



Solidarity

& Workers' Liberty

For social ownership of the banks and industry

No 443 30 June 2016 50p/£1

CLAW BACK THE WEALTH

Under pressure to do a deal with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party, the Tories have found £1 billion extra for public services in Northern Ireland, the equivalent pro rata to £29 billion in England.

They have also sneaked through a huge pay rise for the Queen, from £43 million in 2016 to £82 million in 2019.

On 28 June they voted down Labour's proposal to lift the public sector pay limit. More pressure — strikes, demonstrations, rallies — can make them budge on that, too.

More page 5



- £1bn found for DUP deal
- £82m for Queen
- Public pay still frozen
- Inequality gets worse

Inside:

Grenfell: They're still not



See page 3

Brexit and free movement



Solidarity reports on the latest with the Brexit negotiations.

See page 3

Too much party in the revolution?



Martin Thomas discusses the role of the Bolshevik party in the Russian Revolution.

See pages 6-7

Join Labour!

Is the RMT about to reaffiliate to Labour?

See page 10

School cuts cause school week cuts

By Gerry Bates

A number of UK schools have decided to shorten the school week to deal with budget crises.

A primary school in Leicestershire is the latest to announce it will end the school week on Friday lunchtime.

A Essex secondary school has decided students will get an hour less teaching a week and is considering cutting back subject time for PE and PSHE.

Instead of squeezing top pay, schools are cutting the number of staff. Cutting subjects allows them to get rid of teaching posts. Teachers in other subjects have more lessons squeezed into their week — which means an increased workload.

Shortening the working week in primary schools allows schools to cut down the amount of hours they pay a worker to cover teachers when they are released for their planning, preparation and assessment time.

The Department for Education has said the head teacher of the Leicestershire primary school should not link the decision to cut the school week to the new funding formula, as the funding formula had not yet been implemented.

But if schools are already facing budget crises severe enough to make them cut the school week, imagine how bad it will become when the new funding formula is introduced!

NI abortion win

By Rosalind Robson

To avoid defeat on a House of Commons vote the government has said women from Northern Ireland will be able to get abortions on the NHS in England.

Women are not able to get abortions in Northern Ireland except when there is a risk of death or serious damage to physical or mental health. A woman can obtain an NHS abortion elsewhere in the UK but only if she can pay.

This anomaly has caused untold suffering over the years which, until now, has been ignored by many politicians, even those who are otherwise pro-choice.

An amendment brought by Labour's Stella Creasy on the issue had been selected for inclusion in the Queen's Speech debate. And rather than risk possible defeat the government has now decided it will change its line on the issue. Whatever the reasons, it is a tremendous victory for the women of Northern Ireland.

The battle now is to make abortions available in Northern Ireland and indeed, across the whole of the island of Ireland.

Chicago dyke march kicks out LGBTQ Jews

By Elizabeth Butterworth

On 24 June, a group of LGBTQ Jews were asked to leave Chicago's annual Dyke March.

The group, including Laurel Grauer from 'A Wider Bridge' (an NGO that links with LGBTQ organisations in Israel), were approached by a group of activists asking about their intentions in carrying Pride flags with a Star of David imposed on a rainbow.

After a conversation ensued between the organisers and those carrying the flags, they were asked to leave due to their "Zionist" and "pro-Israel" views. In their statement, the organisers have not made clear what these "offensive" views

are — they could have been views that were racist, but they could have been views that Israel has a right to exist, or that they have been on holiday to Israel.

The organisers affirm their "anti-Zionist" stance and solidarity with Palestinians, but still haven't explained what they found objectionable.

Those asked to leave have said that they were asked to leave because their flag was a "trigger" to some people.

Regardless of what happened next, the fact a group of Jews, identified through the Star of David Pride flags, were approached and grilled on their stance on Palestine is unacceptable and antisemitic. It



is not the responsibility of Jews to account for the state of Israel, just as it is not the responsibility of Muslims to account for the House of Saud.

The tactics of the organisers also point to a trend of "no-platforming" rather than allowing debate and discussion, particularly prevalent on the American left, which uses the concept of "safe spaces" to shut down anyone who disagrees with the self-imposed ideological purity arbiters.

There is ongoing, serious debate among Jews about LGBTQ issues (LGBTQ Jews face discrimination from their own community and wider society), and about Israel — with Jewish views running the full gamut.

It is nothing short of a disgrace that people should be harassed on a Pride march simply for being visibly Jewish.

Shot for being black and sick The right to be cool

By Charlotte Zalens

On 18 June Seattle police shot and killed Charleena Lyles after she reported a burglary.

Charleena was pregnant, and was shot in the presence of her three children aged one, four and 11. The police claim when they arrived at her apartment she drew a knife, so they shot her.

Audio recordings of the shooting

Arming children?

After students at a primary school in Birmingham wrote to emergency services thanking them for protecting them, police invited them to a training facility.

The idea was to show how the police deal with terrorist incidents. But the children were given replica guns and asked to shoot at terrorist targets! If that doesn't sound morbid enough, the police press-released the trip under the title "Ready, aim ... smile!"

Parents have understandably been concerned about the trip, arguing that the event made the idea of shooting another human being into a game.

show police started shooting very soon after entering the apartment — 15 seconds after shouting for Charleena to "get back". Questions have been asked about why police did not try other approaches before shooting.

Charleena's cousin said, "What is the reason to use such lethal force? There are many ways to subdue someone without shooting them. She's not big. She's not intimidating... She called you, and you went to her house and killed her."

Charleena's family have said that she suffered from mental health problems, and there is some evidence that police were familiar with Charleena — a warning was placed on her address over "possible risk to officers".

US police are twice as likely to shoot a black person. And a report by a Massachusetts disability-rights organisation concluded that people with an untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be shot by police. The report concludes that the victim's mental illness is often used to blame them for their own deaths.

Charleena should be alive. Her children should still have their mother. She and them are victims of a system that profiles black people and does not care about the lives of those with mental illness.

Yes, Labour should scrap Trident!

Comments Corbyn has made to Glastonbury festival founder Michael Eavis have caused some controversy.

Following Corbyn's appearance at the festival a Q&A with Michael Eavis was published in a local paper.

Corbyn told Eavis he believed he would be Prime Minister in six months and that he would scrap Trident "as soon as possible".

Denials were issued shortly afterward and Corbyn said that Eavis

was just paraphrasing. The Labour Party again reiterated their support for Trident renewal.

Corbyn is well known for personally opposing nuclear weapons and has accepted that the refusal of the Labour Party conference in 2016 to discuss abolition of Trident is de facto support for its renewal.

Further pressure is needed on Labour to commit to a policy that a vast majority of Corbyn supporters back — abolition of Trident.

By Simon Nelson

June 2017 was the hottest June for 176 years.

Across Europe temperatures went up to 38°C, and groups of school children and workers defied instructions and wore skirts to school and work to try and keep cool.

In Nantes, France, a group of bus drivers asked their employer for permission to wear shorts. When this request was denied they decided to wear the only item that was authorised in hot weather — a skirt.

One worker told the *Guardian* "Our bosses' offices are air-conditioned, which isn't the case with the majority of our vehicles. To spend more than seven hours in a vehicle in 50°C temperatures is not easy."

The protest and negative publicity forced the employer to change the dress code.

This is not the first-time workers have rebelled by wearing skirts. Train conductors won a similar victory in 2013 in Sweden after wearing skirts for two weeks.

More than 30 school students in Bedfordshire and Devon also rebelled against their schools' uniform policies, which ban shorts, by wearing skirts, gaining lots of press attention. In Devon the students

led a protest chanting, "Let boys wear shorts!" The school has now agreed to review the uniform policy in hot weather.

The GMB has threatened to ask its members to wear skirts after a porter at Watford General Hospital was threatened with disciplinary action for rolling up his trouser legs.

A lot of the publicity in these cases has been focused on the fact that skirts are for women and those protesting are men. In Europe the idea of trousers being menswear and skirts being only for women goes back to the 14th century. The V&A website says that "Previously, both men and women wore draped or unshaped garments and tunics. As men's tunics became shorter and tighter-fitting in the 15th century, fashionable men began to wear hose or stockings as outer leg wear." By the 19th century trousers were associated with masculinity.

There is no need for uniform in schools, and many countries do not require school students to wear uniform. School students should be given a free choice over what they wear.

For workers uniform should serve a purpose — to identify someone carrying out a specific role or task. It should always be gender neutral, comfortable, and appropriate for the weather.

According to the Financial Times the value of private jets has dropped 35%

We're struggling to feel sorry for the rich ...



Sales of luxury items dropped after the financial crash in 2008 after massive oversupply in the lead up to the crash. However many yacht and jet suppliers have just switched to fewer, more expensive items, rather than many cheaper ones.

Brexit: fight for free movement!

By Sacha Ismail

As the UK-EU negotiations on Brexit begin, the political landscape in Britain is in flux.

The general election result was widely interpreted as a riposte to the Tories' push for a hard Brexit. Now senior Tory critics of a hard Brexit, and indeed of Brexit per se, are becoming bolder.

Some, for instance Broxtowe MP Anna Soubry, even advocate the maintenance of free movement from the EU. More senior Tories have hinted at that too.

Meanwhile polls suggest public opinion is shifting. A new YouGov/Times poll says that 58pc of people believe that trading with the EU is a higher priority than controlling EU immigration. More voters now believe Britain was wrong to vote to leave than right: 45 to 44%. A Survation poll found that 55% favoured a "soft Brexit" with the UK remaining in the EU single market and customs union, while only 35% favoured a "hard Brexit". Survation found that 48% favour a referendum on the final Brexit deal, while only 43% are opposed!

All this is despite a lack of leadership from the Labour Party.

Labour generally criticises the Tories from the left, i.e. from a more anti-Brexit position. It has rightly denounced the government's concessions on the right of EU citizens to stay in Britain as "too little" — because as the campaign Another Europe is Possible and numerous migrants' rights groups have explained, the offer is hedged round with all kinds of very bad limits. It's "too late" because it should have been done a year ago, when Labour proposed it.

More generally, however,

Labour's position is as clear as mud. With one, decisive exception: senior Labour spokespeople are very clear that they support an end to free movement from the EU. In other words, the position they have tied themselves to is to the right of that taken by Anna Soubry.

Labour's stance has no doubt been given encouragement by the Stalinist-origin types in Corbyn's office who think that leaving the EU is a win for "fighting the monopolies" or whatever. But its origin is with the Labour right.

As late as November 2016, Corbyn told the *Sunday Mirror* that Labour would vote in Parliament against triggering "Article 50" unless the government agreed to a "Brexit bottom line" that included staying in the single market — and thus accepting continued free movement.

Then Tom Watson, who combines right-wing, Stalinist and pseudo pro-working class strands in his politics, intervened to say that Labour would put down amendments but vote for Article 50 regardless. Corbyn eventually deferred to Watson.

CORBYN

Corbyn did not publicly endorse ending free movement until well into 2017, and then he did it in such an unclear way it looked very much like he was unhappy about it. Yet that then became Labour's policy in the election.

The leaders of the organised Labour left played a poor and even harmful role here. During the many months before and even after the referendum when Corbyn was holding the line on free movement, Momentum never once stated its support for this principle, let alone campaign to back Corbyn up. This

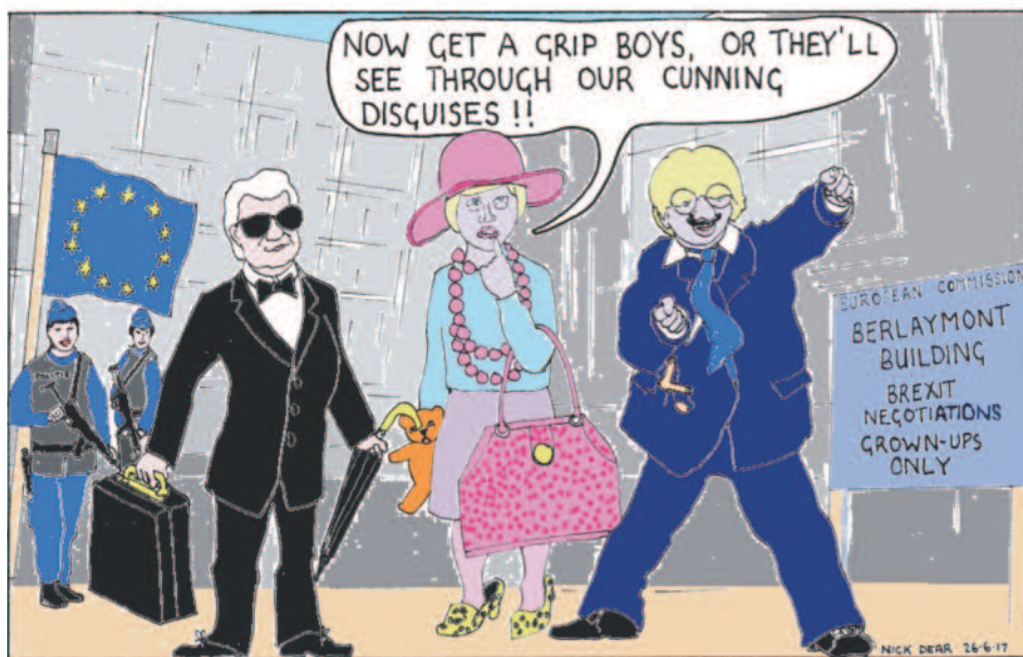
was despite Momentum committees repeatedly taking a stand in favour of free movement, most recently in December 2016, when a motion on it passed with only a few votes against.

Not long after the 23 June referendum, Momentum leader Jon Lansman made it clear that he

favoured the left advocating an end to free movement. Did he stay quiet on the Momentum National Committee because he thought that position would lead to a breach with his allies, many of them young and enthusiastic about migrants' rights? Whatever the backroom manoeuvring was, Momentum never carried its democratic mandate on this, even while that was in line with Corbyn.

Labour Party members or their representatives have never been given a chance to vote on this issue. At last year's Labour Party conference, no motions were submitted advocating an end to free movement — but motions were submitted opposing it, including from the national Young Labour committee and CLPs including Norwich South, Clive Lewis' constituency.

These motions originated with



socialist activists on the left of Momentum. Unfortunately these motions were not prioritised for debate and the Labour right successfully counterposed the issue of refugee rights (which it seemed less keen on during the Blair years!) to having a discussion on free movement.

The bulk of Labour members are very likely in favour of defending (and extending) free movement, and certainly vast majority of left-wing activists are. Yet this has not found expression in the hierarchy or public position of the party. Supporters of the hard right Progress group, which is making such a big deal of fighting a hard Brexit, like to say it will be possible to retain close ties to the EU while also limiting immigration.

If the labour movement stands up and fights it can shift things fur-

ther. It is time to stop the retreat — starting on the left. Labour and trade union activists should unapologetically argue:

1. That leaving the single market will make workers in Britain "poorer and less secure". We should oppose it. Like it or not, remaining in the single market means accepting free movement of labour from the EU.

2. That, in any case, people coming to Britain is not a problem. The labour movement should reject the right-wing idea that it is, and champion unity of all workers to win better conditions and rights for all.

We need an organised campaign to make these arguments, shift Labour's position and finally make the labour movement a positive rather than a negative factor in the shifting patterns of the UK-EU negotiations.

Grenfell: the powerful are still not listening

By Charlotte Zalens

So far all 95 tower blocks which have had their cladding tested since the fire at Grenfell in Kensington, west London, have failed fire safety standards.

These buildings are potentially as dangerous for their tenants as Grenfell was. Many hundreds of buildings are still to be tested.

Tenants have been evacuated from tower blocks in Camden while cladding is removed; Sheffield council is removing cladding and says it cannot afford to re-clad buildings. Cladding is being removed from tower blocks in Brent, Hounslow, Lambeth, Manchester, Islington, Doncaster, Merseyside, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Salford, Stockton, Sunderland, and Wandsworth; Croydon has said it will retro-fit sprinkler systems to all of its tower blocks.

The testing operation shows how the lives of working-class people have been routinely put on the line to make "savings" at every level of building planning and construction.

Meanwhile the grim reality of how many people may have died at Grenfell is starting to be appreciated. Many flats will have been sublet, or have "unofficial" residents. Many Grenfell residents may have had undocumented immigration statuses which has led to friends and family not reporting them missing or nobody knowing to report them missing. Police have appealed for information, stating that neither they nor the Home Office will be checking immigration status. Understandably, many will not trust this. Officials now say that the final death-toll may not be established until the end of the year.

The relief effort is still chaotic, and largely left to volunteers with

little official coordination. Many families may not ask for help for fear over questions over their immigration status; there are reports of some survivors sleeping in parks. The Radical Housing Network have reported that some survivors who had been temporarily housed in a local hotel were being evicted at a few hours notice because the hotel had other bookings.

It remains unclear how many households will be rehoused locally, and on what basis. Housing minister Alok Sharma was heckled on live TV on Wednesday 28 June when he promised homes to all survivors by next week (three weeks after the tragedy!). But he refused to confirm whether these homes would be on a permanent tenancy, or allay fears that people will be moved out of the borough.

Failing after failing on the part of the council, the arms-length housing management organisation, and

various contractors, keep coming to light.

On Tuesday 27 June it was discovered that a council safety officer had ordered newly installed gas pipes in the landings and stairwells of Grenfell to be boxed in with fire-retardant material. The work was contracted to the National Grid's gas distribution arm which had started the work but at the time of the fire had only completed a third of it.

In the course of the work the firm was sold to investors and renamed Cadent Gas. Residents had raised their concerns and been ignored. In an email to Kensington and Chelsea at least three months before the disaster, Tunde Awoderu, vice-chair of Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association, wrote: "This exposed gas pipe throughout the building has put our life in danger and we don't feel secure in the building any more."

Residents of Grenfell and the surrounding area are demanding a say in the public enquiry. Grenfell Action Group is fundraising for legal costs to make that a reality.

On Thursday 29 June the government announced that retired judge Sir Martin Moore-Bick will head up the public inquiry. But it is feared that wealthy, privately-educated Moore-Bick will not understand the problems faced by poor, mostly BAME, working-class people, and the impact of austerity. In 2014 Moore-Bick ruled in favour of Westminster Council being allowed to rehouse a vulnerable woman and her family 50 miles from her current home, a ruling which was overturned by the Supreme Court.

Nobody in power is yet listening to the former residents and families of Grenfell. We must force them to.

• Legal fundraising:
bit.ly/2sVXHnp

The Scottish left: the strongest nationalists

LEFT

By Dale Street

"The Labour Party in Scotland has been wiped out." That was the verdict of the Socialist Party Scotland (SPS) on the 2015 general election. The next step was: "The trade union movement must now prepare to build a new mass party for the working class."

In alliance with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the SPS had stood ten candidates in Scotland under the 'Trade Union and Socialist Coalition' (TUSC) banner. Their votes ranged from 0.2% to 0.7%, and amounted to only 1,772 in total. But that did not constitute a "wipe-out".

Labour's 2015 vote slump, said the SWP, demonstrated that "the crucial task for the left is to organise for a united left alternative in next year's Scottish Parliament elections."

The SWP was contemptuous of "some in the Labour Party who argue that what is happening in Scotland is just a wave of nationalism." What this "failed to understand" was "the shift in the political landscape and the potential for the left to grow."

Apart from allying with the SPS to stand TUSC candidates, the SWP had also given a tacit call for a vote for the SNP: "The SWP is not calling for a blanket vote for the SNP on 7th May" (in effect: a call to vote SNP in most constituencies, but not all).

For the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) Labour's 2015 performance in Scotland had borne out its pre-election predictions:

"Make no mistake about it. We are witnessing the end of an era. Like the Liberals prior to the labour movement, Scottish Labour is a beast that will soon be almost extinct over the next decade."

The election result was further proof of the need for unions to disaffiliate from Labour. Further,

"Union leaderships should combine with the SSP and all genuine socialists to build a mass working-class socialist party to stand up for Scotland's working-class majority population."

The SSP had stood four candidates in the election — after the SNP and the Greens had, unsurprisingly, ignored SSP proposals for a single pro-independence "Yes Alliance" candidate in each constituency. Their total vote was 895.

This year the SPS, SWP and SSP struck a very different tone. But it was no better than that adopted two years earlier. And it was certainly a lot more incoherent.

The SPS stood no candidates. Nor did TUSC. Nor did the non-existent "new mass party for the working class". The SPS did campaign "in support of Corbyn's manifesto."

But this did not mean campaigning for a vote for Scottish Labour which was standing on the basis of that manifesto (however inadequately it promoted its contents in its election campaigning).

CORBYN'S MANIFESTO

The SPS coupled this support for "Corbyn's manifesto" with "pointing to the need to adopt a far more sensitive approach on the national question", including "as a minimum the right to a second referendum when there was a majority in favour of one."

After the election the SPS talked up "significant swings to Labour in working-class areas in Glasgow and across the West of Scotland". In fact, the popular vote for Labour in those constituencies was either static or less than in 2015 general election.

The SPS also fell over itself with helpful tips about how Scottish Labour could have improved its performance and "doubled their numbers (of MPs) in Scotland". But such belated advice would have had more credibility if they had actually campaigned for a Labour vote.

In the run-up to this year's election the SWP again made an implicit call for a vote for the SNP, using the formulation "We call on our readers to vote Left in every constituency, to choose the candidate who is best able to carry forward the fight against austerity and racism AND FOR INDEPENDENCE." (Emphasis added.)

Any number of Scottish Labour candidates



would have met the first two criteria but none would have met the third. But in England and Wales all Labour candidates were endorsed by the SWP, for what it was worth, simply because they were Labour.

It was okay to vote for a right-wing Labour candidate in England, but wrong to vote for a left-wing anti-independence Labour candidate in Scotland!

The SWP looked on in awe when a thousand people turned up to hear Corbyn speak in Glasgow. But this was coupled with criticism of Corbyn for not supporting a second referendum on Scottish independence.

The normally let's-not-waste-our-time-with-any-of-this-parliamentary-shite SWP was aggrieved by Corbyn's failure to "respect the majority for a second referendum in the Scottish Parliament".

In its analysis of the election result the SWP concluded that "using the crude measure of first-past-the-post elections, independence has won this election". The three anti-independence parties, explained the SWP, had won only 40% of the seats.

But in the real world, using the only slightly more sophisticated measure of the popular vote, independence lost. Anti-independence parties picked up 63% of the vote.

Inconsistently, the SWP attributed the SNP's loss of seats to the fact that "the SNP leadership staked so much on a second independence referendum."

So: independence won the general election in Scotland, according to the SWP, but the party which had championed independence had lost seats because — errrr — it championed independence.

Who knows what the SWP will make of the SNP's backtracking on their pledge to seek a swift second referendum!

The SWP was realistic in its analysis of Scottish Labour's poor showing in the election but, at the end of the day, this was all irrelevant.

With the election — yawn — out of the way, the SWP could get back to business as usual:

"We should not postpone the fight against austerity to focus on a second referendum and let the SNP off the hook. Battling against those attacks now should be at the centre of the left's political action."

The "mass working-class socialist party" which the SSP had looked forward to in 2015 had also failed to materialise by the time of this year's election. Left to its own devices, the SSP stood four fewer candidates than it had in 2015, i.e. none.

"But that does not mean that we will not be campaigning," the SSP explained. It would be campaigning — for independence:

"Our annual conference last weekend committed all SSP members to spend the next six weeks making the case for independence..."

This was the vital task confronting SSP members because "Theresa May is heading for a 60-70 seat majority at Westminster, and Labour is heading for a hiding." Only Scottish independence could provide a defence against the approaching Tory onslaught.

Boldly, the SSP declared its readiness to criticise the SNP for failing to be sufficiently pro-independence (and with good reason given the SNP's recent stance on a second referendum):

"In the very important debate Alex Salmond initiated last week between him and Nicola Sturgeon about this being 'the independence election', we are bound to say we agree with Alex..."

Unfortunately for "Alex", having the SSP on his side turned out not to be enough to save him from defeat.

But the SSP was as good as its word. In an article snappily entitled "Independence Offers Our Only Escape From a Zombie Tory Government" SSP co-convenor Colin Fox let the world know:

"We will be campaigning to increase support for independence with a series of sparkling initiatives which we will unveil in the next few days."

But the election result was not as predicted by the SSP. Corbyn's gains had shown that socialist ideas "are highly popular, and this must be welcomed." And a second general election was "a strong prospect."

The SSP attributed the loss of 21 seats by the SNP to "their failure to make the case for independence — supposedly (sic) their core belief." The SNP's defeat, concluded the SSP, "underlined the case for a reinvigorated broad-based Yes movement."

To sum up: prospect of strong Tory government necessitates Scottish independence; actual election of weak Tory government necessitates ... Scottish independence.

Some things never change. And one of them is socialist organisations which have collapsed into tailending nationalism — even when the nationalism they chase after is in electoral decline.

Analysis of Scottish Labour election results: bit.ly/2skHoSq

Help us raise £20,000 to improve our website

We need to build a left that is open to debate and is serious about self-education.

Our website, including its extensive archive could help build a different kind of socialist culture — one where discussion and self-education are cherished.

From Trotskyist newspapers of the 1940s and 50s, to older Marxist classics, to discussion articles on feminism, national questions, religion and philosophy and resources such as guidelines for Marxist reading groups — it's all there on the Workers' Liberty website.

But to make our archive of real use we need professional help to make all content fully integrated, searchable by date and subject and optimised for mobile reading. We



need to finance a website co-ordinator to ensure our news coverage is up to the minute and

- If you would like to donate by paypal go to www.workersliberty.org/donate
 - Or set up an internet bank transfer to "AWL", account 20047674 at Unity Trust Bank, Birmingham, 60-83-01 (please email awl@workersliberty.org to notify us of the payment and what it's for); or
 - Send a cheque payable to "AWL" to AWL, 20E Tower Workshops, Riley Rd, London SE1 3DG (with a note saying what it's for).
- Take a look at www.workersliberty.org**

shared on social media. We want to raise £20,000 by our conference in November 2017. Any amount will help.

• In the last week thanks due to the supporters week who have donated £145.

Claw back the wealth!

Under pressure to do a deal with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party, the Tories have found £1 billion extra for public services in Northern Ireland, the equivalent pro rata to £29 billion in England.

They have also sneaked through a huge pay rise for the Queen, from £43 million in 2016 to £82 million in 2019.

On 28 June they voted down Labour's proposal to lift the public sector pay limit. More pressure — strikes, demonstrations, rallies — can make them budge on that, too.

Many Tory MPs openly call for the limit to be raised, and, before reaffirming that the limit "has not changed", Tory spokespeople said: "We've heard the message at the election... decisions will be taken [in the autumn]".

Since the 2008 crash, profit rates have revived nicely. Top pay has zoomed again. The High Pay Centre's latest report, in August 2016, found that average pay for a top company (FTSE 100) CEO rose to £5.50 million in 2015, 33% up on the 2010 average of £4.1 million.

The ratio of FTSE 100 CEO pay to the median full-time worker across the whole UK economy was 183:1 in 2014, up on 160:1 in 2010.

This year's *Sunday Times* Rich List reported that it has been "boom time for billionaires". 2017's "500 richest individuals and families are now wealthier than the entire top 1,000 were in 2016..."

"Those who saw their fortunes soar were mainly those making money out of the City, those holding huge property portfolios, or people who were involved in manufacturing".

At the same time, real wages are still below their pre-crash levels. They rose a bit in 2015 and 2016, for the first time since the crash, but are now falling again. The latest figures, for April, showed prices up 2.9% on a year before, and wages up only 1.7%.

The worst-hit have been the lower-paid — often suffering also from big cuts in working-age state benefits — and younger workers. Since 2008, young people's wages have fallen 16 per cent, taking their pay to below 1997 levels.

The official Social Mobility Commission, reporting on 28 June, found:

- between 1997 and 2017 incomes of the bottom fifth of households rose by just over £10 per week; for the top fifth, over £300
- by 2014 the wealthiest 10% of households owned 45% of all household wealth
- the poorest fifth now spend 31% of household income on housing costs, up from 24% in 2003
- child poverty has risen since 2011
- public spending on education is now falling
- schools with the highest proportion of free-school-meals (poor) children have twice as many unqualified teachers, higher rates of teachers leaving, higher proportions of newly qualified teachers amongst the entrants, and at secondary level fewer hours taught by subject specialists. The system is geared to recycle class inequalities from generation to generation.

The 8 June general election, in which Labour proposed to tax the rich and well-off by an extra £50 billion and put that into restoring public services and free education, plus a £10 minimum wage and increased



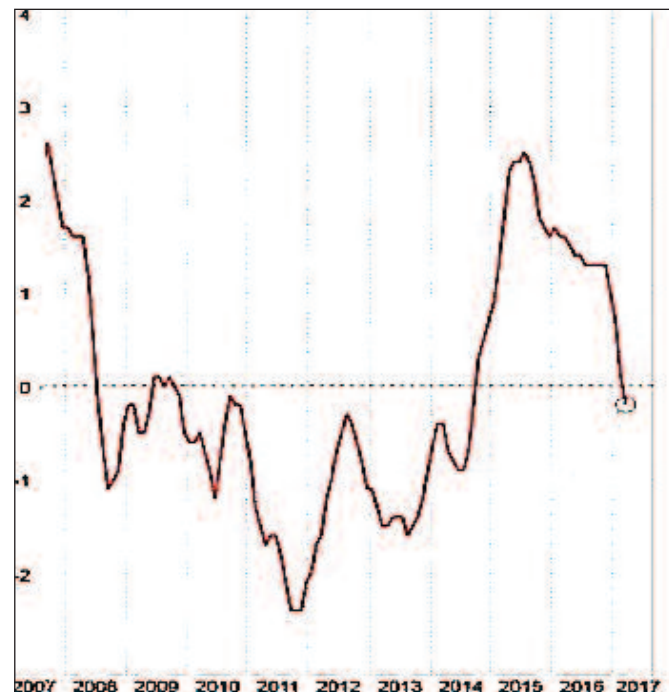
workers' rights, showed a revolt against this gruesome spiral of inequality and a will to claw back the wealth produced by the working class and annexed by the plutocrats.

The annual British Social Attitudes survey, published on 28 June, confirms that Labour's left turn both reflects and increases a shift in attitudes.

If the question was posed as "should the government tax more and spend more?",

the Thatcher years saw rising support for public spending. Under Blair and Brown, that first levelled off, then fell, from 2002, and remained low as the Tories told us that only cuts could prevent economic catastrophe.

Only 29% now agree cuts are need to help "the economy", while 43% did so in 1996. 48% now say the government should increase taxes and spend more, a higher proportion than for over a decade.



Left: protest against the wage rise freeze in the NHS. Above: the rate of real-wage increase has been below the zero line most of the time since 2007, and is now below it again.

even without saying whom the taxes should target,

The system of entrenched and spiralling class inequality, which seemed as "strong and stable" as Theresa May could wish it only weeks ago, is now losing its grip.

Protests in Parliament — Labour should withdraw all the ordinary cooperation which enables governments to run smoothly — combined with a fresh effort by the trade unions in the workplaces and on the streets, can pull it apart.

No pay freeze, no program of cuts, can now be regarded as inevitable and immovable.

Force the Tories out!

DUP deal shows there is money to spend

On 26 June, after over two weeks of negotiations, the Tories and the DUP signed a deal to give Theresa May's beleaguered government a small but working majority in the House of Commons.

The "confidence and supply deal", which falls short of a formal coalition agreement, comes at a financial and political price for May.

As well as £1 billion of new funding, Northern Ireland will be allowed more flexibility in the use of £500 million of previously announced funding. Politically, even though it does not touch on social issues, the deal associates the Tories in the public mind with the toxic social and religious conservatism of the DUP.

The text of the deal reads that: "The DUP agrees to support the government on all motions of confidence; and on the Queen's speech; the Budget; finance bills; money bills, supply and appropriation legislation and estimates ... the DUP also agrees to support the government on legislation pertaining to the UK's exit from the EU and legislation pertaining to national security."

This means that the government's key priority, Brexit legislation, is likely to have a parliamentary majority, though there is still much scope for campaigning around its details. Much will depend on what Labour now does, as well as internal dynamics within the Tory party between rival factions.

There was no explicit guarantee of a soft border in Ireland, though this could make its way in to any final details. This is hinted it by the clause recognising "the importance of the agriculture sector to Northern Ireland

[which would be disrupted by a hard border] and the opportunities for growth that exist."

Predictably, the Tories have dropped some of their more unpopular policies: "Both parties have agreed that there will be no change to the pension triple lock and the universal nature of the winter fuel payment."

The deal also says that: "Support on other matters will be agreed on a case-by-case basis." This means that on any other issues, the DUP could well demand more concessions as a condition of their support.

Irish republicans will be concerned about some of the language of the agreement, notably that "the Conservative Party will never be neutral in expressing its support for the Union." This is reinforced the promise to extend the Armed Forces Covenant to Northern Ireland, giving preferential treatment to veterans and their families.

DEVOLUTION

The DUP, for its part, "recognises the need for early restoration of inclusive and stable devolved government in Northern Ireland and affirms its commitment to agreeing the formation of an Executive."

Negotiations at Stormont are due to come to an end on Thursday, as we go to press. In many ways, they only begun in earnest after the text of the Tory-DUP agreement was released, as there was no way republicans could sign up to any arrangement with the DUP before first knowing what the unionists had agreed with the British government.

The money agreed as part of the deal is to be spent on health (£300 million), health ed-

ucation (£50 million), infrastructure (£400 million), broadband (£150 million), and deprived communities (£100 million) in Northern Ireland. The right to vary VAT and Air Passenger Duty tax has been agreed pending further consultation, along with a commitment to work toward devolving corporation-tax-varying powers to Stormont.

The Tories' much-mocked rejoinder to Labour's spending commitments, that there is "no magic money tree", now looks even more ridiculous in light of May's £1 billion deal to buy DUP voters. The "money tree" grew rather quickly when it was needed to keep the Tories in office.

The deal has predictably been attacked by politicians in Wales and Scotland, with Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones arguing that it "kills the idea of fair funding" and the SNP's leader at Westminster, Ian Blackford, complaining that Scotland should get "its fair share".

There is very real need for increased public spending in Northern Ireland, as there is in all parts of the UK. Socialists should argue against any feelings of resentment towards voters in Northern Ireland, and resist any attempt to divide workers on the basis of nationality.

What the DUP's deal really proves is that the Tories' claims that there is "no money" for investment in public services and infrastructure is a lie.

The labour movement should now press its demand for increased funding for all areas, on the basis of need, by taxing the rich and big business.

**SOLIDARITY 444 WILL BE OUT ON
12 JULY 2017**

Why we need more Bolshevi

By Martin Thomas

Few except the most conservative deny the emancipatory grandeur of mass action in the October 1917 Russian revolution. Common, however, is the claim that there was too much "party" in the revolution – the Bolsheviks were too organised, too ruthless, too pushy, and that led to Stalinism. This article seeks to refute that claim.

October 1917 is often described as a "Bolshevik coup", suggesting that the Bolsheviks took advantage of momentary excitement and disorder to seize an existing machine of power. In fact, in the weeks after 25 October 1917, the Bolshevik (and then Bolshevik/ Left SR coalition) government elected by the Soviet (Workers' Council) congress had essentially no means to implement its policies other than the power and cogency of its political agitation.

It inherited no functioning state machine. The police force had been broken up by the February revolution. The army was in collapse, and on 12 February 1918 the Soviet government officially decreed its total demobilisation. Most government officials at first refused to cooperate. The new People's Commissars had to scabble just to find an office, a table, some chairs, some ready cash.

The Red Army was officially inaugurated on 20 February, but at first it could be built into an actual army only by persuasion and agitation.

In the early weeks, many people saw the revolutionary regime as a flaky experiment, unlikely to endure. Sympathisers hesitated to support the new regime, since to do so was to increase the risk of suffering reprisals if, or when, conservative inertia overwhelmed the revolutionary experiment.

Over the first months, the regime won active support, in good part by demonstrating that it had the will and courage to hold on and build a functioning administration out of nothing.

After 25 October, the revolutionaries busied themselves with a very rapid flurry of decrees. They also drafted and adopted a Soviet constitution at high speed (by July 1918).

They knew the revolutionary regime's decrees, at first, had virtually no force other than as instruments of political agitation.

The priority was to agitate, to mobilise people to build up a new machinery of government. They were also agitating for an audience abroad – in the Western countries whose revolutionisation they considered vital to any hope of survival for the Russian revolution – and for the future.

They put down markers for workers' democracy. The early Bolshevik government very rarely described itself as socialist. It described itself as a "soviet" power, as "workers' and peasants' power", or justified its decrees in terms of "democracy".

The Bolsheviks knew that Marx had criticised the Paris Commune for its lack of revolutionary ruthlessness, and that the Jacobin Republic of 1793-4 had only been able to maintain itself, even briefly, by the Terror. So

they knew already – though they could not yet have envisaged the full horrors of the civil war – that after putting down their markers they would prove unable to live up to some of them.

The Bolshevik party had a strong collective will built on fierce democratic debate, individual commitment, individual courage. Without that, the October revolution would not have happened. The moment would have been missed. Right-wingers would eventually have made a real coup.

Contrary to myth, the Bolsheviks had no highly centralised party machine. The central "machine" consisted essentially of party secretary Yakov Sverdlov, carrying the "files" in his pockets and in his head, and half a dozen assistants, operating in a country with poor communications. The Bolshevik party was a powerful revolutionary factor because of the force of its ideas and its revolutionary will, not because of any special strength of its organisational machine.

The Bolshevik party did not impose a centralised structure of its own on the new state. On the contrary. The Bolshevik party acquired a strong centralised machine only as a by-product of its effects to construct a new state centralised enough to fight the civil war which developed from early 1918.

Dangerously, and ultimately tragically, the centralisation of the Bolshevik party was "nested" inside the centralism of the state machine, rather than standing beside it.

CIVIL WAR

The tragedy of the civil war could have been diminished if the Bolshevik party in October 1917 had been more stereotypically "Bolshevik" – ruthless, organisationally tight, capable of having its own centralised machine apart from and alongside any state centralism.

There was at first much wavering. Many of the best-known Bolshevik leaders resigned from their positions soon after the revolution in protest at the Bolshevik majority's refusal to accept the Mensheviks' and SRs' conditions for a coalition government (namely, the Bolsheviks to have only a minority in the government, and that minority to exclude Lenin and Trotsky).

Lunacharsky, the Bolsheviks' best-known mass orator in 1917 after Trotsky, resigned because he had heard (inaccurate) reports that the Bolsheviks in Moscow, fighting to take power there, had damaged St Basil's Cathedral. Those waverings cannot but have encouraged those who hoped to overthrow the new Soviet power by force.

The first attempt at armed overthrow of the Soviet government was set in motion on 31 October, by General Krasnov, leading a body of cossacks. It was defeated by typical Bolshevik audacity: two activists smuggling themselves into the cossack barracks at 3am and arguing with the soldiers for five hours until they persuaded them to stay neutral and wait and see.

Bolsheviks arrested Krasnov, but released him on his word of honour. The freed Krasnov immediately headed for the south in order to mobilise a counter-revolutionary

army there!

It would be as foolish to mock the Bolsheviks' "softness" in late 1917 as it would be to recoil in horror from their "hardness" in 1921. In neither era could the Bolsheviks jump over the head of history. Tsarist Russia did not give them the possibility of organising a party that could be "ideally" efficient, centralised, and ruthless, or "ideally" liberal and easy-going.

The Czech Legion was a body of some 35,000 to 40,000 troops from the former Austro-Hungarian Imperial army who had been taken prisoner by the Tsar's army. It regained freedom of operation in the ferment of revolution, and decided to throw its lot in with the Whites, starting the civil war in earnest. In the conditions of 1917-8, when there was no consolidated state machine at all, that small splinter was the most formidable military force in the country.

The Red Army was built, and the civil war was won, only by repeated episodes of daring comparable to that of the Bolsheviks who won over Krasnov's cossacks. As the Red Army acquired military clout and structure, the Bolsheviks used it ruthlessly. But right through to the peasant revolts in 1922, agitation, by voice, leaflets, and pamphlets, was primary.

The Bolsheviks won the civil war, fundamentally, by that agitation being successful. The advantages of pre-established force were on the side of the Whites, effectively starting the civil war.

War communism and the Red Terror were inaugurated following the Left SRs' assassination of the German ambassador (designed to provoke renewed war with Germany) and abortive insurrection of July 1918; the assassination by Right SRs of the Bolsheviks Volodarsky (June 1918) and Uritsky (August 1918), and their attempt to assassinate Lenin on 30 August 1918. As Trotsky put it: "It was in those tragic days that something snapped in the heart of the Revolution".

Significantly for those who think that the inauguration of the Cheka was already dictatorship in embryo, the assassination of the German ambassador was carried out by Left SRs who were also leading figures in the Cheka. Despite withdrawing from the government in March 1918, in protest against the Brest-Litovsk peace, the Left SRs still had a very large role in the Cheka.

War communism and the Red Terror were emergency measures by a government which had just seen even those who had previously been its closest allies attempt an armed uprising against it, and try to tip the country into a new disastrous war with Germany.

There were examples of Terror before August 1918, many "from below". The historian Jean-Jacques Marie reports a massacre of five thousand officers by rank and file soldiers in two incidents in January 1918, which was neither decreed nor agitated for by the Bolsheviks.

Before the Revolution, not only were Russian landlords violent. Under the peasant village elders' own justice, horse thieves could be castrated, beaten, branded with hot irons, or hacked to death with sickles.



Part of the mission of the revolution was to end that culture of violence. But first the revolution had to happen, and consolidate itself if only for a short while. It had to do that with people as they were.

The Red Terror was partly designed to control and restrain the terror "from below" (there was something of the same with the Terror in the French Revolution, which also started "from below"), and was partly motivated by the fact that, where persuasion could not work – and it couldn't always – and where you needed to terrify the enemy – and in war you do – mild measures could not work with a population accustomed over generations to such high levels of violence.

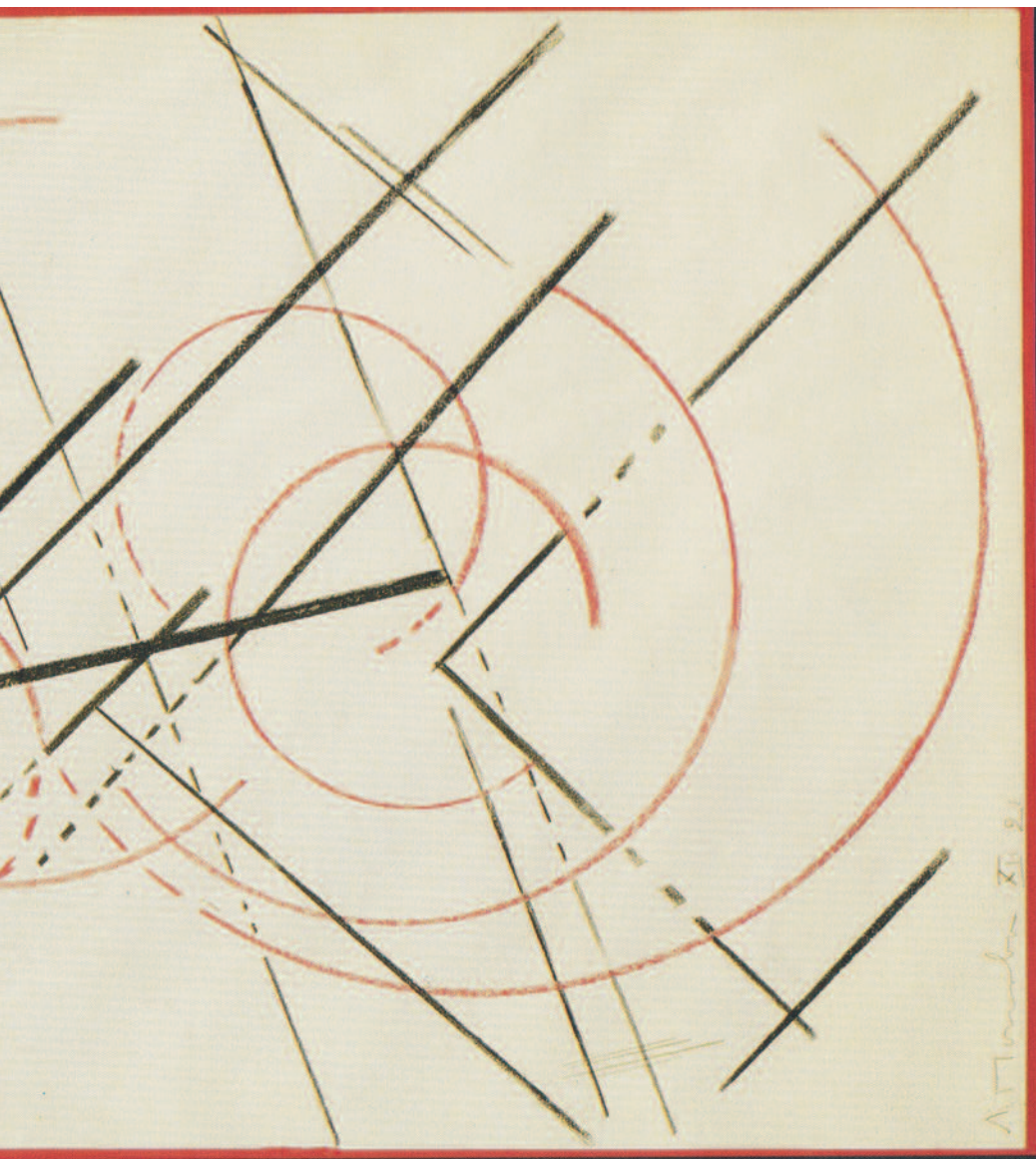
ECONOMIC

The economic policy of war communism consisted essentially of feeding the cities and the army by requisitions from the peasantry.

Not-too-different policies were adopted by the Whites and the Green (anarchist) armies, and the Bolsheviks sought to limit the adverse effects by a "party maximum" banning any Bolshevik from getting a bigger wage than a skilled worker.

Many follies were committed under war communism; there was much misguided making virtue out of necessity during it (though it should be born in mind that many of those inventing those "virtues" will have

ks today



seen them as flowering – soon – with the extension of the revolution to the West, rather than being self-sufficient).

Trotsky called in early 1920 for a shift towards more market-based policies, such as eventually came in early 1921 as “NEP”. It can even be argued that those policies could and should have been adopted instead of “war communism” right from the start in 1918.

But the Bolsheviks did not know in advance how long and destructive the civil war would be, or how much it would empty out the workers’ councils and breed habits of command, and did know that failing to feed the cities and the armies would lead to cataclysmic counter-revolution. In Finland, according to Victor Serge, the triumph of the conservatives in the civil war of January-May 1918 led to the slaughter of a quarter of the whole working class (which was not, of course, a majority of the population).

One can argue that if the Bolsheviks had let the counter-revolution happen earlier and more “easily” than it happened with Stalin, then the ensuing fascism would have been milder than Stalin’s regime. But how could they calculate on that basis, in advance?

The remarkable thing about the stories of the Bolsheviks manipulating or delaying soviet votes in 1918, for example, is how high the standards were which they had set themselves, and which they felt they had to in-

fringe on. For governments in all-consuming war, war which threatens the very existence of the polity, to allow elections at all is rare.

The British government in World War 2 ranks high, historically, in relative wartime democracy because it allowed debates in Parliament and a fair degree of press freedom.

Yet it pretty much suppressed popular votes – there were no general elections between 1935 and 1945, or by-elections contested by the big parties. Britain was never invaded, and most of the time at no immediate risk of being invaded.

The Bolsheviks face critical scrutiny — rightly — but because, fighting a war in much more desperate circumstances, they sometimes they postponed elections, not for ten years, not for three years, not even for the eight months for which the unelected Provisional Government postponed Constituent Assembly elections – but for a few weeks or months, and because they used ambiguities in election procedure to their advantage.

Some argue that civil war measures may have been necessary, but the sins of the Bolsheviks show in their failure to re-enlarge democracy after early 1921.

If Martov’s Mensheviks had been re-legalised in November 1918, and pro-Soviet SRs re-legalised in February 1919, surely all “soviet” parties could easily have been re-legalised in 1921?

Jean-Jacques Marie’s book on the civil war

is titled *The Russian civil war, 1917-22*. Not 1921. Large-scale armed conflict continued after the defeat of the main organised counter-revolutionary armies in early 1921. There were very large anti-Bolshevik peasant uprisings in mid-1921.

Meanwhile the country was exhausted, and ravaged by drought, famine, and disease.

The Bolsheviks knew that in the French revolution, Thermidor, the overthrow of the radical Jacobins, had been triggered, paradoxically, by the great French victory at Fleurus (26 June 1794). The Fleurus victory produced a desire for relaxation, a backlash against the rigours of the revolutionary regime.

Thermidor was followed within a few months, in a gradual and smooth but speedy slide, by a full-scale White Terror, the definitive expulsion of the sans-culottes from serious political influence, and the formal replacement of the revolutionary 1793 constitution by a new, conservative template.

The Bolsheviks knew that a Thermidor in Russia would disperse and dissipate the new revolutionary parties in the West, removing any possibility of early revolution in the West.

So they emphasised closing ranks, keeping the party solid against the threat posed to it by the large surviving corps of Tsarist officials, the exhaustion and eventually revolution-weariness of the mass of workers and peasants.

WAR

The Bolsheviks in 1921 faced a far greater mass exhaustion than the Jacobins in 1793. Fourteen million dead since 1914! Four and a half million dead in the civil war! Seven million abandoned children! Industrial production collapsed!

Lenin’s health had been fatally undermined by the strain of 1917-21. Trotsky was ill for many of the following years.

“A political reaction set in after the prodigious strain of the Revolution and the Civil War”, wrote Trotsky in *Stalin*.

The Bolsheviks, harassed, exhausted, were nevertheless determined to keep the revolutionary possibilities open.

In August 1921 Lenin wrote to the Bolshevik oppositionist Gavril Miasnikov:

“We have many maladies. Mistakes... have greatly aggravated the maladies springing from our situation... Want and calamity abound... They have been terribly intensified by the famine of 1921.

“It will cost us a supreme effort to extricate ourselves, but we will get out... Revive the Soviets; secure the co-operation of non-Party people; let non-Party people verify the work of Party members: this is absolutely right. No end of work there, and it has hardly been started”.

The Bolsheviks ran into tragic but difficult-to-avoid conflicts like Kronstadt. The failure of the Bolshevik emissary Kuzmin to win over the Kronstadters in February 1921 – while in dozens of centres across the years 1917-21, Bolshevik agitators had won over vacillating or rebelling fighters holding strategic points – was to do with an exasperated, impatient tone, the result of years of civil war pressure and habituation.

The pressures of 1921 also drove the Bolsheviks into avoidably damaging acts, notably the invasion of Georgia in February 1921. Trotsky, with hindsight, argued that the peace deal between Menshevik Georgia and

Bolshevik Russia could not have held for very long anyway. But he offered no sustained argument for why. In any case, as he himself cogently argued, the “premature” invasion had enormous damaging effects.

Trotsky in his later years pointedly refrained from positively defending the 1921 ban on factions in the Bolshevik party and on non-Bolshevik parties. In fact, those bans did not stop a deadly faction (or “party”) growing up within the Bolshevik party, around its Secretariat, a faction that merged with the old ex-Tsarist officialdom.

As Trotsky wrote: “The three years of Civil War laid an indelible impress on the Soviet government itself by virtue of the fact that very many of the administrators, a considerable layer of them, had become accustomed to command and demand unconditional submission to their orders... Stalin, like many others...”

There proved to be “not enough” party, rather than “too much”. The Bolshevik party was bit-by-bit crushed between the stones of officialdom and mass disillusion. For future revolutions we need more Bolsheviks, not fewer

• Adapted from a longer article: www.workersliberty.org/node/31223

Books by Workers’ Liberty

The 1917 Russian revolution was the greatest event in political history so far – the first time working class people took political power and held it for a decade. Yet the real history is buried under myths.

Learn about the real history of the Russian Revolution and how the ideas developed then are relevant today.

£14.80 including postage

The left in disarray

Sean Magma



There is a quickening of life on the left. But, politically, the left is still very weak and disoriented. This book traces the turns and realignments imprinted on this left over many decades by the ascendancy of Stalinism and by the post-

Stalinist global reshufflings after 1989-9. Independent working-class politics needs a sense of its own path and its own compass. The left needs to emerge from defining itself primarily in a negative and reactive way, and rediscover what, positively, the real left must be for.

£14.80 including postage

www.workersliberty.org/books

From dictatorship to liberal capitalism

The first part of an account of the development of capitalism and the working-class in Turkey, by Turkish organisation Marksist Tutum.

A bourgeois republic, led by Mustafa Kemal, was established in Turkey in 1923, and this was an historical turning point pertaining to the development of capitalism in Turkey.

However the Turkish bourgeoisie did not totally abolish the old despotic, Asiatic state traditions of the Ottoman Empire. The social and political reforms necessary for modern capitalism to develop in Turkey were carried out from above, with Bismarckian methods, and this was the pattern until the 1960s.

The Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) was founded in 1920 as a section of the Comintern, under the direct influence of the October revolution. But the bourgeois nationalist movement of Mustafa Kemal followed a hypocritical policy of secret agreements with imperialism to crush the Turkish communist movement, by resorting to intrigues and conspiracies, whilst at the same time pretending to be an anti-imperialist, populist movement, seeking help from the Soviet Union.

For a long time the socialist movement in Turkey could not understand the real character of Kemalism. The fundamental weakness of the great majority of the left in Turkey is a conception of anti-imperialism without an anti-capitalist content. The left in Turkey considered Kemal's movement as really anti-imperialist for years. Another misconception of the left is to equate, more or less, the state capitalism of Kemalism with socialism. Because of this mistaken approach the Turkish left are blind in many spheres, particularly in the Kurdish question, where they have assumed a chauvinist attitude up until today.

The history of the bourgeois republic in Turkey is the history of never-ending persecutions, prohibitions and state terror on the working class and socialist movement. For example, the Turkish Communist Party [TKP], the oldest left party of Turkey, followed the official Stalinist line throughout almost its whole existence. Although some opposition groups did emerge in the TKP none of them could break with Stalinism. There was only one exception to this, which was the "Workers' Opposition", organised in 1932 and supported by the great Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet. But this opposition group was accused of being Trotskyist, and liquidated by the Stalinist party leadership.

Under Kemalism, despite both liberal policies and the enactment of encouraging laws, neither a capitalist industrial advancement nor a desired level of a "national" bourgeois class could be created. There was not an adequate amount of native capital accumulation for this, nor was there was not an inflow of foreign capital from the west. Although the Kemalist general policy aimed at Westernisation (which means to become a capitalist country), the Western capitalist states still approached the young Turkish Republic with caution. As a result, Turkey remained largely an "agrarian country" with pre-capitalist production relations.

Crucially landlordism remained, especially in the eastern and south-eastern parts (Turkish Kurdistan). Rather than liquidating this landlordism, the Kemalist bureaucracy had allied itself with this landlordism. Therefore, most of the super-structural reforms in the social sphere remained as superficial reforms that could not go beyond formal limits and

were "alien to the people".

1929-33 was a period of deep crisis of the world capitalist system. This crisis affected the Turkish economy through its foreign trade. Since the exports of Turkey were primarily based on agriculture, decreases in the prices of agricultural products lessened the revenues of both the state and the landowners. Turkish currency lost its value significantly. Moreover, the Turkish treasury was in difficulty because the country had begun to pay back Ottoman debts, debts which devoured nearly one tenth of the budget.

These unfavourable conditions forced the young bourgeois state to develop a new economic strategy involving the direct intervention of the state in economic life (statism) to start industrialisation and to build a national economy. The military-civil bureaucrat cadres around the state were similarly inclined to implement this strategy. The Kemalist bureaucracy believed that a "national" capitalism in Turkey could only be established through the state. They could see the economy of the Soviet Union, a neighbouring state, based on statism, was not significantly affected by the economic crisis.

The Turkish state started to prepare its first five-year economic plans, similar to those in the Soviet Union. This period, extending from 1930 to 1946, was a period of absolute "statism" in all spheres of the economy.

BUREAUCRACY

The political life was under the one-party dictatorship of the official state party, the Republican People's Party (CHP), which represented the rule of the bureaucracy.

It had nothing to do with the people and its interests. This party was the representative of the block of "bureaucracy-bourgeoisie-big landowners", against the working people.

State enterprises spread rapidly and the share of state industry in the economy doubled. Until 1950, banking, big industrial institutions, mining, energy, chemistry, transportation, communication, textile, alcoholic drinks, cigarettes (tobacco) etc. were all run by the state. The basic and long term aim of this statism was the development of a native capitalist industry and a "national bourgeois" class, by means of a rapid capital accumulation, and super-exploitation of labour.

In these years there was the utmost authoritarian and repressive political framework. The labouring masses were not permitted to have a say, nor was there an improvement in the standards of life. But the state could implement this policy only under the veil of a rhetoric of "populism" and "anti-imperialism".

Kemalist power was supported by some of the leaders of the Stalinist Communist Party of Turkey, including the then General Secretary. Other leaders left the party to publish *Kadro* (meaning cadre) in support of Kemalist power. They defended the following idea: "Our statism is such a national statism that it is not based on any class and can be an example for the peoples of the world that wage an independence war." This profound illusion has remained alive in left movements in Turkey, even today!

After Mustafa Kemal's death in 1938 there were not even the slightest changes in the structure of the one-party dictatorship. Another ex-Ottoman pasha, İsmet İnönü, assumed the presidency.

Although Turkey did not participate in the Second World War, the labouring masses were drawn into unprecedented misery, as if they were in a war. There was a steep in-



Mustafa Kemal

crease in military expenditures, shrinkage of production by 5-6% on a yearly basis, recruitment of workers to the army, a proliferation of war profiteering all over the country. Moreover the labouring masses lived under a system of severe repression and terror. The minorities living in Turkey, such as Greeks, Armenians, Jews etc., got a share of this repression. Their properties and assets were seized, many were sent to labour camps as a result of operations such as "Tax on Wealth", a policy reminiscent of Nazi Germany.

Turkey did not refrain from selling herself to whichever imperialist camp they thought would be victorious. For example, they let a racist fascist tendency develop within the state, which was in collaboration with the Nazis, in case of the victory of Nazi Germany. Only after it became clear that Germany would lose was this current liquidated.

Once the defeat of Germany became certain, Turkey hypocritically declared war against Germany, in order to compensate for her slippery record.

After the war, facing a considerably changed world, Turkey was thus compelled to introduce liberal measures in the political sphere. And faced with serious economic problems, the Turkish ruling class was desperate for economic aid from Western capitalism. In 1946 Turkey was compelled to accept the establishment of new political parties.

The coalition that had been formed by the ruling class around the CHP underwent a split. The big landowners and merchants left the CHP and formed the Democratic Party (DP). They wanted to free themselves from the political patronage of the Kemalist bureaucracy. In 1950, with the coming to power of the Democrat Party, the one-party dictatorship of the CHP came to an end.

The broad popular masses had voted for the Democratic Party in the 1950 elections, and carried it to the parliament with an overwhelming majority. Yet the DP, reflecting the interests of the big landowners and capitalists, was in fact a party of the existing order. The DP channelled the anger of the masses by pretending to be in favour of democracy and liberties. Yet quite soon after its victory the DP proved that it was as capable of being as cruel an enemy of the working class and the left in general, as the CHP.

In 1946 the TKP had created two legal socialist parties, because it was still illegal to create a political party with the word "communist" in the title. One was the "Socialist Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey" and the other was the "Socialist Party of Turkey".

With the Kemalist CHP still in power, and at the time claiming that liberal reforms were being carried out, it closed down these two socialist parties just six months after their launch.

On the other hand, the Turkish working class began to establish legal unions. Hundreds of local unions were established and thousands of workers were organised in these unions. Then the Turkish bourgeoisie panicked. After just six months, these legal unions were closed and their officers were arrested.

Only in 1947 did workers win the right to set-up unions, but the right to go on strike and to collective bargaining were made illegal. These rights were achieved only in 1963. The bourgeois state did not permit any legal socialist parties until 1960. However, the articles that prohibited "communist propaganda" were not abolished until 1990.

After the war came a frenzied capitalist development in agriculture and a considerable advance in industrialisation. The driving force was the opening of new lands to agriculture, and the use of advanced techniques in agriculture.

A conflict between the traditional block that was in favour of interventionism in the economy, and the bourgeois section that was in favour of liberalism, continued without reaching an accommodation.

Relations between Turkey and the US imperialism became much closer. Affiliation to NATO (1952), the US's decision to include Turkey into the Marshall Plan, the formation of CENTO etc., all took place in this period. Turkey actively supported the US's Cold War policy through sending troops to the Korean War, and became one of the closest allies of the US in the Middle East.

With the guidance of the US, the Turkish state had the Confederation of Turkish Labour Unions (Turk-İş) organised in 1952, which would operate under state control. This organisation sought to install an American style business trade unionism.

This period also created the conditions for an economic and financial crisis. The government had increased the foreign debts and followed a one-sided policy of investment, primarily in agricultural investments, counting on revenues from agricultural exports. This suited the interests of the imperialist capital, with both the US and the European capitalist preferring to lend money with high interest rates, and making profit from selling their goods, instead of direct investments. And this would soon draw Turkey into an economic and financial impasse.

In 1958 a financial and foreign debts crisis prepared the way for the overthrow of DP rule. Foreign trade deficit reached 60% of the total exports. The import of the necessary inputs for industry (machines, equipment, raw material) became impossible. The economy shrunk, and social expenditures were reduced. Turkey could not repay foreign debts.

The DP continued to pump finance from state funds and banks to the big landowners, but did not support industrial capitalists adequately. Foolishly the DP also alienated the army by cutting its budget weakening their political influence.

The industrial bourgeoisie wanted to end the domination of the big landowners. The imperialists were in favour of putting an end to the power of the big landowners, as they were an obstacle to capitalist development.

It was also clear that an essential transformation of the economy could not be brought about whilst the DP ruled.

Guevara is not our hero

Pablo Velasco reviews *The Politics of Che Guevara: Theory and Practice* (Haymarket 2016) by Sam Farber

By Pablo Velasco

Che Guevara is lionised as a revolutionary icon by wide sections of the global left.

Even those claiming some Trotskyist heritage, from the various "Fourth Internationalists" to the British SWP, publish mostly uncritical appreciations of the individual and his politics. Yet Guevara was never a working class socialist nor even a revolutionary democrat. He helped overthrow the hated dictator Batista in Cuba, but only to replace it with a Stalinist regime. Clearing away false messiahs and Stalinist blind alleys is a central task if the Marxist left is to revive.

Samuel Farber is the most outstanding critic of Castro's Cuba from genuine socialist perspective. His latest book, *The Politics of Che Guevara: Theory and Practice* (Haymarket 2016) is a comprehensive debunking of the myths around Guevara. Farber charts Guevara's rise from middle class origins in Argentina. As a youth Guevara embraced machismo and was averse to homosexuality. His renowned shabby appearance and bohemian asceticism date from this time.

The experience of travelling through Latin America politicised Guevara, but in the direction of Stalinism in the USSR and towards the Communist parties in Guatemala, Mexico and later Cuba. In 1960, on a visit to Russia as a representative of the new Cuban government, he insisted on laying a floral tribute to Stalin's tomb. Guevara believed that the solutions to the world's problems were behind the "iron curtain", at a time when Stalin's

crimes were well known, the USSR was a bureaucratic state and the Russian working class savagely atomised.

Guevara emerged as an advocate of a top-down peasant-based guerrilla strategy in Cuba. His distinctive contribution was to integrate the Cuban Communists (the PSP) into the Castros' revolutionary nationalist project. Although the rebel army succeeded in overthrowing Batista by 1959, Guevara's efforts to apply this guerrilla strategy in Congo and Bolivia ended in disaster. Guevara was never an advocate of working-class socialism, never based his politics on working class struggle or advocated working-class political organisation such as soviets.

Guevara supported the one-party state to the end of his life. In power he brought PSP cadres into the centre of the new state, including the military academy and secret service. He was responsible for the first civilian labour camp at Guanahacabibes. He argued that the Russian's atomic bombs were "in the hands of the people" and advocated the use of nuclear weapons during the Cuban missile crisis.

Guevara's economic views were largely derived from his reading of Stalinist textbooks, with imposed top down planning, the suppression of consumer demands and bureaucratic methods of administration. He advocated a voluntaristic political economy, ignoring the realities of the situation in favour of exhortation coupled with coercion. Guevara saw no place for trade unions under socialism and supported the neutering of the Cuban unions after November 1959. The industries nationalised in Cuba under his leadership did not practice workers' control or workers' self-management.

Guevara was responsible for establishing a



bureaucratic collectivist mode of exploitation in Cuba. Since 1959 the regime has suppressed any efforts for working class self-emancipation. Cuba evolved into a form of state capitalism on the Chinese model after the collapse of the USSR. The regime remains strongly anti-democratic and authoritarian, held together by the external threat of the US and the internal forces of state coercion. Cuba is no model for socialism and Guevara no part of our tradition.

Farber's book summarises these issues concisely and should form part of every socialist's library.

A political journey that doesn't end

HOW I BECAME A SOCIALIST

By Joe Booth

I have been a person of cause and rebellion for a long time. As an autistic young man growing up under capitalism, alienation has always been something I feel strongly.

My parents are trade unionists and far-left socialists, and they brought me to the ideas of anti-oppression and solidarity.

My mum did not know she was also autistic until the age of 45. Before then it was a struggle for my family and everyone around me — including at school — to grasp what was actually stressing me and how to fully help me. The journey of growing up therefore brought me to rebellion, emancipation and socialism.

From age 10 (in 1992), I was a juvenile socialist; I followed my parents' morals to fight conservatism, prejudice and all forms of social inequality. A year later, I was still a consistent juvenile socialist but drifted away, as it seemed like another ordinary hobby to me and I didn't have enough experience in politics. During the first three years of secondary school, I was experiencing friendship, but also the morality and pressure of the world. My two school friends from the summer of 2014 to January 2016 when I turned 14, were more important.

Since then however, I have learnt about social and personal inequalities and this has made me more conscientious. In March 2016, I became impassioned with the idea of wanting a revolution after watching movies like 'The Hunger Games' and learning about the Bolsheviks. This set me on my political journey.

From March to May 2016, my passion for wanting a better world led me to inventing a utopia which I presented to the Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell, and made me think more about the meaning of socialism.

In the summer of 2016, I spent the majority of my time working out how to become part of the revolutionary movement, and went to a summer school organised by the Alliance for Workers' Liberty (AWL) called Ideas for Freedom. This made me more conscientious again and sparked me into going on more protests.

In September 2016, I quit seeing my support worker and started going to AWL meetings which gave me a better experience of Marxism; but I was still a young utopian socialist.

From October to December 2016, I read the pamphlet, *We Stand For Workers' Liberty*, which ultimately gave me a better grip on Marxism, Trotskyism and Permanent Revolution; I learned that in order to change the world we need Third Camp socialist and dialectical revolutionary politics.

On 10 December 2016, I went to an event called Reason in Revolt which marked the

50th anniversary of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty. That made me most convinced about joining and motivated to properly understand the politics behind the organisation. A week later, I went on a residential course in Derbyshire reading Marx's Capital and learning

how to explain capitalism. I was able to join a lot of Marxist debates. On 23 December I officially became a member of the group.

On first becoming a member, I got quite negative about there not being enough activism during Christmas and I addressed that issue at a school for new members in January. Since then I've got a better idea of how the AWL advocates activism and working class solidarity. I attended a second introductory school as I did not yet fully understand the politics and action within the group.

I understand it properly now — it was a journey for me. But then, journeys don't end. I have learned that action within revolutionary socialism requires pace and long-term campaigning which I'm trying to get involved with now.



Joe and his dog Summer doing a fundraising walk for Workers' Liberty.

Grenfell

POEM BY JANINE BOOTH

Bring help
Bring fire engines
Bring water
Bring air
Bring stretchers
Bring ambulances
Bring us round from sleep and out to safety

Bring food
Bring clothes
Bring blankets
Bring camp beds
Bring phone chargers so we can find our friends and family
And tell them that we made it

Bring shoulders to cry on
Bring arms to embrace
Bring ears to listen
Bring hands to hold
Bring the strength to go on

Bring news
Bring hope
Bring solidarity
Bring community
Bring what you can
Bring yourself

Bring questions
Demand answers
Bring the letters written and the warnings given
And bring the inadequate replies

Bring the plans
Bring the regulations
Bring the budgets
Bring the decisions and the contracts
Let everyone examine them

Bring your despair, your pain
And blend it in solidarity with others'
Bring it to the boil
Bring it into the enquiry room
And into the corridors of power
Bring the truth out into the open
Bring justice
Bring charges
Bring this system down



Where we stand

Today one class, the working class, lives by selling its labour power to another, the capitalist class, which owns the means of production.

The capitalists' control over the economy and their relentless drive to increase their wealth causes poverty, unemployment, the blighting of lives by overwork, imperialism, the destruction of the environment and much else.

Against the accumulated wealth and power of the capitalists, the working class must unite to struggle against capitalist power in the workplace and in wider society.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty wants socialist revolution: collective ownership of industry and services, workers' control, and a democracy much fuller than the present system, with elected representatives recallable at any time and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

We fight for trade unions and the Labour Party to break with "social partnership" with the bosses and to militantly assert working-class interests.

In workplaces, trade unions, and Labour organisations; among students; in local campaigns; on the left and in wider political alliances we stand for:

- Independent working-class representation in politics.
- A workers' government, based on and accountable to the labour movement.
- A workers' charter of trade union rights — to organise, to strike, to picket effectively, and to take solidarity action.
- Taxation of the rich to fund decent public services, homes, education and jobs for all.
- A workers' movement that fights all forms of oppression. Full equality for women, and social provision to free women from domestic labour. For reproductive justice: free abortion on demand; the right to choose when and whether to have children. Full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Black and white workers' unity against racism.
- Open borders.
- Global solidarity against global capital — workers everywhere have more in common with each other than with their capitalist or Stalinist rulers.
- Democracy at every level of society, from the smallest workplace or community to global social organisation.
- Equal rights for all nations, against imperialists and predators big and small.
- Maximum left unity in action, and openness in debate.



If you agree with us, please take some copies of *Solidarity* to sell — and join us!

Events

Thursday 6 July

For the many gig
7pm, O2 Forum Kentish Town,
London NW5 1JY
bit.ly/2umHzJD

Thursday 6 July

Pit Camps — History of
activism
6pm, The Miners' Hall, Flass
Street, Durham DH1 4BE
<http://bit.ly/2t4BaTJ>

Saturday 8 July

Durham Miners Gala
All day, Durham
bit.ly/2toYMT4

Saturday 8 July

Pride in London parade
Assembles 11am, Oxford Circus
prideinlondon.org

Have an event you want listing? Email:
solidarity@workersliberty.org

Wednesday 12 July

Reinstate Alba LSE strike
All day, LSE Houghton Street,
London WC2A 2AE
bit.ly/2tpcOWU

Sunday 16 July

Fair Funding for all Schools:
Carnival Against the Cuts
Noon, Parliament Square, London
SW1P 3BD
bit.ly/2sPfiFh

Monday 17 July

Britain still needs a pay rise
rally
5.30, Central London TBC
bit.ly/2t4y2Hq

More online at www.workersliberty.org Workers' Liberty @workersliberty

Labour responds to election result

LABOUR

By Keith Road

Labour's election result has been rightly celebrated by the Labour left. It was also cautiously welcomed by the Labour right. So what will now be the political mood inside Labour?

Although there are still vocal opponents of Corbyn, like Chris Leslie and Neil Coyle, the vast majority of the 172 MPs who no-confidenced Corbyn 12 months ago have stayed quiet. Some have even admitted they were wrong.

The short-lived effort to get back into the Shadow Cabinet from these people did not really come to fruition. Only defeated Corbyn challenger Owen Smith was handed a post — as Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary.

But the right is not going away. While open hostility to Corbyn may no longer work, they organising among Party members, preparing for conference in September and attempting to tighten their grip on the party apparatus.

Labour First, the old Labour right within the party, remain intransigent on what Labour's path too power must be:

"In England it requires us to take large numbers of traditional marginal seats which can only be done by taking votes direct from the Tories as it looks like we have already maximised the vote share we can obtain from mobilising previous Greens, Lib-Dems and non-voters."

They do not say why they think the voter share from non-voters and others has been maxed out. There are limited data on what percentage of young people vote; it was higher than the 43% of 2015 but could be raised further. In fact

Labour First want to say that Labour must alter its political direction to appeal to a more entrenched Tory vote. They want Labour to turn right.

But Labour's manifesto, although limited, it is here to stay. Labour's politics must remain bold and, in fact, go further on left-wing commitments. Labour members must be ready to resist pressure from the right.

During Corbyn's leadership there has been a lot of focus on the actions of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Now fortunately, there seems to be a decisive turn to working to transform Labour at ward and Constituency Labour Party (CLP) level.

DELAYED

The election delayed many Labour Party meetings, including selections of conference delegates, AGMs, and discussions on conference policy and Party rule changes.

The deadline to choose delegates and pass rule changes is 7 July. Activists will need to be very quick now to organise, to get to meetings and help guarantee a strong left presence at Labour Party conference. At last year's conference the left were weak, disorganised and suffered numerous defeats. However there is evidence that more CLPs are sending full delegations rather than just one delegate. The huge surge in membership that accompanied Corbyn winning and defending the leadership has created the potential for a more representative conference, and it seems that left-wing members are winning delegate positions.

In CLP and branch AGMs there are more left candidates organising slates that have a good chance of winning control and making CLPs

into hubs of campaigning and politics, rather than stale and bureaucratic bodies concerned only with administrative business.

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has also increased its membership. Activists now see attempts to reform and transform the party as more possible and more needed. Hopefully this will be reflected by rule changes at this year's conference. Discussions on MP selections, and abolishing the rule that means a CLP can only submit either a rule change or a contemporary motion are expected.

Workers' Liberty backs all the rule changes being pushed by CLPD and Momentum. We also urge activists to put forward the motion promoted by Stop the Labour Purge to reform the clause which has been cited in the cases of hundreds of socialist activists who have been "auto excluded" from the Party. (The motion can be found at bit.ly/2tnLVmI.)

On 28 June Momentum launched their continuing general election campaign, which includes training and creating new digital campaigns that can help Labour into power next time round. Corbyn has said that Labour are on a permanent election footing, and John McDonnell has called for millions of people to take to the streets to oppose the Tories.

Such an orientation is right, but these campaigns must have substance and go beyond single days of campaigning, like those before election on the NHS and on schools.

Momentum should not become solely an electoral machine; it does this well but it also needs to develop into the type of fighting political body that can both sustain and enliven the movement around Corbyn.

Will the RMT reaffiliate to Labour?

By Ollie Moore

As *Solidarity* goes to press, the annual general meeting of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport workers (RMT) is debating a series of motions at its annual general meeting on its relationship with the Labour Party.

The RMT, whose predecessor union helped found Labour, effectively had its affiliation cancelled by the New Labour leadership in 2004, after the RMT leadership refused to censure Scottish branches which wanted to back candidates of the Scottish Socialist Party, then an active and growing force.

Since then, RMT has backed a number of electoral efforts against Labour, but since 2015 has been a staunch supporter of Jeremy Corbyn. RMT encouraged members to vote and campaign for Labour in the 2017 election.

Most of the AGM motions, which were submitted as emergency motions responding to the events of

the election, call for the union to organise a special general meeting to debate and decide on whether the union should seek reaffiliation to Labour. Workers' Liberty members active in RMT helped circulate and submit several of the motions.

RMT's National Executive Committee has indicated it will support the call for an SGM, making the

proposal in its own political report to the AGM.

If RMT was to reaffiliate, it would join the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in reaffiliating to Labour following Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader. The FBU disaffiliated in 2004 following a bitter pay dispute with the New Labour government.

RMT votes against free movement

A motion calling to RMT AGM on the union to defend free movement and support migrant workers fell by 41 votes to 21, with six abstentions.

The motion said: "Migrants and immigration are not to blame for stagnating wages and squeezed services. No serious study has found any evidence that immigration has a significantly depressing affect on wages. [...] If and when employers do use one group of workers to undercut another, our

answer is strong workplace organisation and united struggle. We will not accept one group of workers being turned against another."

The motion would have committed the RMT to: "campaign against increased border controls being part of the Brexit deal; to support campaigns for migrants' and refugees rights; [and] encourage [its] Parliamentary Group MPs to vote against any Brexit deal which restricts immigration and attacks workers' rights."

Those opposing the motion, including supporters of the Socialist Party, argued that the union should support increased controls on immigration.

Defend the Picturehouse four!

By Ollie Moore

As Picturehouse cinema workers prepare to strike again on 1 and 7 July, seven Labour MPs have written to Picturehouse and Cineworld bosses to protest the sacking of three Bectu reps, and the suspension of another.

Marsha de Cordova (Battersea), Chris Williamson (Derby North), Helen Hayes (Dulwich and West Norwood), David Drew (Stroud), Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green), Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Brighton Kemptown), and Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell signed the letter, which said: "Any suspensions or sackings of trade union reps who have been organising a strike for very basic rights – the Living Wage, full company sick pay, maternity/paternity pay and union recognition – intended to intimidate trade union members would be a matter of deep concern for the whole labour movement. No trade unionist or Labour Party member can tolerate the deliberate intimidation of trade union activists for pursuing their legitimate business."

Three Bectu reps from the Ritzy cinema in Brixton have been sacked. A fourth was awaiting a disciplinary hearing as *Solidarity* went to press.

The 1 and 7 July strikes will involve workers at five cinemas across London — Ritzy, Picturehouse Central, Crouch End Picturehouse, Hackney Picturehouse, and East Dulwich Picturehouse. A sixth



Community activists in Brixton picketing the Ritzy

site, Dukes Picturehouse in Brighton, also remains in dispute.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters of the strike have been organising community pickets, leafleting in support of the dispute and encouraging patrons to take their business elsewhere.

The pickets have clearly rattled Picturehouse management, who on one occasion called the police in response to a picket at the Ritzy. Activists say they plan to continue with the action. Further demonstrations and community pickets are planned in support of the strikes, including at the Ritzy at 4pm on Saturday 1 July.

Rail and transport union RMT was passed a motion of support for the strike at its annual general meeting in Exeter on Wednesday 28

June.

Strike organisers plan a series of meetings with workers at Picturehouse Cinemas around the country, with the aim of spreading the strike to more sites. Support the victimised reps:

- Send messages of protest to: Mooky.Greidinger@cineworld.co.uk

- Send messages of support to: ritzylivingwage@gmail.com, twitter: @RitzyLivingWage and @HPHLivingWage

- Donate to the strike fund: www.crowdpac.co.uk/campaigns/250/picturehouse strike

- Sign the petition: www.change.org/p/picturehouse-pay-proper

- Find out more about the dispute: www.picturehouselivingwage.com

Lewisham council shames Labour

By a Lewisham teacher

Teachers at Forest Hill school in Lewisham, south London, struck again in the last week of June in their ongoing dispute against cuts at the school and the effects on their working conditions.

Parents lobbied Lewisham council on Wednesday 28 June demanding action in support of the school. Meanwhile, motions calling for Paul Maslin, the cabinet member for Children and Young People on Lewisham council, to resign his position are going to a number of local Labour Parties. One has been passed by a branch close to where the school is based.

NUT members and parents are incensed by Maslin's intransigence and unwillingness to seek to support the school. This is in stark contrast to the approach of the neighbouring borough, Greenwich, which has intervened and sought positive solutions to the problems of its schools facing a funding crisis.

The dispute at Forest Hill has become more acrimonious since 22 June, when agency staff were used as illegal scab labour to keep the



Forest Hill parents and supporters lobbying the council on Wednesday 28 June.

school open whilst the NUT was on strike. Both Maslin and Mayor Sir Steve Bullock have claimed that this was a mistake by the head for which he has apologised.

They say the head was simply using the agency staff to cover long-term sickness and simply kept them on. There is however evidence that striking members who were not on long-term sick had their classes covered during the strike.

The council accepts no responsibility for solving the funding crisis or the associated workload prob-

lems and no responsibility for the use of scab labour. Labour supporters will wonder the point of electing "Labour" councils and of stopping academies stealing our schools.

The NUT and labour movement activists in Lewisham will continue to fight to defend our schools against the Tories but also against "Labour" politicians who make grand speeches against the Tories' education cuts but are willing to pass them on with out a murmur.



Outsourcing round-up

By Gemma Short

Activists at SOAS university, London, have ended their occupation with a victory as the university has committed to keeping open the refectory, which was threatened with closure, and reversed all planned redundancies.

The university has also said it will move catering staff onto the better terms and conditions which other outsourced workers get; open up negotiations to end zero-hour contracts; negotiate with Unison for all catering staff to receive unpaid Living Wage increases in full.

Workers at the London School of Economics, who won an end to outsourcing and parity of terms and conditions with other LSE workers, will strike again on 12-15

July for the last of their demands – the reinstatement of sacked union member Alba Pasmirino.

Security workers at the University of London struck again on Thursday 22 June. Workers are demanding that outsourced contractor Cordant pays them a pay rise promised six years ago, ends the use of zero hours contracts and gives workers itemised pay slips. Porters and postroom workers are now balloting to join the strike.

Cleaners and porters at Barts Health NHS Trust have voted by 99% in favour of strikes for a pay rise. Strikes will happen on 4-6 July, followed by a seven day strike starting on 11 July, and a 14 day strike starting on 25 July.

Workers previously went on wildcat strike when, on the day they took over the contract, outsourcer Serco cut breaks and imposed a pay cut.

Unison conference wakes up

By a delegate

With Labour's election success and the press dominated by the residents of Grenfell Tower murdered by political decisions, Unison's National Delegate Conference (20-23 June) was always going to be a bit more left and reflect a mood of confidence and combativity in the working class.

And it did. Delegates repeatedly overturned the Standing Orders Committee to push motions which called on Labour councils to not make cuts back on the agenda. Calls were made to break the anti-union laws.

The first debate of the conference was on the public sector pay cap and the demand for a £10 an hour minimum wage. From the platform to conference floor everyone agreed to back Corbyn and smash the pay freeze. Conference Dave Prentis, everybody's favourite Dave Prentis was clear pay cuts could go on no longer.

"[Public sector workers] worried about their jobs, their families and can't go through another five years of poverty pay. Now is the time to shout enough is enough. This is the year to smash the pay cap."

This isn't the first time the Unison leadership have promised to smash the pay freeze. In 2012 Conference Dave Prentis smashed through a block of ice in the shape

of a pound sign to symbolise Unison's plan. But real terms pay cuts continued. With the new anti-union laws, Unison is very unlikely to pass required ballot thresholds to take national strike action. It is possible the Tories will voluntarily increase public pay, or an early election will bring a Labour government which will offer a pay rise but hoping for a government gift is not enough.

Unison mustn't assume it cannot improve turnout and give up on national action. This is the Tories' anti-union laws doing what they were designed to. They are not designed to promote democracy, but to shackle unions and prevent workers from fighting back. They are designed to make us police ourselves, to internalise the restrictions, and give up on our most powerful weapon. Public sector workers must talk about how we take these laws on head on, how we reassert our democratic rights and how we support those workers who break them.

The Labour Party should not just commit to improving our pay they should commit to a bill of trade union rights which will allow us to fight for our own rights, those of other workers and wider society.

We hope that the newly founded Unison Labour Left will work on campaigns like this to reignite the link between Labour and Unions.



Solidarity

For a workers' government

No 443 30 June 2017 50p/£1

Hillsborough: police to be prosecuted at last

By Rosalind Robson

Last year an inquest jury found that David Duckenfield was guilty of “manslaughter by gross negligence”

Duckenfield was the police officer in charge of policing the fateful football match at Hillsborough, the grounds of Sheffield Wednesday, in 1989. 96 people were crushed to death, and 400 others injured in an overcrowded pen.

Now the Crown Prosecution Service has decided to charge Duckenfield and five other people with criminal offences.

The families and friends of those who were killed will finally get to hold at least some in the establishment to account — charges have been brought against four former senior police officers, a police solicitor and the chief executive of Sheffield Wednesday.

The Hillsborough families will not, unfortunately, be able to hold to account the politicians (including senior Labour, the CPS, other court officials and media who conspired directly or indirectly to make sure the truth did not come out.

But the disgusting behaviour of the police is at the heart of this tragic story. For 27 years the police lied, and covered up their actions on the day.

Shortly after the disaster Duckenfield fed a lie about fans being

drunk and to blame — a lie which was printed on the front page of the Sun and other newspapers just a few days after the event, in the midst of grief. The Sun newspaper then continued to blame the police for their printing of the story vilifying Liverpool fans.

South Yorkshire police not only maintained the lie through the years and this led to a 1991 inquest verdict of “accidental death”. The systematically changed 164 witness statements to distort the truth, a fact that was revealed after that inquest. When that systematic perversion of justice was revealed the then Labour government, specifically Jack Straw and Tony Blair, refused to order a new inquest.

In the last few years, Duckenfield, when he knew the truth was soon to come out, did admit some responsibility. But he continued to maintain fans were drunk, despite this being something he knew nothing about, being for all of the match inside a control room.

Duckenfield was put in charge of Hillsborough despite having no experience. He took the decision to open an exit gate so that people rushed into an already overcrowded pen. It was a mistake, but he behaved like a cop. He sought to enforce order at all costs. He chose to treat the fans as “hooligans”. He called for dogs instead of ambulances, when it was clear that people were suffering —



in fact they were being asphyxiated to death.

For years MPs and governments obstructed debates in Parliament, and then the demand for a further inquest to reverse the failings of the first inquest, in which the coroner decided not to look at the emergency response to the disaster.

In 2009, a review was finally set

up by Labour. It led to the results of the original inquests being quashed. But it took yet another campaign by the bereaved families for the High Court to order last year's hearing.

Hopefully this is the last chapter in the fight mounted by the families and friends of the people who died at Hillsborough. We salute the tremendous bravery

and determination of those campaigners and we have to hope their fight will help others who will face similar battles against the powerful.

In particular we hope it will give heart to those who have been bereaved in the Grenfell fire, and show that they too can find out the truth behind the fire, get justice and stop similar tragedies from happening.

Subscribe to Solidarity

Trial sub (6 issues) £7 ☐
Six months (22 issues) £22 waged ☐, £11 unwaged ☐
One year (44 issues) £44 waged ☐, £22 unwaged ☐
European rate: 6 months €30 ☐ One year €55 ☐

Name

Address

I enclose £

Cheques (£) to “AWL” or make £ and Euro payments at workersliberty.org/sub
Return to 20e Tower Workshops, Riley Road, London, SE1 3DG.

Or subscribe with a standing order

Pay £5 a month to subscribe to Solidarity or pay us more to make an ongoing contribution to our work

To: (your bank) (address)

Account name (your name)

Account number Sort code

Please make payments as follows to the debit of my account:
Payee: Alliance for Workers' Liberty, account no. 20047674 at the Unity Trust Bank, 9 Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB (60-83-01)

Amount: £.....

To be paid on the day of (month) 20.... (year) and thereafter monthly until this order is cancelled by me in writing.
This order cancels any previous orders to the same payee.

Date Signature

Contact us

020 7394 8923

solidarity@workersliberty.org

Write to us: The editor
(Cathy Nugent), 20E Tower
Workshops, Riley Road, London,
SE1 3DG

Solidarity editorial:
Simon Nelson, Cathy Nugent
(editor), Gemma Short, and
Martin Thomas

Printed by Trinity Mirror