

Unity!



Racism serves the ruling class

▲ Bristol communists welcome the toppling of Edward Colston's statue writes Ken Keable. This is a man whose fortune from stealing and selling human beings, used race to justify his actions.

The people of Bristol have, at last destroyed the symbol of the city's racist, slave-trading elite, which had the Merchant Venturers Society at its core.

Hands off China's sovereignty
★ Communist Party general secretary Robert Griffiths, has slammed the former foreign secretaries seeking to stir up further social unrest in Hong Kong, "Britain's empire in the Far East is dead and the sooner these backward-looking politicians realise it, the better it will be for friendly and mutually beneficial relations between our countries. The hypocrisy of their confected outrage is staggering – one can only imagine their response had a gang of violent protestors broken into the Commons chamber and smashed it up. Even more ominous is their veiled threat to plunge China into the same division and destruction which British, US and NATO intervention fomented in the former Yugoslavia" he said.

COMMUNIST PARTY

MOLLIE BROWN

THE VICIOUS killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis has highlighted the racism that still pervades developed capitalist societies and their state institutions Mollie Brown told the June meeting of the Communist Party's executive committee.

Recent examples of the deaths and serious injuries of black detainees in police custody in Britain, the US and France were linked to the use of dangerous restraint techniques that were used disproportionately against black and working-class people she said.

"Our response must include recognising the class basis of prejudice, discrimination and racism in Britain and other imperialist countries, and urge black and white to unite in the fight against them".

The party leadership agreed a range of proposals from the party's Anti-Racism Anti-Fascism commission including the early publication of a pamphlet on *Covid, Class and Racism*.

BREXIT warning

Responding to the collapse of the fourth round of Brexit talks between the British government and the European Union's chief negotiator Michel Barnier, Mollie Brown warned against attempts by the EU and British big business to force an extension of the 'transition period' with its EU rules and jurisdictions beyond the end of the year.

"Barnier's insistence that future British governments should not be allowed to intervene in the economy to protect key industries and enterprises, regulate private investment and end competitive tendering is unacceptable and intended to frustrate any settlement this year on future UK-EU relations", she said.

"Likewise, the bid for full EU access to Britain's already depleted fishing waters is a deliberately provocative demand that the EU has never insisted upon in trade deals with Canada and other countries".

Britain's communists urged the Labour Party leadership not to repeat previous mistakes by supporting an extension of the 'transition period' and siding with those 'anti-democratic

elements' in the Tory, Labour, LibDem, Green and nationalist parties who have never accepted the 2016 EU referendum result.

Save Britain's industry

The party's executive also received reports highlighting the massive threat to what remains of Britain's industrial base, including recent announcements of tens of thousands of job losses around Gatwick airport and 6,000 redundancies at Rolls Royce beginning in Derby, Inchinnan near Glasgow and Lancashire.

Rolls Royce and British Airways have both taken public money on the pretext of saving jobs and should not be allowed to cut and run said the party trade union organiser Andy Bain.

Trade union organiser Andy Bain called for broad-based community campaigns led by the trade unions and local trades councils to resist these devastating blows. Both companies should be returned to the public sector and protected in the public interest regardless of EU state aid rules, he said.

MOLLIE BROWN IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Red Wedge success

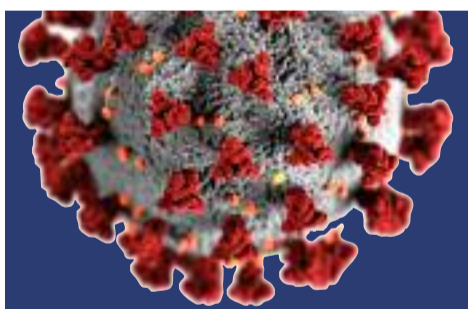
Over a hundred new and prospective members of the Communist Party took part in a nationwide series of 10 online meetings at the end of May.

Feedback on the meetings showed that all the 34 Red Wedge course leaders felt the sessions were a success and all the new and prospective members rated the sessions five out of five stars.

Building on the success the party's Red Wedge team is planning the immediate launch of Communist Party women members training courses and a Zoom public launch of the party's new *Women and Class* pamphlet and political education classes at the Communist Party Centenary/Red Wedge event on Saturday 1 August.

The same date will see a major Red Wedge event for trade unionists and prospective party members active in trade unions.

★ The Young Communist League has set up new branches in East Anglia and Kent and is planning to set up new branches in Greater London localities, Brighton, Liverpool, Stirling and Warrington reports YCL general secretary Johnnie Hunter.



Protect the health and rights of the peoples



Joint statement of the world's communist and workers' parties

<https://tinyurl.com/stghk79>

Austerity and Covid-19 crisis

HEALTH COMMISSION

THABO MILLER

THE GOVERNMENT response to the Covid 19 pandemic has been one of mismanagement and incompetence from the start said the Communist Party's newly established Health Commission in a statement following its launch meeting.

"The roots of this were laid in the decade of austerity, cuts, privatisation and under resourcing of our health and social care services across the four nations, as well as a political doctrine which promotes individualism and lack of community responsibility that has resulted from the capitalist economic system.

"The question of where to go from here is, therefore, one with no easy answers. Any steps forward must be based on the evidence of potential benefits and harms for all, rather than on narrow political ideology."

The commission identified two pressing questions that need to be answered:

- What are the costs and benefits to health across the nations associated with lockdown?
- Looking at other countries in the world who have had a more successful response to the pandemic than the UK, what can be learned as to the criteria necessary before lifting lockdown?

The party's Health Commission covers a wide range of expertises in health and social care. These include professionals working in the health and social care sector as well as individuals with direct experience of the wider provision of health and social care across the country.

The commission is planning to use the expertise of its members to address questions relating to health and social care policy, in a rigorous and evidence-based way. It will advise and counsel the executive committee of the party and the party membership on best practices within the services. The commission intends to analyse existing practices from a class-based perspective in order to understand why those practices and policies currently occur.

Progress requires our class and our party to not merely be reactive to the actions and policies of the bourgeois class and of monopolies, but to develop a clear, detailed and specific alternatives.

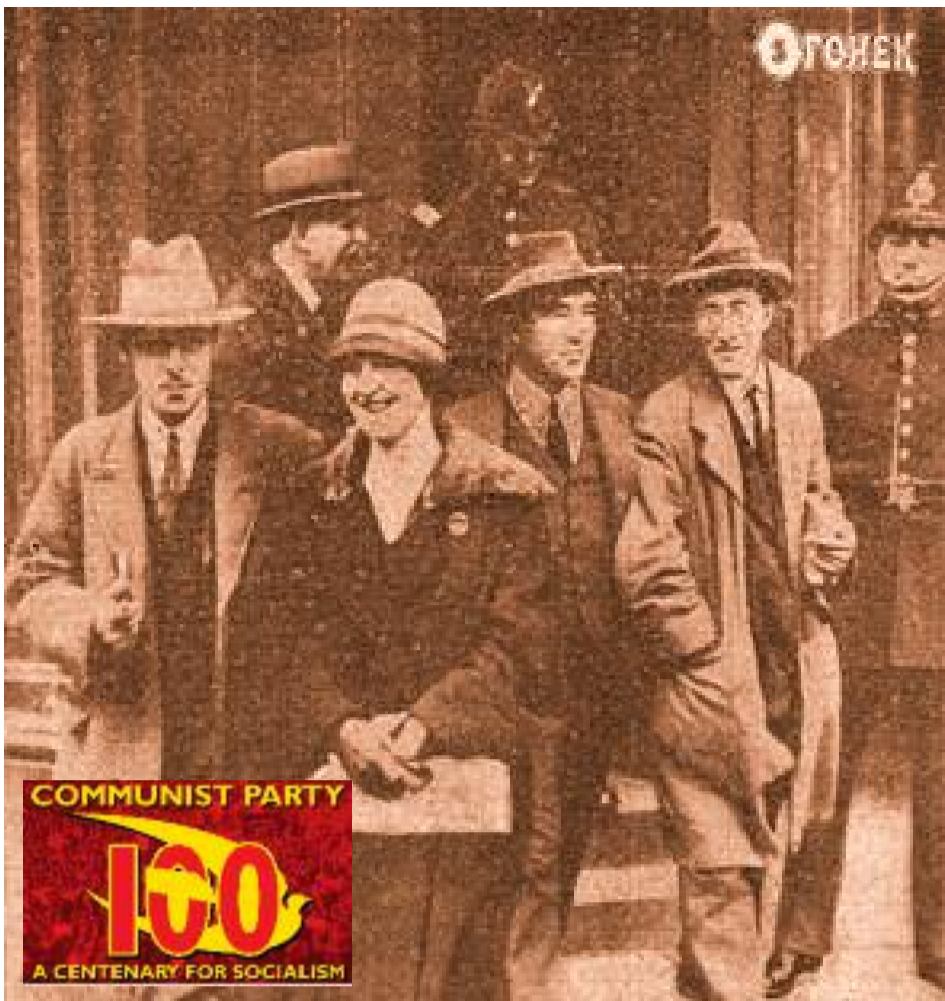
"Over the medium to longer term, the health commission will draw up a specific vision for the NHS of the 21st century, built upon the principles that patients need an ambitious public health system which is democratically accountable" said the commission.

THABO MILLER IS CONVENOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S HEALTH COMMISSION



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June 2020



OUR HISTORY

PHIL KATZ

THE WEEKEND of 31 July and 1 August 2020 marks 100 years since the historic gathering of delegates at the Cannon Street Hotel in London, to form the Communist Party.

Plans to celebrate the centenary are being stepped-up as we near the date, with the organising team having to take into account radically changed circumstances, resulting from the lock-down.

The recent growth of the Communist Party, with a rapid rise in membership and the formation of new branches, means more is expected of the celebration.

The first response to the COVID crisis was the rebuilding of an entirely new party website, which allowed meetings and organisation to continue. The wifi waves now positively hum with Communist Party activity. Public meetings are regularly held and for members, there are a growing range of online training courses. A major centre for political education, including the use of video tutorials for new members, on the party programme *Britain's Road to Socialism*, sits alongside a suite of ePublications. A social network to put members in touch with each other, for discussion and mutual aid, has helped answer questions promptly, taking pressure off the ever busy central and Scottish party offices, which have continued to function remotely.

The party's centenary store has done its best business in decades with the party programme selling out twice and now heading for its third printing.

The centenary publication *Red Lives – 100 years for socialism* is nearing publication, work is at an advanced stage on a film, *The Reds* and a new history of the party is in preparation. Graham Stevenson's history of the *Real Life of Jessie Eden* was published in April. A travelling exhibition is ready as soon as conditions allow, with bookings running into 2021.

Online plans

The party's web presence will take centre stage as the main source of delivery for ambitious plans to mark the centenary weekend. The 1 August will be a 'wear your badge with pride day' – photos can be sent in for the Communist Party facebook page and the Young Communist League instagram.

Over the period the party website will host political education courses, including a new four-part series *Women and Class* and agitprop short courses for activists wanting to organise in workplaces facing job loss, wage cuts and dangerous unhealthy conditions. There will be a number of public meetings on the day, relayed online, about party history, internationalism, the struggle for women's equality, anti racism and for peace. These will be hosted by party organisations and supported by the Young Communist League.

There will be guest lectures including one on 'the importance of history - why we remember', another on *The German-Soviet Pact and British communists*, and a number of online meetings for

women and for young workers that will require prior registration. Some of the meetings will be hosted by friends and allies of the party.

There will be an internationalist meeting on press freedom hosted by the *Morning Star* and marking its 90th anniversary this year.

Party trade union activists will host 'why and how you should organise' training events - these require prior registration.

Young communists will read out the biographies of communists that will be included in the *Red Lives - 100 years for socialism*. Look out for the life story of legendary communists such Bob Stewart from Scotland, Yvonne Kapp and sports champions such as Clem Beckett, boxer and anti-racist campaigner Len Johnson and hockey ace Angela Gradwell Tuckett, dropped from the England hockey team for refusing to give the Hitler salute when playing in Berlin.

Expect an online exhibition of historic documents relating to the Communist Party, many not seen before.

There will be a presentation of historic banners, including one from the cyclathon riders of the Harry Pollitt brigade (their ride to London later in the year will be filmed online).

Culture will play an important role and there are plans for publishing playlists of radical music and historic performances including the ever-powerful voice of Paul Robeson. A cinema will show a range of labour movement and anti-imperialist films.

The weekend will mark the launch of a new film history of the Communist Party and we will run a trailer for the feature film, *London Recruits*.

A series of podcasts will include interviews with communists and the reproduction of historic speeches by early party leaders Tom Mann and Harry Pollitt.

Presentations to veteran members are planned, and a call for you to raise a cuppa or something stronger (as long as you are not driving or at work!) in their honour. There are special events to mark the contribution of Communist Party volunteers in the International Brigades and the London Recruits who volunteered to fight against apartheid, with greetings from leaders of communist parties in South Africa, Russia, India and Ireland.

Ambassadors from China, Vietnam and Cuba will make presentations. Communist Party general secretary Robert Griffiths will give a live keynote speech later on the 1 August.

Over the weekend we will announce landmark events in the next phase of the centenary year including a residential school for young organisers being held in the north of England, a wreath laying an commemorative event for party activists, a conference on the future of work at a venue in the Midlands and more.

It is all systems go for the Communist Party!

PHIL KATZ IS THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND IS ORGANISING THE PARTY'S CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Picture above shows the arrest of the Communist Party leadership in 1925 as the ruling class makes preparations for the 1926 General Strike

Schools face Covid-19 crisis

EDUCATION STRUGGLES

LAURA BRIGGS

BORIS JOHNSON'S sudden announcement to reopen schools on 1 June prompted a coordinated response throughout the education unions to delay the reopening and, where this was not possible, to protect vulnerable staff.

Even in the short timescale allowed by Johnson's announcement communist teachers met online to explore how the unions could best respond, given that balloting for strike action would not be possible.

Our view was that the unions would need to offer significant support to members and reps to carry out negotiations in their individual workplaces. The teaching unions clearly were sensitive to this and produced a wealth of material (checklists, letter templates, etc) and held online webinars, meetings and training to support members. It is extremely likely that the coordinated efforts of union leadership, organisers, reps and members has saved lives. Communist teachers are keen to use this momentum to further increase the profile of education unions.

London District of the Communist Party held a successful online meeting on the theme *Covid-19: Safe Schools: Safe Workplaces* discussing the effect of school closure and reopening on working class and vulnerable students; the success of the NEU's national and local action; and what the future holds for education policy. A recording of this meeting is available.

LAURA BRIGGS IS CONVENOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S EDUCATION COMMISSION



WOMEN

The publication of *Communist Women* is a boost to the struggle for women's rights, for community and women's trade union activism and aims to put the struggle for equality, at the centre of working class life. It reflects the growing work of the all-Britain Communist Party Women's Commission, which has resulted in the formation of women's commissions in London and Scotland in the last year. The first issue, to appear regularly in desktop and tabloid formats is now available. It's one of a number of new ePublications. *Communist Women* is free and you are invited to subscribe.

<https://www.comunistparty.org.uk/e-publications/>

Download the pdf of issue 1 at <https://www.comunistparty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Communist-Women-1.pdf>

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A ground-breaking pamphlet by the late Vishnu Sharma, published 1979, has been reissued with an introduction by Tony Conway convenor of the party's Anti-racist, anti-fascist commission.

The pamphlet, by the leading Indian communist in Britain, who resigned from the Commission for Racial Equality in protest is a condemnation of the racist immigration and nationality policies of the Tory and Labour governments of the period.



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- SUMMER 2020 Contents include**
- ★ 100 years of the Communist Party *Rob Griffiths*
 - ★ The Communist Party in the Industrial Struggle, *Peter Kerrigan*
 - ★ The first 50 years against Imperialism *Idris Cox*
 - ★ The Communist Party against fascism and appeasement *Phil Katz*
 - ★ Flags, fascism, mourning, and the Machinery of Capitalism *Fran Lock*
 - ★ Soul Food: British Communist Poets



A panel discussion marking 75 years since victory over fascism organised jointly by the Marx Memorial Library and the Society for Cooperation in Russian and Soviet Studies Monday, 22 June 2020 - 7:00pm

This panel will explore the role of the Soviet Union/communism in the fight against fascism in the 1930s and its defeat in the Second World War.

75 years since victory over Nazi Germany in 1945, it will reflect on how and why this history is now under attack, with particular reference to the resolution passed by the European Parliament 'on the importance of European remembrance for the Future of Europe' in September 2019.

Dr Michael Jones, historian and author of *Total War and Stalingrad*
Phil Katz, author of *Freedom from Tyranny: the fight against Fascism and the falsification of history*
Jonathan White, MML tutor and associate editor of *Theory & Struggle*



Marxism in a New Time of Struggle

Marx Memorial Library and Workers School launches its 2020 issue of *Theory & Struggle* with Professor Mary Davis, Andrew Murray and Maxine Peake Thursday, 18 June 2020 - 7:00pm
Contact: m.jump@marx-memorial-library.org.uk 02072531485

