily Worker* hailed the result as a great success. "Despite the intensive police terror the Red mobilisation under the leadership of the Communist Party was a great success." (D.W. 11/8/31)

Prior to this, there was a noisy campaign to equate the Social Democrats with fascism.

"For the bourgeoisie the question is not fascism or social democracy but fascism with social democracy... The bankrupt bourgeois democracy and its chief representative the Social Democratic Party are in this fight unconditionally on the side of fascism." (D.W. 18/8/30)

United front from below

This denunciation of the Social Democrats went hand in hand with a call for a 'united front from below'. In other words, the social democratic workers should break with their leaders!

This was not the united front policy of Lenin, which was an appeal by the communists for unity with other workers' organisations for a common struggle over a concrete issue. This was what was needed in Germany: a united front of communists with the social democrats against the common enemy of Hitler's fascism.

The only person advocating a united front policy was Leon Trotsky, the co-leader of the October Revolution, who had been exiled from the Soviet Union by Stalin. However, the Stalinists vehemently denounced him and his policy!

Cover up

And yet, in the *British Road to Socialism*, the CPB turns the truth on its head and tells its members and supporters a complete fairy story:

"In Germany... the ruling class turned to fascism ... to destroy the communist challenge and divide the working-class movement... In Britain, France, Spain, the US, China and elsewhere, communists led the fight during the 1930s to build a working-class united front ... against fascism."

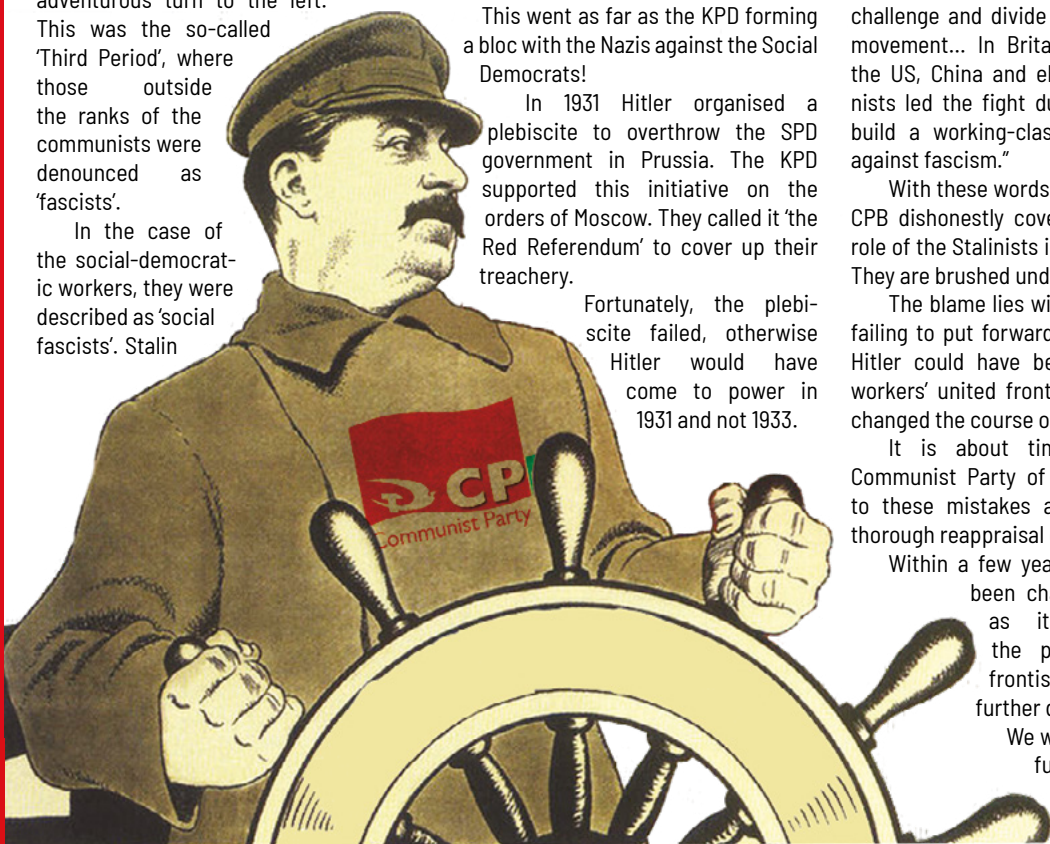
With these words, the leaders of the CPB dishonestly cover up the criminal role of the Stalinists in the rise of Hitler. They are brushed under the carpet.

The blame lies with the Stalinists in failing to put forward a Leninist policy. Hitler could have been stopped by a workers' united front. This would have changed the course of history.

It is about time the so-called Communist Party of Britain owned up to these mistakes and carried out a thorough reappraisal of its history.

Within a few years, the policy had been changed in Moscow, as it zig-zagged to the policy of 'popular frontism', which led to further defeats.

We will deal with this in future issues. ●



TOWARDS
THE RCP

NEW PODCAST SERIES
FROM MARXIST VOICE

CLICK
HERE



Tommaso Ugo Verga, Tooting and Balham Communists

Yard Act's lyrics have always stood out as a funny and often touching commentary on life under a deepening crisis, with verses about potholes, frustrated petty bourgeois ambitions and corporate fraud, accompanied by a deep, refreshingly post-ironic faith in the human spirit.

With their new album, *Where's My Utopia?*, Yard Act take a step forward musically but a step backwards thematically.

The album paints a more explicit portrait of a crumbling economic and social system.

But without the insight of dialectics, even these talented, socially aware artists collapse into cynicism. Thus, in its most emotional moments, this album abandons the hope of its predecessor in favour of individual reckoning with one's mistakes and faults.

Yet even this cynicism has the potential to turn into its opposite. There might be some truth behind the slightly apathetic promise, in 'Illusion,' that, "When the wheels are in motion, swear I'll join the revolution."

Overall, for all its bleakness, the album is undoubtedly clever and manages to squeeze some real beauty and fun out of its themes.

Yard Act continue to stand out as one of the most interesting bands in Britain today. •

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING



Eric C. and Katya T.

Dune: Part 2 is a masterpiece adaptation, showing the brutal reality of imperialism and offering insight into the tactics of liberation movements. *Dune* follows the journey of Paul Atreides on Arrakis, a planet unique in producing a precious commodity called spice, used by various ruling factions to maintain power.

In this film, Paul allies with the colonised Arrakis natives, the Fremen, to wage war against the brutal Harkonnens who have been oppressing them for generations. One harrowing scene shows a brutal bombing campaign, completely flattening a Fremen holy site.

We are treated to action-packed montages of the Fremen disrupting the spice trade. But this struggle for liberation is not as simple as smashing the tools of the oppressors and then celebrating a job well done.

In particular, the prophesied arrival of a messiah, who will lead the Fremen out from under their misery, haunts the narrative of *Dune: Part 2*. Splits begin to form in the movement, between those awaiting the messiah, and those who argue Arrakis must be liberated by its own people.

In just its first week, the film had already grossed over \$200 million and received rave reviews. This is a story that has understandably struck a chord with people today; we don't believe its popularity is solely down to its world-class acting and epic cinematography... •

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND WARNS AGAINST "CONTROVERSIAL" WORKS

Luke Rogers, Stratford Communists

Last month, Arts Council England (ACE) cautioned there could be funding withdrawn for organisations producing "overtly political or activist" works.

Met with sharp backlash, ACE has since released a torrent of statements explaining their intention was only to "manage risk" with "good risk assessments" rather than dictate output.

Yet this is all a little too late. The curtain has been lifted.

Impartial

For 75 years, the 'impartial' Arts Council England (ACE) has supposedly championed free expression as it decides which worthy art will be anointed in their oil of state funding.

But the real politics of ACE are written on the wall, issuing three statements of solidarity with Ukraine but falling silent on the Arnolfini's cancellation of Palestinian film screenings.

Likewise, they remain silent when artists are attacked or censored by arts institutions – most recently, the Barbican's cancellation of a lecture by Pankaj Mishra on the genocide in Gaza.

It is no coincidence that Arts Council England's warning came on the eve of the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport launching a full-scale review of ACE. Amidst Sunak's preaching the dangers of 'extremism', the higher-ups at ACE have decided to toe the line.

Funding

As it stands, arts in the UK is balancing on a knife edge.

Under the Tories, funding for Arts Council England has been cut by a third since 2010. In Birmingham City Council's recent bankruptcy budget, arts funding was cut 100%, with warnings that the city faces 'cultural deprivation' as a result.

Earlier this year, members of Equity and the Musicians Union in the English National Opera (ENO)

were set to go on strike – some for the first time in 44 years – over precarious contracts introduced in response to ACE funding cuts.

Redundancy notices were instead sent out to members mid-performance, after the unions

abandoned their long-standing demand to 'stop the cuts' and accepted deals with ENO.

That ACE should warn against art that is too 'political' or 'activist' when in such a crisis is bearing down on the arts is laughable.

Democratise art

Art, by its very nature, is political. It reflects, critiques, and shapes the society of its time. To claim or demand artistic neutrality is to deny this fundamental truth.

And as Trotsky noted, it is the decline of capitalism that sparks a yearning for 'liberating art'; what ACE may condemn as 'political' and 'activist' works, capable of challenging and reshaping the established order.

Artists must not succumb to and be silenced by threats from Arts Council England or any other.

From Arts Council England to Equity, all must be placed into the hands of the working class, funding genuine creative expression and an authentically liberating practice of art. •



GAME OVER FOR THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY?

Harri Salkeld, Newcastle Communists

The video game industry has grown to become one of the largest and most profitable of the entertainment sector, with 2023 netting a record-breaking \$184 billion in overall revenue.

Despite this, investor confidence is shaky, with parallels being made to the period before the industry last crashed in 1983. Alongside this, game quality is rapidly declining, and 2024 is on track to be an even worse year for layoffs than 2023.

Workers under attack

Last year there were estimated to be over 11,000 job losses in the industry, with 900 in Britain alone. Already in 2024 there have been over 6,000 jobs cut.

The real figure is undoubtedly far higher. This is due to the common practice of 'silent layoffs' in the industry where workers aren't fired but rather their contracts are simply not renewed.

Similar to other jobs in the tech industry, the majority of game workers are on highly casualised contracts and low wages which do not stand up to inflation.

However, workers have not taken this lying down. Following the example of workers in the tech and entertainment sector, which has seen increased industrial action recently, more and more game industry workers have begun to unionise.

The Game Workers' branch of the IWGB union reported a 50% rise in membership over 2023, with 12% of that being in October alone.

Greed?

There have also been serious concerns raised – from industry professionals and gamers alike – about the declining quality of games released.

One need only look at the countless examples of 'blockbuster' games in recent years which have been released in a broken and unplayable state. This has become such a common occurrence that it's an exception when games are released that don't have these issues.

All the biggest, so-called 'AAA' companies – Electronic Arts, Activision/

Bethesda, and Ubisoft – are also notorious for predatory practices such as micro-transactions. These push players into purchasing more and more 'in-game content' to make the game playable.

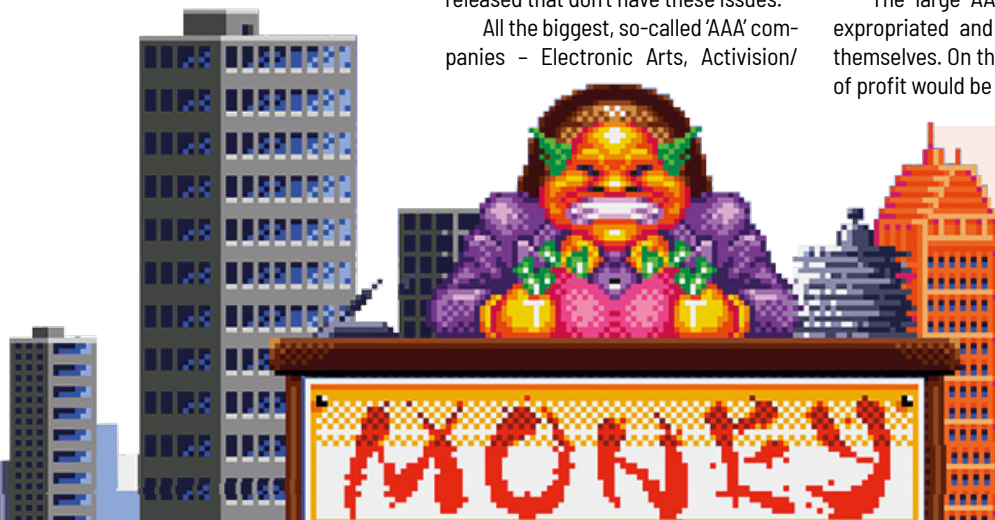
Socialism

The issue, however, is not down to a few particularly greedy companies. Under capitalism, video games are a commodity like any other. To the capitalist producers, generating profits is the number one priority, with things like quality and playability being secondary.

Hence we see corners cut, games rushed, and workers laid off. Companies play it safe by relying on sequels of existing games, rather than taking risks on new ideas.

It's often remarked within the video games industry that it is a miracle that any game is ever released. The amount of time, coordination, and planning that goes into producing games is immense. Ultimately, not a single game would be made without the thousands of workers that develop them.

The large AAA studios should be expropriated and run by the workers themselves. On this basis, the shackles of profit would be smashed. •



Newcastle Communists are organising a public meeting 'Video game layoffs – what can we do?' to help organise game workers against attacks on Wednesday 20 March, in Meli Cafe, Newcastle at 6:30pm.



Charge!

A long dusk on a wretched day,
No promise of a new dawn awaits.
No space to sit, nor time to waste,
Now is the hour to make haste.

To build the party, first learn the craft,
Take heed of lessons from the past.
But reading alone is not enough,
Do the work, though it may be tough.

Visit the picket, hit the street,
Learn from victory and defeat.
Find those who share your drive and wrath,
Lead them on the communist path.

If you spot a chance that's fleeting,
There's nowt to be gained in retreat-ing.
On the front foot, advance and act,
Go forth and plant our party's flag!

Grasp the ideas and find a way
To raise your voice to proudly say:
"If you hate capitalism like me,
Join us and build the RCP!"

R.M.



Katie Foster, Lancaster Communists

Critically-acclaimed musical *HadesTown* recently opened in London.

The story is set between a world stricken with poverty and climate crisis and HadesTown, the industrial nightmare of the underworld, overseen by Hades.

We follow the story of Orpheus, a poor boy that could "make you see the way the world could be"; and Eurydice, a "hungry young girl" who could only see "the way the world was".

Amidst a harsh winter, a desperate Eurydice accepts a job in HadesTown. These workers represent alienation at its extreme: nameless, faceless tools of industry.

Yet when Orpheus attempts to take on Hades alone to bring Eurydice home, he fails. He only succeeds when he convinces the workers to join him, freeing themselves.

Outnumbered, Hades lets them all go – but only if Orpheus does not look back to check Eurydice's following him. We know how that story ends.

HadesTown is one of my favourite pieces of art: it is a tragedy, but it rarely makes me feel anything but hopeful. It ends with the message: "We're gonna sing it again," the narrator says, "as if it might turn out different this time."

Crucially, it's when Orpheus listens to his doubts ("who are you to lead?") that he fails and loses sight of his vision for how the world could be.

Unlike Orpheus, we're not stuck telling the same story. When the masses realise their worth and rise up against the bosses, we will not look behind us; we can learn from the past, and truly transform the world into "the world we dream about". •



In Defence of Marxism #44

A recent poll commissioned by the Museum of Communist Terror revealed that of those in Britain that had heard of Lenin, 13.52% had a favorable opinion. That number skyrockets to 32% of Millennials and 43% of 18-24 year olds.

With capitalism in crisis all across the planet, it's no wonder that millions of people are looking to the great revolutionary for a lead.

So, to equip yourself as a Leninist in order to convert the 38% of youth who have not yet heard of Lenin, grab your copy of the latest *In Defence of Marxism* magazine, our quarterly theoretical journal.

This issue features articles on all aspects of Lenin's life and thought including his study of Hegel, his struggle against Stalinism and his approach to indescion and procrastination in the revolutionary party.

These articles are packed with lessons for our revolutionary work today. So don't delay: subscribe!

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Tune into the weekly podcast of the International Marxist Tendency, which delves into revolutionary theory, history and politics from all across the globe. Recent episodes include:

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- What is capitalism?
- Unrest on every continent: How the Communists are mobilising!

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Lousy landlord

Last July, I found myself in a predicament. Receiving a message from my landlord, they informed me – three weeks prior to my medical exams – that they wished to terminate my contract for the following year.

The term 'distressing' is ill enough to capture the situation I was in – materially and mentally.

However, such is to be expected from your 'run-of-the-mill' landlord, who you see once-per-eon, yet is able to extract vast sums of money from financially insecure workers and students.

The feature that made the scenario stand out was the fact that the landlord was not just someone I previously would consider a friend but was also a medical student. By law, a landlord must provide a minimum of two months' notice prior to the date of eviction, and provide a reason.

I was on the receiving end of neither, and despite protesting for disciplinary action via the medical school and citizens united, I was beaten.

Consequently, my misfortune has forced me into shoddy accommodation in which undoubtedly a polar bear would freeze, for I wore a coat to bed during the entire month of December 2023.

An anonymous medical student

Hollywood hypocrisy

Jonathan Glazer's film, *'The Zone of Interest'*, about a family that lives next door to Auschwitz, was awarded Best International Film at the 2024 Oscars.

This movie was 10 years in the making but it happened to be released at a time when the Israeli state is bombing and starving innocent children in an open-air prison. During his acceptance speech, an emotional Glazer critiqued what he views as the hijacking of the Holocaust to justify slaughtering thousands of innocent people.

Glazer's speech echoed previous moments when Hollywood's reception to political statements proved chilly. Such as in 2003 when Michael Moore was booed for condemning the imperialists' invasion of Iraq.

Now most liberals see the Iraq invasion as a giant mistake. But they refuse to learn from history. As someone once said "A liberal is someone who opposes every war except the current war, and supports all civil rights movements except the one that's going on right now."

Rab, Uxbridge Communists

Democracy

I recently had the 'pleasure' of meeting the Attorney-General and took the opportunity to question how she reconciles her belief in the 'rule of law' and democracy with her support for an unelected PM.

She proceeded to tell me he was elected (even Truss had a greater mandate than Sunak!) and suggested I was too young and naïve to understand the realities of politics!

I thank her for her hospitality...

Anonymous

Charity

I am a volunteer at a charity that helps disabled people get benefits that have been denied to them. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will ignore and dismiss disabled people's symptoms. They will accuse people of lying or exaggerating their symptoms.

Two-thirds of appeals made in court are accepted, because the DWP's claims are clearly unfounded.

The DWP banks on the fact that they will not attempt to appeal. Many of the people that call us are desperate.

However, as a charity we only have so much funding. There is not enough funding in the court system, and waiting lists are long.

The irony is when the government denies benefits, they will direct them to charitable organisations, such as ours, to appeal. Workers and disabled people are expected to bear the brunt of capitalism's crisis. We need to fight for communism; enough is enough!

Anonymous, Norwich

NHS appointments

This past week my 12-year-old daughter came down with a cold and earache. She went on to experience vertigo causing her to feel nauseous. I contacted our GP surgery on Tuesday and I expected to hear back that day, two at most. I didn't hear back until Friday morning! She still had to attend school with nothing more than calpol to manage her symptoms.

On Friday afternoon the doctor found she had an infection behind her eardrum and was prescribed antibiotics.

Unfortunately it seems that this experience isn't uncommon. 5.4 million people in England had to wait two weeks for an appointment, 1.5 million people had to wait four weeks or more!

Only through a fully nationalised NHS on the basis of a planned socialist economy can we halt a growing health crisis.

Where better to start than by building the Revolutionary Communist Party and fighting for world socialist revolution!

*Simon Cochrane,
Ashington Communists*

Edward Bond

Drama suffered a monumental loss this week due to the passing of Edward Bond. Ostracised from modern theatre, Bond offered depictions of the spectacular cruelties of everyday life including violence, suicide, war and poverty. Political agitprop was Bond's bread and butter.

He wrote poignant scenes such as: a child killed by nuclear bombings visiting the past to accuse society for his brutal demise, mothers killing their own starving children, soldiers turning their weapons against their officers to save civilians, and historical events such as the Babi Yar massacre. His death is a great loss.

As Bond himself says, "We are not in the world to be good, but to change it".

*Kate Holmes,
Leeds Communists*



LETTERS FROM BIRMINGHAM COMMUNISTS

Comrades in Birmingham report on the devastating impact of the cuts to the council's budget - the largest local authority cuts in history

A closed book

25 of 35 council funded libraries across the city are being threatened with closure. This attack on free public libraries is an attack against the most vulnerable layers of the working class.

Libraries are community pillars of support providing free, accessible literary resources in more than 50 different languages. They offer communal IT and printing services, essential to the over 100,000 children thrust into poverty by the capitalist system.

Without libraries such resources would otherwise be inaccessible. In order to organise a true defence of our libraries, the firmest action must be taken if we are serious about saving our services.

ST

Cinema closure

The Electric Cinema, the UK's oldest working cinema, was permanently shut on 29 February. Proposals have been made to demolish the 115-year-old cinema despite public outcry and protest.

A petition is circulating with almost 17,000 signatures calling for Historic England to designate Station Street as a Historic, Cultural and Civic Asset, to save the historic venue from demolition.

Meanwhile, the city council is unable and unwilling to act, instead seeing a quick buck in more luxury housing developments.

How many other historic icons must we, the people of Birmingham, mourn whilst we face Tory austerity and the cost-of-living crisis.

We cannot allow the plug to be pulled on the Electric Cinema!

Kit

Automation

Dear comrades,
I work in a bar at the Utilita Arena Birmingham, under heavily casualised conditions.

This week I arrived at work, and instead of seeing a row of tired faces I saw that they had been replaced with self-serve drinks machines. These machines are a clear attempt to cut wages.

Three staff members remained, their new roles are to help customers operate the confusing machines, and take the heat for sky-high prices – upwards of £7.50 a pint!

Workers are sick of footing the bill for the billionaires in their VIP boxes and their profiteering system.

Tim Coal

Culture deprived

Birmingham's disastrous council cuts will leave the creative sector in shambles. The attitude of our leaders is clear; under capitalism, art and culture are perceived as a luxury to be enjoyed only by those with a surplus of time and wealth.

The Symphony Orchestra, IKON Gallery, and REP Theatre are just a few of the many cultural institutions that are set to have their funding slashed by 100% by 2025. This short-sighted and irresponsible move will all but obliterate arts and culture across the city.

Funding will need to be raised through charging the public, or risk facing closure like the Electric Cinema.

We desperately need a communist alternative that will defend our cultural institutions from the greedy hands of the ruling class, and keep them open and accessible to all.

Ellie

Darkness descends

Street lighting across the city is being reduced by 10%. The implications of this are stark. Diminished street lighting jeopardises public safety, with women's security particularly at risk!

For women, who are already cautious due to pervasive gender-based violence, inadequate street lighting will exacerbate feelings of vulnerability and fear when walking alone or commuting back from work in the winter months.

The most deprived areas of the city will be dimmed the most. A sombre mood has fallen across the small shop owners of Soho Road who voice apprehension fearing the demise of the local night economy.

Altogether, another essential public service is under threat, darkness is literally descending upon the city.

Marina

The rotten stench of austerity

Adding on to the heaping pile of rubbish, the council has agreed that bins will be cut to fortnightly collections from 2025.

The effects of austerity have reached people's doors as overfilled bins wait to be collected or scavenged through by rodents. Neighbourhoods will paint a bleak picture of despair with litter scattered on the streets.

The question of redundancies also looms on the minds of bin workers, whose jobs have been threatened in the past.

The council will find, however, that the workers of Birmingham will not put up with their rubbish!

Frankie

REAL WAGES, PRODUCTIVITY, AND PROSPERITY: HAVE WORKERS 'NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD'?

Sean Hodges

"Lies, damned lies, and statistics" is a well-known aphorism for a reason. By massaging the figures cleverly, it's possible to 'prove' anything.

Last year, *The Economist* magazine ran a series of articles claiming that workers have 'never had it so good'. Real wages are better now than they have been in decades, we're told. The income differential between the very top and the very bottom is apparently shrinking.

Strangely enough, though, workers everywhere are clearly still angry. Our learned, liberal journalists have the answer to this riddle. It's all a question of 'narrative'. Workers simply believe that they are worse off. So nothing to worry about!

There's just one small question: are these optimistic assertions true?

Are real wages growing?

Firstly, let's look at the question of real wages – pay adjusted for prices. *The Economist's* data ranges from 2019 to 2023, a conveniently short span of time.

Pointing to a 3% and 1.5% real-terms pay increase in the USA and Britain, respectively, we are invited to breathe a sigh of relief.

Unfortunately, the facts don't select themselves. And a wider time range produces a rather different picture.

As the journal's authors themselves admit, if real wages are examined from their pre-crash peak in 2008, we find that workers' purchasing power in the UK has in fact fallen by 4.7%.

Even then, real wages are very difficult to measure. Some measures of inflation, for example, don't even include things like housing costs, which have skyrocketed.

Furthermore, if we factor in the scourge of unpaid overtime and overwork, or the slashing of public services (which represent a part of the 'social wage' that workers receive), then *The Economist's* arguments look even shakier.

Wage inequality

What about wage differentials? The very lowest are seeing their wages rise at a notably faster rate than the very highest, according to *The Economist*.

This indicates that income disparity is narrowing, they say, in direct contrast to 'conventional wisdom', thereby disproving the idea that the capitalists are hoovering up the lion's share of the newly-generated wealth in society.

But measuring wage differentials tells us nothing about the gap between workers and capitalists – because the latter, by definition, *aren't paid wages*. Instead, the bosses, landlords, and bankers appropriate surplus value created by the working class, in the form of profits, rents, and interest.

This data therefore tells us precisely *nothing* about the gap between those who work and those who own the means of production. Nor does income disparity tell us much about the inequality in wealth between the super-rich and the rest.

All it shows is that the gap between the best-paid and least-paid

wage-earners is narrowing. But even this is more a reflection of levelling down, through deskilling and 'proletarianisation', than of any real gains made at the lower end.

Taxing the rich

If we do examine wealth inequality, the contrast between the billionaires and the billions has never looked starker.

Oxfam recently revealed that the wealth of the world's five richest individuals has more than doubled since 2020. Meanwhile, the planet's poorest 60% have gotten poorer.

The solution demanded by reformists is for taxation on wealth and profits, alongside stronger intervention by governments to bust monopolies.

But as long as production is privately owned by the capitalist class, widening inequality is inevitable. Wealth concentration isn't a bug, but an unavoidable feature of the capitalist system.

Instead of scrabbling for crumbs, we must fight to socialise the means of production, and place them in the hands of the working class, in order to plan production for need.

Supply and demand

The Economist argues that a relative tightness in the labour market – due to a mixture of deficit spending and ageing populations – is driving wage growth; in other words, that it is simply a case of supply and demand (of labour-power) pushing up wages.

But the key factor determining what workers receive from the bosses is class struggle.

The refrain of the capitalists has been for wage restraint, not wage rises. Employers everywhere have ferociously resisted pay increases.

Without organisation and struggle, Marx stated, the working class is only "so much raw material for exploitation".

To maintain their living standards in the face of the bosses' attacks, workers have had no choice but to organise and strike back. Hence the tremendous strike waves seen in both Britain and the USA over the last couple of years, with a reawakening of the working class.

Overthrow their system

The Economist's efforts are a case of smoke and mirrors; a comforting bedtime story for the bankers and bosses.

The truth is that workers are not angry because of 'false narratives'. They're angry because they can see that their lives are getting no better, while a handful of billionaires get richer by the hour.

The capitalists and their lackeys don't understand the system they defend. And they have no interest in understanding it. As long as the profits keep flowing in, all's well as far as they're concerned.

Ironically, it's the communists who best grasp the realities of the capitalist economy. We strive to understand capitalism, however, so that we can fight to overthrow it – and replace it with a system that would genuinely raise living standards for the vast majority, and improve life for all of humanity. ●

STAND UP TO TATA: IT'S NOW OR NEVER!



Alex Falconer, South Wales Communists

Tata bosses are clearly rattled. At the first sign of a fightback in Port Talbot, with news that the steelworkers are to be balloted for potential strike action, they've threatened their employees: if they dare to strike, they will have their redundancy payments revoked.

Just the hint of industrial action is enough to worry the bosses. They know a strike could escalate, potentially into an occupation of the steelworks, and hit them in the profits.

Where next?

What is being offered by Tata is nothing more than a choice between death by hanging or drowning.

Tata's owners couldn't care less about their workers or the town of Port Talbot. Their gangsterism and thirst for even greater profits is going to destroy both.

The bosses' cards are on the table. They've thrown down the gauntlet to the unions and the workers. The only question now is whether to fight back or surrender?

Foot dragging

Tata bosses are fearful. But it's not the union leaders that scare them. They have done little-to-nothing to suggest that a militant fightback is forthcoming.

Even now, Alun Davies, national officer for steel at Community, has said: "At this time, Community is not confirming an industrial action ballot timetable, and this would be premature as we have not yet exhausted the procedures." (our emphasis)

We're long past premature! Redundancy notices have already gone out. The first job losses are looming. The only thing that's been exhausted

is precious time – time that should have been spent organising and mobilising.

For months now, the steel union leaders have attempted to bargain with the bosses, while keeping workers in the dark. Their marches have been more akin to a funeral procession than a militant fightback.

What the unions and the Welsh Trades Union Congress (WTUC) should be doing is launching a campaign across the labour movement, and across the whole of Wales, to fight these job losses, calling for solidarity from workers everywhere.

Time running out

A comparison with the movement of the Welsh farmers is striking. They have organised slowdowns on the motorways, formed barricades around Welsh ministers' offices, and rallied thousands of infuriated farmers outside of the Senedd. This is the fighting approach that workers need to take!

The situation in Port Talbot is on a knife edge. The town could still be saved. But action needs to be taken now.

If the unions won't provide a lead, then the steelworkers should rely on their own strength. This means standing up to the bosses, organising an immediate walkout, and taking united strike action.

An appeal should be made to the working-class community to form steelworkers' support committees, along the lines of those that were formed to aid the miners.

This could pave the way to a full-on occupation of the plant. This would force Tata to eat their words, and save the jobs they're threatening to axe. It's time to show these fat-cats who's really in charge. It's now or never! ●



AMAZON UNIONISATION: THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Jazir Mohammed and Rikitesh Kumar, Warwick Communists

The fight to unionise at Amazon UK continues. Warehouse workers attempting to organise have had to face down many strike-busting efforts by the company. But they've fought through every barrier placed in their way.

One worker, "S", speaking to *The Communist*, told us that: "Idle time is used to pay even less wages, despite a full day's work. If a worker has an idle time of 30 minutes, it is then rounded up to a full hour for which the wages aren't paid."

The bosses regularly deploy classic divide-and-rule tactics. S noted that: "Managers often [fuel] and heighten racial tensions amongst the company's

multicultural workforce when it comes to making decisions for promotion."

Another worker, named "G", discussed the sheer level of contempt held by management towards workers. He said there was a culture of managers constantly taking excessive and unnecessary disciplinary measures against workers, "in order to prove themselves to higher ups and get promotions".

Despite the setbacks, union organisers at Amazon are very close to reaching their target for formal recognition. Two further strike days are planned for 19 and 20 March.

Successfully unionising workers at the world's biggest company would be a major victory for the entire labour movement, giving confidence to workers everywhere. ●

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A ... NIGHT RECEPTIONIST



Throughout my job as a night receptionist (10pm-8am) in a budget hotel, I see the crimes of capitalism on display daily.

Guests who are waiting for social housing are frequent. These guests can be expected to be waiting for upwards of half a year before social housing is found for them – a cruel result of Maggie Thatcher's Right to Buy, and of landlords buying up housing *en masse*.

The amenities such guests can expect to find are barebones: a bed, a kettle, an uncomfortable chair, and mouldy showers. If they're lucky, the council might provide them with one of our 'luxury' breakfast boxes, consisting of: long-life milk, orange juice that tastes off, dry cornflakes, and a tasteless *pan au chocolat* – hardly a nutritious start to the day.

For many, our small hotel bears little resemblance to the comforts of home. We do not even have a microwave to heat up their meals, so for many it's instant noodles everyday of the week.

Domestic violence occurs frequently within the hotel, as does hard drug use and prostitution. Police visits are common. Staff are expected not to take difficult issues home with them – as if we're automatons devoid of any emotion.

The long hours are devoid of any social interaction. Night staff are essentially budget security guards. Yet our pay is significantly lower than such a role.

Under communism, such a work environment would be completely different. No longer would guests wait months upon months for social housing.

Hard drug use here wouldn't be as frequent either, since people would no longer have to numb themselves from the ills of capitalism. And women wouldn't have to resort to the dangers and traumas of prostitution to make ends meet.

A better world is possible. We must fight to make it a reality. ●

BANKRUPT BIRMINGHAM: WHAT ARE THE UNIONS DOING?

Roman Merker, Birmingham Communists

On 5 March, Birmingham City Council signed off on a new wave of austerity and a 21% rise in council tax. This comes on the back of a scandalous failure to deal with an equal-pay claim, alongside a bodged IT system upgrade – both of which cost hundreds of millions of pounds.

Working-class residents have not been involved in any decision-making. Yet we're the only reason the city runs at all. So why should we bear the consequences of the authorities' failures?

In response to the crisis, the unions have organised two protests. Unfortunately, the attendance and mood at both were somewhat flat.

The blame for this lies with the passivity of the union leaders. In general, their message is that we need to wait for a Labour government to get in power.

But does anybody think that a Starmer government would behave any differently to the Tories when it comes to austerity and cuts?

In the meantime, the unions have provided no plan for industrial action to resist these cuts. Unison, the biggest union in Birmingham, has said nothing.

We cannot wait for any saviours. Instead, if any worker loses even a penny of their salary, or if even one job is axed, the unions should respond defiantly. This means balloting to strike as soon as possible, and planning serious action.

Rank-and-file committees should be organised to coordinate a one-day general strike for all public workers across Birmingham. This would really show the commissioners who's in charge.

The attacks facing Birmingham are the tip of the iceberg. A fightback here could show the way forward for working-class communities everywhere. It's time to draw a line in the sand and take a stand. ●

BASTARD BOSS OF THE WEEK



I am a part-time supervisor at a coffee chain, where we earn less than a living wage. Recently, management has made us 'save labour hours' by sending our colleagues home early, in order to save the company money.

We have to choose between cutting each other's pay, through not reaching contracted hours, or getting berated by management.

Comrades in unions in the USA have referred to these as 'skeleton shifts'. This is an apt description.

Cleaning every bit of equipment, every tile on the floor, and every toilet stall, as well as doing all the bookkeeping within an hour, is hard enough with three people, never mind two.

We are run off our feet. Then management has the cheek to call in supervisors and tell us off for receiving poor scores on customer service. How dare we work our understaffed shifts without a smile!

We have tried to explain our frustrations to the bosses, but to no avail.

Hospitality employers have been doing this for years. To make the same profits from less wages, they cut the workforce down to the bone, whilst piling up work for the remaining workers.

I have been inspired by baristas in the USA, who are unionising and walking out over these issues. We must do the same! ●

GRADY WINS UCU ELECTIONS, AS LEFT VOTE SPLITS

UCU Communists

The UCU elections recently came to a close, with incumbent Jo Grady reelected on a turnout of just 15%.

This low turnout is reflective of the low morale in the union, following two long national disputes. One of these, over pay and conditions, remains 'open'.

This battle has dragged on thanks to poor leadership and anti-democratic shenanigans by Grady and the wider leadership. Their actions scuppered the struggle and demoralised rank-and-file members – evident in the failure to get over the 50% turnout threshold in the last strike ballot.

Despite all of this, Grady was reelected. This is primarily due to a split in the left vote. The results show that if there had been a single left candidate against Grady, it's likely they would have won.

Unfortunately, the left vote was split between Vicky Blake, a well-known activist and a soft-left candidate, and Saira Weiner, the candidate of the UCU Left, who was standing on a militant and democratic programme.

This has happened before in the UCU, and in many other union elections. The result is always the same: allowing 'moderate', class-collaborationist candidates to slip through and win.

The lesson for next time is for the left to stand a single candidate on a fighting and democratic programme, with a campaign based on the grassroots.

Attacks on higher education workers are coming in thick and fast. Just recently, 120 Sheffield Hallam staff found out they are at risk of redundancy.

With the UCU election now over, rank-and-file union activists must prepare for battle and demand their leadership begin a national, united struggle against these cuts. ●

Comrade Tara in Oxford speaks at a local UCU rally for international working women's day



CAMBRIDGE DELIVERY RIDERS MOBILISE

Hasan Wright, Cambridge Communists

Cambridge delivery strikes are heating up. We have been speaking to riders for several weeks now, and it is becoming increasingly clear: food delivery companies are running out of road.

Workers tell us that the recent Valentine's Day pickets were militant, with riders encircling Clifton Road Morrisons on bikes and blocking entry to Deliveroo kitchens.

Possibly some 200 hundred riders participated – maybe two-thirds of the total in Cambridge. The riders are all incensed by cuts to payments, which have plunged the majority far below the hourly minimum wage.

Virtually every rider we have spoken to wants further strikes. Many are even talking about indefinite action. The

problem is that nobody is calling it.

Several riders thought that another strike would take place on 10 March. But this proved to be more of a rumour than a hard fact.

Unaware of what exactly was due to take place, we did our best to spread the word about this potential strike with posters and leaflets. And we got riders' phone numbers, to help them organise and make this round of action even bigger than the last.

But in the end, widespread strike action failed to materialise. Only those riders who we helped to mobilise showed up to form picket lines.

This episode reveals the hunger for strikes amongst these workers. That a relatively small group of activists, such as us, can organise action – armed only with a few flyers and phone numbers, – shows the potential that exists.

Subsequently, we have changed our tactics, forming a new group chat with a QR code for riders across town to scan. At the time of writing, some 40 riders are organised in this chat. And we intend to use this as a platform for riders across Cambridge to call further action.

But this is the least we can do. By patiently discussing our ideas with them, we are close to recruiting several of the riders.

Given time and support, these red riders can help lead the fight not just against the Deliveroo bosses, but against the capitalist class as a whole. All they need now is a party to organise with – and the RCP aims to provide them with exactly that! ●



PCS BALLOT: RE-MOBILISE THE TROOPS! COORDINATE THE FIGHTBACK!

PCS Communists

The Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union has announced plans to ballot 150,000 members for strike action, including high-impact areas like the Passport Office and HMRC.

This strike has been called in the context of civil servants receiving some of the worst pay in the public sector, alongside chronic issues like turnover and underfunding.

The union's demands include pay restoration, a £15 per hour living wage, and a shortening of the working week with no loss of pay. These are good demands, and could serve as an example to other public sector unions.

The mood in the union is mixed at present. Some workers are frustrated by the handling of the online consultation, and by the scheduling of the ballot process. DVLA workers we spoke to also told us about disillusionment in their workplace, linked both to these factors and to events surrounding the previous round of strike action.

The desire to launch a serious fightback is also there, however. In Ofqual, for example, our comrade took part in a discussion where the demands of the pay campaign brought the branch to life, with members keen to take up roles in fighting for a Yes vote. This shows the potential that exists – potential that must now be seized, in order to turn the tables on the government this year.

The key thing is to ensure that members are fully engaged at all levels, over the duration of both the ballot and the dispute, and are able to link their struggles to those of other unions.

One of our comrades, for example, has proposed a conference motion for cross-union strike committees, in order to link our strikes with those of other unions. This has been passed unanimously by their branch.

Bold initiatives like this can be a stepping stone to revitalising the union, and to coordinating with other unions for a new, bigger strike wave. This is what communist civil service workers are fighting for! ●



P8: THESES ON THE BRITISH REVOLUTION

P3: GALLOWAY'S ROCHDALE VICTORY

CENTRE-PAGES: SPECIAL PARTY BUILDING
PULL-OUT

KICK THEM OUT!



JOIN THE

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY!

The election of George Galloway in Rochdale. The farmers' movement in Wales and Europe. Aaron Bushnell's self-immolation.

All of these events of the past month are partial, distorted reflections of the same underlying process: the malaise in society; the burning anger against the status quo and the establishment that upholds it.

At root, these shocks are a product of the deepening crisis of capitalism, in Britain and worldwide.

The market and the profit motive have led us down a dead-end. The only way forward is to overturn this entire decrepit system – and to kick out the capitalist politicians who defend it.

We live in a period of sharp turns and sudden changes; of instability and volatility. An explosive situation is being prepared in all countries. A mountain of inflammable material is piling up everywhere.

This is particularly true for Britain, which has been rocked by a series of social and political earthquakes over the last decade: from the support for Scottish independence; to the rise of the Corbyn movement; to the Brexit vote; to the mass

Black Lives Matter and climate protests; to the strike wave of 2022-23; to the tremendous uprising in solidarity with Palestine.

Britain has become a powder keg, ready to ignite. All that is required, as Lenin once remarked, is a spark to light the flame.

At the same time, there is an enormous political vacuum. The traditional parties are hated. The old 'lefts' are completely worn out and discredited. And the reformist trade union leaders have failed to provide a genuine lead.

Now, into this combustible cocktail, we have the arrival of George Galloway, rolling into the House of Commons like a grenade, ready to set the whole rotten edifice alight. In the context of a brutal Israeli invasion of Rafah, and a wider conflagration across

the Middle East, Galloway's election could act as a further catalyst to events in Britain.

The Rochdale MP's bold, unapologetic agitation against the imperialists and the establishment could give a spur to the Palestine movement – exposing the hypocrisy, lies, and crimes of the Westminster warmongers, and giving a political expression to ordinary people's anger inside Parliament.

Under the hammer blow of such events, consciousness is being profoundly shaped and transformed. Increasing numbers of workers and youth are drawing radical – even revolutionary – conclusions. Larger and larger layers are looking towards communism. That is why we are launching the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) this

May. And we are calling on you to help us in this venture.

Join us and get organised. Study and spread the ideas of Marxism. Subscribe to *The Communist*, and take extra copies to sell in your workplace or school. And most importantly, recruit your friends, family, neighbours, classmates, and colleagues to the fight for revolution.

Nobody else is going to topple the Tories and smash capitalism for us. It is up to us to forge the forces of communism needed to liberate humanity from the scourges of war, poverty, and climate catastrophe.

So, if you're a communist, it's time to get organised. It's time to join *your* party. It's time to build the RCP. ●