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For a united front against monopoly capitalism and war!
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bulletin



Unity!

TORY PAY RESTRAINT CONDEMNED

UNITY! NEWS TEAM

INFLATION

YOUNG COMMUNIST League leader Johnnie Hunter has slammed calls by the Bank of England and government ministers for pay restraint in order to combat inflation.

'People everywhere should treat this ruling-class attempt to shift the blame and the burden onto working people. It's the energy companies, banks and retail giants who have driven up fuel, food and housing costs in their greed for greater profits'. 'Workers and their families have suffered real cuts in their incomes and living standards, while the fat cats continue to enjoy the cream', he argued.

Johnnie Hunter, a delegate to the recent Unison conference, urged the labour movement to uphold the essential role of unions to fight and when necessary strike for higher wages.

Instead, Labour leader Keir Starmer and his officials continue to pull their party to the right, purging socialists and gerrymandering selection processes to fill the Parliamentary Labour Party with 'tame stooges'.

'Like Unite, Labour-affiliated trade unions should demand and fight for radical economic and employment policies from the Labour Party in return for working people's money', he said. He warned that Britain's ruling class wanted to rupture the link between the labour movement and the Labour Party, pouring huge donations into party coffers and lobbying Starmer and Shadow Cabinet members for even more big business-friendly policies.

'Today, only the Communist Party stands unreservedly for policies such as price controls, renationalisation, a wealth tax on the rich, the repeal of all anti-union laws, millions more council houses and an economic plan to combat climate change and create full employment', said the young communist leader.

CRUSH ANTI-UNION LAWS

ANDY BAIN
ANTI UNION LAWS

THE TUC meets this week as the Tory government prepares to widen its attack on trade union rights and further hobble working class resistance to poverty and falling wages.

The situation is complicated by the unwelcome fact that Labour's leadership has abandoned its commitment to the New Deal for Workers endorsed at last year's Labour Party conference.

Starmer's election strategy is to convince the employers, the City, the bankers and Britain's bourgeoisie as a whole that it poses no threat to their power, privileges and profits.

Last month's abandonment of the Starmer pledge – made when he was standing to succeed Jeremy Corbyn as leader – to raise income tax for the top five per cent of earners has been reinforced with an outright rejection of a wealth tax.

In a provocative move Westminster Labour was intent on showing just how little regard it has for the trade union movement.

A "modest" wealth tax on the richest 140,000 people in Britain would, says the TUC, raise more than £10bn to help pay for public services.

TUC research suggests that a one-off wealth tax of 1.7 per cent on people with assets above £3million, rising to 3.5 per cent for those with more than £10m,

"could deliver a £10.4bn boost for the public purse".

This, the TUC says, affects only the richest 0.3 per cent of the population.

It is these people that Starmer is most intent on reassuring.

Labour's lovefest with the rich is served up with clear signs that it intends to abandon rights at work from day one and reduce the commitment to sectoral collective bargaining to the care sector only.

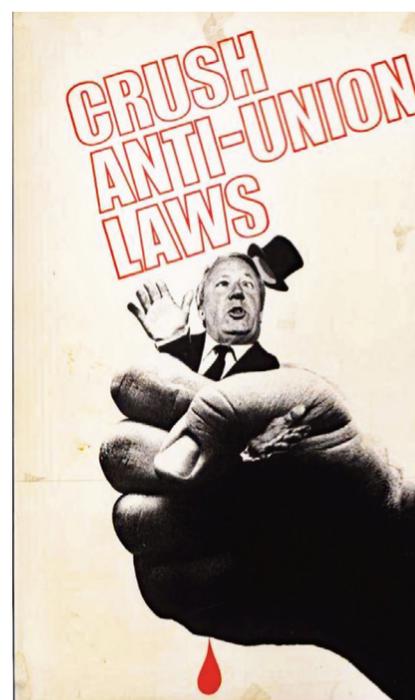
The government's new Minimum Service Levels (MSL) Act is the biggest single attack on trade union rights in decades. It adds to the measures in the new implemented Public Order and the Retained EU law legislation.

Congress will see a battle to commit Labour to a speedy repeal of anti-union laws in its first year of office.

One innovation before delegates is a bid to commit Labour to "a bill of rights providing positive employment and trade union rights — including strong rights to collectively bargain and to take strike action".

In a strong evocation of the united trade union campaign to defeat the Heath government's 1972 Industrial Relations Act delegates will consider proposals for mass opposition including a strategy of non-compliance and non-co-operation to make the laws unworkable.

Added to this are calls for a mass demonstration, 100 per cent solidarity with any trade unions attacked under the law



and a campaign of mass non-compliance

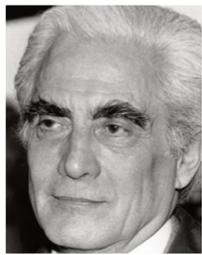
This would include a co-ordinated campaign to demand the non-issuing of work notices by devolved governments, local authorities, mayors, fire authorities, other public bodies and employers. The Scottish government has already declared that it will not issue or enforce work notices.

ANDY BAIN IS THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S INDUSTRIAL ORGANISER AND A FORMER TSSA PRESIDENT

Unity!

Since the 1990s Unity! has been the voice of communists and their allies in the trade union movement and has been published at every TUC and many union conferences.

Now published as a monthly it also appears in special issues at demonstrations and festivals.



NEWS & VIEWS

“In a country with a capitalist system, the subordination of political power to economic power determines that democracy is conceived, institutionalized and practiced using class criteria. Specifically, in defense of the interests of capitalists”
Alvaro Cunhal Historic leader of the Portuguese Communist Party



MICAELA TRACEY RAMOS YOUNG COMMUNISTS

DELEGATES TO the congress of the Young Communist League celebrated a big increase in membership and activity.

This was described as a testament to how young people in Britain are beginning to abandon illusions about the capitalist system with increasing numbers and joining Britain's biggest and fastest growing revolutionary youth organisation.

This, the largest YCL congress in recent history is a signal to the wider Labour movement that young people are critical for working class progress.

The congress was a great success – we heard from international guests and the general secretary of our party. We elected a new central committee and debated a wide range of motions.

The outcome was a heightened ideological unity and a strong commitment to unity in action with our Communist Party.

YCL cadres came out of the congress reinvigorated and ready for the great

tasks ahead of us. A strong, united Young Communist League is essential if we are going to free the youth and the working class of Britain from the chains of the capitalist system and oppression.

International guests at the congress were the secretary of the Student Federation of India ((UK) Nikhil Matthew and the president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth Aritz Rodriguez. They both outlined the importance of the youth revolutionary organisations struggling for peace and against Imperialism – particularly British complicity in the world imperialist system. There was a commitment to working closely with the Students Federation of India in Britain and a message from the Kononovich brother's – imprisoned Ukrainian young communist leaders thanking our YCL for solidarity. 'Thanks to your actions, we are alive' was their message.

Our determination to win for our class, to struggle against imperialism is greater

MICAELA TRACEY RAMOS IS A MEMBER OF THE YCL CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND OF THE UNISON NEC



▲ The Calton Weavers massacre Ken Currie
Commemorate the Calton Weavers
Sunday September 1pm

Calton Burial Ground, Abercromby Street, Glasgow G40 2DD.

A day of talks, walks, music and entertainment to mark Scotland's first major industrial dispute.

The 1787 strike by weavers, for better conditions and wage rises, was brutally repressed. It pre-dates Tolpuddle by a half century. Free Eventbrite tickets at <https://rb.gy/06uw3>.

CHINA SYMPOSIUM

UNITY REPORTER
CHINA

A DELEGATION led By Rob Griffiths, Communist Party general secretary, attended a symposium on the theme of the Communist Party of China and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Ambassador Zheng Zeguang – who has travelled widely throughout Britain and Ireland to promote mutual understanding – described the western media's relentless misinformation of China and its policies. He was followed by six presentations.

The first, on party building and the challenge from party's 20th Congress to maintain the support of the people was followed by one on the theme of party duty and the importance of leadership in securing the gains of the revolution.

Presentations followed on cadre development, party conduct and discipline including anti-corruption measures.

2023 marks the tenth anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative which has lifted over 40 million people out of poverty – concrete gains in comparison with the empty platitudes of Biden's 'Build Back Better'.

Cde Zheng said that BRI had 'originated in China but belonged to the world; China's Global Development Initiative (GDI) is supported by 70 countries and seeks to create a global community of development; the Global Security Initiative (GSI) is founded on UN principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and promotes peaceful resolution of disputes rather than militarism.

China brokered the rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and is advocating a peace process in the Ukraine-Russia war.

In March 2023 Xi Jinping launched the Global Civilisation Initiative (GCI) which challenges the New Cold War mentality by respecting diversity, common values, inheritance and innovation of civilisations as well as people-to-people exchanges.

Zheng Zeguang summed up the presentations and reiterated the commitment of the Chinese party to apply Marxism in a Chinese context.

China aspires to be a builder of world peace he said.

Rob Griffiths confirmed the party's support for China's Ukraine peace initiative and reported on a recent international delegation to China which included meetings with trade unions and visits to party building schools.

Other speakers included Keith Bennet of Friends of Socialist China, Sinologists Frances Wood and author Martin Jacques, former editor of *Marxism Today*.



▲ Hundreds gathered on Church Green in the Norfolk village of Burston to commemorate the longest strike in Britain. From the beginning of the Great War in 1914 until 1939 local children abandoned their school to march against the sacking of their teachers and attend the famous Strike School. Their banners read: 'We want our teachers back'.

NEW COMMIECASTS

Following on from the August podcast *The Quiet American Wars* with Liz Payne and Kevan Nelson a new release *Not one step back from the Truth* dealing with historical revisionism and holocaust denial with Communist Party members Phil Katz and Dan Ross talking about historical revisionism on a world scale and holocaust denial is now available..

★ To listen to *The Quiet American Wars* go to <https://tinyurl.com/33mkz6ch>

★ To listen to *Not one step back from the truth* go to <https://tinyurl.com/dr3wjzpr>

CULTURE MATTERS

Culture Matters website aims to publish relevant creative material – poems, images, music – and critical material including reviews, articles and interviews *reports Phil Katz*. It runs the Bread and Roses Arts Awards, publishes books and pamphlets, and works with the labour movement through workshops and campaigns on culture issues. Unrivalled on the Left for its scope of genres, topics and contributors to an arts hub online, has just gone over 1000 followers on Facebook. Give them a boost and enrich your own world by looking at their work.

To follow go to <https://tinyurl.com/CultureMattersOn-FB> or to <https://www.culturematters.org.uk/>



Safe passage for refugees • Stop scapegoating and division
 Blame the government not refugees

PORTLAND UNITY DEMONSTRATION
Saturday 16 September, 12 noon

Assemble Gateway Pillars, Victoria Square, Portland, Dorset

WELCOME REFUGEES



The march is backed by Stand Up to Racism Dorset, Dorset Trades Union Council, South West Region Trades Union Congress and trade unions across the South West

TUC EVENTS

Tuesday 12 September

Where next for fighting unions? Hear Daniel Kebede, Fran Heathcote, Alex Gordon and Libby Nolan. Adelphi Hotel at 6.30pm supported by RMT, NEU, Unison, Unite and PCS board lefts.

Monday 12 September 12.45pm

Strike wave: building on a year of industrial militancy with *Morning Star* editor Ben Chacko joined by a host of general secretaries and activists. Room 3b

Monday 11 September 7pm

For anti-racist immigration and nationality laws. Hear a representative from the Status Now Network, Mike Jones PCS Home Office group secretary, Peter Middleman NEU regional secretary and Sarah Woolley BFAWU general secretary. The Bridewell, 1 Campbell Square Liverpool L51 5FB (10 Minutes walk from Congress Centre).



WHO PROFITS FROM WAR?

Shareholders of the world's top five oil and gas companies saw record profits of €192 billion (\$209 billion) and distributed \$102 billion (€93 billion) in the form of dividends and share-buy-backs in 2022. **Greenpeace report: *How Gas Corporations Capitalise from War in Ukraine***



CPI defends Irish neutrality

JIMMY COCORAN
IRELAND

FOLLOWING A PROTEST organised by the Communist Party of Ireland outside the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin to condemn the Government's decision to provide weapons training to the Ukrainian armed forces, the following letter was handed in to the minister for foreign affairs, Micheál Martin.

The Communist Party of Ireland condemns the Government's decision to order Irish troops to provide weapons training to the Ukrainian Armed Forces. This decision dangerously increases Irish involvement in the war and is another calculated attack on Irish neutrality. It is also designed to ensure that the war will continue, resulting in increased death and destruction.

We call on the Government to immediately rescind this decision and instead to add its voice to the majority of the world's nations that have called for a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement.

Article 29.2 of the Constitution of Ireland is quite clear on the duty of the Irish state to seek a peaceful resolution to international conflicts: 'Ireland affirms its adherence to the principle of the pacific settlement of international disputes by international arbitration or judicial determination.'

This constitutional imperative cannot be squared with Government policies since the beginning of the conflict in 2014, and in particular since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The decision once again highlights how Irish foreign policy is dictated by the needs of imperialism and how the Atlanticist policy of the Department of Foreign Affairs runs counter to article 29 of the Constitution.

The decision also does not reflect the wishes of the majority of the people of Ireland, who in a number of polls support a negotiated settlement to the war.

In line with article 29.2 of the Constitution, the Communist Party of Ireland calls on the Government to end its military support for the Ukrainian Armed Forces and to work with those countries calling for a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement of the issues at the heart of the conflict. This will put Ireland in line with the majority of UN member-states. What is needed is a de-escalation, rather than contributing to the escalation and prolongation of this destructive and senseless war.

JIMMY COCORAN IS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND



This is the moment for peace talks

ANDREW MURRAY
UKRAINE WAR

DOES THE movement support the policy of the Tory government? A stupid question one would think. If the matter were about economic or social policy it would be easy to answer – no, never.

However, the issue is the war in Ukraine. On the war, the most important matter in world politics today, Congress delegates are being asked to give a resounding endorsement to the policy of Sunak – and Johnson and Truss before him.

Unions are being asked to believe that this policy – of protracting the war, of blocking all possibility of peace, of fuelling the war in every way – is somehow different. That in relation to Ukraine, the Tories are not following a class policy but the "national interest".

That makes no sense, of course. The Tories pushing for a war to the end against Russia, regardless of the human suffering, are the same Tories forcing austerity and pay cuts on British workers in the interests of the elite.

Yet on this issue, Congress is being pushed to forsake an independent policy of its own and line up behind the cabinet instead.

That is the actual import of the motion from the GMB. It is a call for the trade unions to align in support of the most hardline elements among NATO policymakers and push for the war to continue until Russian surrender. The key phrase is the demand for "the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from all Ukrainian territories occupied since 2014."

Crucially, this requires as a prerequisite for peace the return of Crimea to Ukrainian control. Firstly, this is most unlikely to be achieved, and the effort to do so risks the escalation of war to the point of the use of nuclear weapons. At the very least only

prolonged and intense military operations, including far more civilian deaths, could put the reconquest of Crimea remotely on the agenda.

Secondly, there is no evidence that the people living on the peninsula want to be handed back to Kyiv. They have the right to determine their own destiny, rather than having it decided for them by NATO, or the TUC come to that.

That is not to justify the Russian aggression of 2022, which has brought immense suffering to the people of Ukraine. Nor is it to argue that Russia should be allowed to keep all the land it has illegally annexed since.

It is, however, to assert that lasting peace in Ukraine must allow for self-determination for the people living in disputed areas. Let them choose between Kyiv and Moscow. Is that not far better than a war to the death over the issue?

That would be a democratic working-class response to the crisis. There are other issues that need to be sorted out too, including guarantees for Ukraine against renewed attack, and security arrangements in the region that work for everyone – unless all feel safe, none are safe.

That is not the policy of the Tory government. Prolonged war is their preference. Boris Johnson broke off from partying in Downing Street to fly to Kyiv last April to tell President Zelensky to forget about peace talks.

Now the head of the British armed forces, Admiral Radakin visits Ukraine regularly to direct operations there. British special forces are on the ground and British arms are pouring in. None of it is helping bring peace a day closer.

The GMB motion endorses all that. It commits to increased military supplies from a British government already pouring the most advanced weaponry into the conflict, including depleted uranium.

Last year Congress shamefully voted to campaign for increased arms spending,

In the three months March to May this year NATO military aid to Ukraine totalled \$9 billion. Last year US military exports were up 49 per cent.

Tory peers Lord Glendonbrook, Viscount Eccles and Lord Sassoon, and Lord Lupton and Lord Gadhia, each own shares of at least £50,000 in British weapons firm BAE Systems. BAE Systems' share price rose 23% since the Ukraine war started.

BAE Systems is Britain's biggest arms seller and the world sixth biggest. Since the war began, share prices at Germany's Leopard tank manufacturer rose by Rheinmetall more than 60% and Italy's Leonardo up by more than 44%.

Last year share value of four of the US 'big five' arms corporates increased by more than \$10 billion in market value. Sources: Open Democracy, HoC Library

LEFT: Destroyed Ukrainian armoured vehicles

regardless of the impact this will have on working people and other public services at a time of public service cuts and a cost-of-living crisis. It should not make the same mistake again.

The motion also rightly criticises the denial of trade union rights in Putin's Russia, yet it is silent on the assault on democracy and trade union freedoms – now removed from the great majority of workers – in Zelensky's Ukraine.

There has been some movement on the Ukraine war in a positive direction amongst the trade unions this year, as the dangers and costs of the conflict have become clearer.

The risk of escalation – even of nuclear escalation – remains high. The poorest countries in the world are paying the economic price for the conflict. And neither side appears able to prevail on the battlefield.

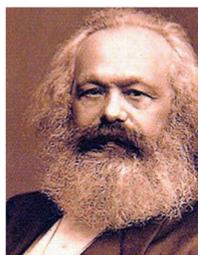
This is a moment for peace talks – that is what the British government should be advocating, and what the TUC should be demanding.

The need is for negotiations, ideally preceded by a ceasefire. The British government has opposed such a policy, and worked to obstruct it, from the outset. Tory class interests are served by continuing war, the integration of Ukraine into the western imperialist bloc and the isolation and degradation of any state that opposes that bloc, including ultimately China.

Yet the Global South refuses to line up with either side and instead pushes for the earliest possible end to the war. They know this is a proxy war between great powers and that there can be no winners from its continuation. Shouldn't that be where British trade unions take their stand too?

Trade unions need to find their own voice this week, ditch Tory policy on war and peace and vote against the war motion.

ANDREW MURRAY IS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE STOP THE WAR COALITION



CLASS STRUGGLE

It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organize itself at home as a class and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle — insofar as its class struggle is national, not in substance, but, as the Communist Manifesto says, ‘in form’ **Karl Marx, Critique of the Gotha Program 1875**



SEAN CANNON
AUSTERITY

ALL EYES WILL be on Manchester on Sunday 1 October. The media will be hyping up the speeches at the Tory Party conference that weekend. But Britain's trades unionists and anti-austerity activists are determined that the TV cameras focus on the anger of ordinary working people who have plenty of reasons to be angry!

Campaigners from the People's Assembly, Britain's largest anti-cuts organisation, with members of its trades union affiliates will be out in force in the city, demanding wholesale changes in government policy.

Making as much noise as they can, outside the annual Tory shindig, they will be pushing eight demands.

End the cost-of-living crisis – cut profits, increase wages

Today's high levels of inflation are not the result of rising wages (most of which aren't rising very much, anyway, if at all). The real causes include rampant profiteering by big business, and outrageous salaries and bonuses for CEOs.

Tax the rich – fund social care and social security

Essential public services, on which we all rely, have been starved of funds every year since 2010. Over a decade of damaging cuts has resulted in many services failing, with local councils close to being in breach of their statutory obligations to provide an acceptable level of provision of children's and adult social care. Meanwhile the super-rich have become ever more wealthy. A modest wealth tax, for example, would provide sufficient revenue to reverse the cuts.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT LABOUR?

Nick Wright
LABOUR

KEIR STARMER'S shadow cabinet reshuffle has completed the restoration of the Blairite right wing. It comes as no surprise. The Labour leader has made no secret of his intention to completely abandon the policy platforms on which he stood in the election to succeed Jeremy Corbyn and one by one each of his ten pledges have been repudiated.

Right wing fixer Pat McFadden is in as shadow chancellor and failed leadership contender Liz Kendall at work and pensions have been elevated while figures like Lisa Nandy and Annaliese Dodds who thought they might construct an alternative pole within the leadership have been shown who is boss.

Only Ed Miliband and Angela Rayner – both with a more substantial base and a more secure mandate – have survived both to wait for another day and likely to avoid a fight.

Resistance to Westminster Labour's strategy to convince our

Nationalise energy, water, mail and rail

It's common sense that natural monopolies, like the railways and the utilities, are best run by the public sector, under the democratic control of the people. Getting rid of rapacious private rail companies, many of them foreign-owned, would mean lower train fares as on the continent.

Refugees welcome – stop racist scapegoating

Under international law, people fleeing war and persecution have a legal right to seek asylum in safe countries. Safe, secure routes should be provided. Britain has a responsibility to uphold these international obligations, given its involvement in many of these wars (for example, in Iraq and Libya).

Scrap anti-union and anti-protest laws

The new Tory laws, severely curtailing strikes and the right of citizens to protest on the streets, represent a serious assault on our civil rights. They must be resisted.

Climate justice now – no new fossil fuel contracts

It's unbelievable that, at a time when man-made climate change is creating misery for millions of people around the world, our Tory government is allowing the big energy companies to exploit new oil reserves, for private profit. Britain should be investing far more in renewable energy (solar, tidal, wind, green, hydrogen etc) and insulating homes to save valuable energy and leaving the oil in the ground!

End the housing crisis - build council homes

We need to build thousands of decent houses for ordinary working people. The council homes sold off by the Tories in the 80s and 90s, need to be replaced. A massive building programme should be created.

Defend the NHS and public services end privatisation and outsourcing

The NHS, and other public services are being sold off systematically to private companies. There are enormous profits to be made from NHS contracts. Many in the political establishment want to turn the NHS into an insurance-based system, like the wasteful, expensive system in the United States. We must not let them get away with it.

So, if you are free on the 1 October, and can get to Oxford Street, Manchester by 12 noon, why not join in this mass protest? Coaches will be transporting campaigners from many cities around the country including Birmingham, Bristol, Coventry, Derby, Glasgow, Newcastle, Durham, South East London and the West Midlands. Please look at the People's Assembly national website for details.

<https://thepeoplesassembly.org.uk>

SEAN CANNON IS THE CONVENOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ANTI AUSTERITY COMMISSION

ruling class that it presents no threat to its wealth and power cannot be found either in parliament or in the party apparatus. The key question – given that the Tories may lose the next election and that irrespective of the result Rishi Sunak is a dead man walking – is what the trade unions who are affiliated to Labour will do to protect workers employment rights in event of Labour forming a government.

It boils down to a question of leadership. Since the summer of 2022 workers have demonstrated a willingness to fight both employers and government. Will the union leaderships be prepared to tackle a Labour government wedded to complete class collaboration. And what will the unions do to fight their corner inside the party. Experience suggests that union representatives on the party's NEC tend too often to act as transmission belts for right wing policies back to their unions rather than workers' tribunes.

NICK WRIGHT IS EDITOR OF UNITY!



RUTH STYLES
COMMUNIST PARTY

OUR COUNTRY is in crisis. And the working people of our three nations are paying the price. Runaway profits are the root of a price inflation that is blighting the lives of millions, with lower paid workers the most exploited.

The pay and incomes of the top 10 per cent has outstripped the pay of most working people while an out of control Bank of England racks up interest rates and tries to blame wage demands.

The TUC has revealed that the highest paid - with salaries of £180,000 or more – raked in an extra 7.9 per cent compared to last year, while wages for everyone else stagnate as prices rise.

From school buildings at risk of collapse to a care sector crisis, from an under funded NHS to cash strapped councils the fabric of life for millions of working people who depend on public services is in tatters.

This crisis is a crisis of the capitalism system but with a special British dimension. Since the post war cycle of reconstruction ended in the 1970's British monopoly capitalism has abandoned the post war welfare state consensus.

Both major parliamentary parties are fully signed up to the neo-liberal menu of privatisation, monetarism, deregulation, marketisation and the full financialisation of the economy.

But as the neo-liberal order enters its deepest crisis it is Britain's working people who are bearing the brunt of capitalist failure. Since the 2008 financial crash which put paid to Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's delusion that a City-centred financialisation of the economy could be tweaked to fund a limited expansion of health, education and social welfare British capitalism has entered a prolonged crisis.

But while working people face ever rising energy prices and food costs, runaway rents and mountainous mortgages corporate profits have shot up.

This is the price we pay for the the ever increasing domination of the City of London, the big banks and main monopolies.

Rather than the promised boost in investment, scientific innovation, the recreation of a skills-based workforce and secure living standards the reality is a low wage, low skill jobs market for millions, rising insecurity and living costs that now threaten all sections of the working class and even sections of the middle class.

The back ground to this is a failure to invest in productive industry while profits are exported. The economy is plundered for tax cuts for the rich, rising arms expenditure and nuclear arms. This is the background to the congress of the Communist Party this coming November. Every two years party organisations meet to analyse the world situation, review the party's work and elect a new leadership.

Communist Party organisations up and down the country are discussing the main resolution put forward by the party's leadership along with a thorough going review of the party's organisation as it tackles the new problems faced by the working class as a new and younger generation enter the struggle for working class power and begin to assume the responsibilities of leadership.

The Communist Party and especially the Young Communist League are growing as more and more people are looking for a real alternative to capitalism in crisis.

RUTH STYLES IS CHAIR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Communist Party Congress Resolution

For a United Front against monopoly capitalism and war



THE NEW COLD WAR

Since 2020, the share of the G7 capitalist powers in the world's economy has fallen from 43% to 30%. The share of the EU continues to decline and these Western trends are widely forecast to continue throughout the 2020s. Meanwhile, China's share of global GDP has trebled to 19%, overtaking the US according to IMF and OECD estimates. Furthermore, the combined GDP of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) has now surpassed that of the G7. Whether the BRICS alliance can solidify and maintain its progress, especially following the election of President Lula in Brazil, depends on the future course of (1) Russia after the Ukraine War; (2) India — now being courted by the US; and (3) South Africa after the 2024 National Assembly elections.

The IMF warns that the major capitalist economies are unlikely to expand much over the next 15 few years, as inflation and a debt-driven financial crisis threaten the post-Covid recovery.

Meanwhile, China continues to modernise its productive economy on a scale unmatched in the West, while rolling out its 'Belt and Road Initiative' for massive infrastructure investment across Central and Southern Asia, into Europe as far as Italy, and down through eastern Africa.

This is the economic context in which to understand the eastwards drive of the EU-NATO bloc since the 1990s and the change of Western policy (the so-called 'pivot to Asia') — led by the US and Britain — towards China and Russia.

China's rapid economic and technological progress and the resulting political influence are seen as a threat to Western imperialist domination, in particular to the position of the US as 25 the world's pre-eminent economic and military superpower. Some ruling class circles in the US believe this threat outweighs the benefits to be gained from closer economic relations with China, although ruling class opinion is divided. Under President Trump, additional trade and investment sanctions against Chinese companies were imposed. Military provocations continue to be staged around the borders of China by NATO, the AUKUS (Australia-UK-US) military pact countries and Japan. The US has opened new military bases in the Indo-Pacific region and recruited Australia, Japan and a more reluctant India into its anti-China QUAD security initiative. Meanwhile, the West's state and monopoly mass media keep up their propaganda barrage against China with false claims and bogus concerns about human rights abuses, national minorities and Chinese 'aggression' and 'expansion'.

The Communist Party will work with the peace movement to warn against any drift or drive to military conflict with China. This should

include explaining how Taiwan is an integral part of China and that it is for the Chinese people and government to decide how and when they reunify their country. We will continue to work with No Cold War and Friends of Socialist China, not only to oppose the escalation of hostility against China but also to explain the realities of that country's path to socialist modernisation and the benefits that positive relations can bring to the people of our respective countries. In place of the 'de-twinning' drive — based on ignorance or prejudice — to cut links with Chinese cities and regions, we will argue for establishing more and stronger links based on friendship. In 2024, the Communist Party will organise an all-Britain speaking tour of physical and online meetings to promote peaceful, constructive and mutually beneficial relations between our three nations and China.

We will also highlight the unique role of the *Morning Star* which alone among the national daily papers in Britain, refuses to peddle Cold War propaganda and tells the truth about developments in China. The exclusion of all critical voices from the mainstream broadcasting media is almost total and — alongside Britain's ongoing four-year incarceration of Julian Assange and US threats to lock him up for life for exposing US war crimes — makes mockery of British and Western claims to champion a free media and free speech.

The war in Ukraine

In the wake of widespread death and destruction in Ukraine, the Communist Party reiterates the main positions set out in its statement of February 25, 2022, especially as the US-NATO-EU military block appears determined to prolong the conflict, rejecting the calls for a peace process whether from the UN Secretary-General, the Pope, China or South Africa. The British government has played a particularly bellicose role in demanding more armaments for Ukraine, including cruise missiles and depleted uranium tank shells. The US favours further escalation by supplying Ukraine with more cluster bombs outlawed by a UN Convention signed by 108 member states including Britain (but not by the US or by Russia and Ukraine which have already deployed them during the war).

The war between Russia and Ukraine is part of a wider conflict between capitalist powers: between Russia on one side and Ukraine and the expansionist NATO powers on the other.

Neither side in this war stands for the real interests of the peoples of Russia, Ukraine or of Europe more widely.

Russian president Putin represents the interests of a section of the country's big business oligarchy that profited from the theft of that country's economic assets from the Russian working class. He rejects socialism and has explicitly attacked Lenin's policy of federalism and autonomy — reflected in the Soviet Union's 1924 Constitution — which guarantees the rights of nations and nationalities. We condemn the widespread military offensive launched by President Putin on February 24, 2022, which further destabilised Ukraine. It has led directly to the expansion of NATO to include Finland and Sweden and strengthened those elements who champion militarism, provocations and war rather than negotiation and the peaceful settlement of conflict between and within states.

The Ukrainian government represents Ukrainian oligarchs who, like their Russian counterparts, stash their stolen wealth in Western banks and launder their money through the City of London. Ukraine has been thrown open to Western capital, while President

Zelensky has now extended the ban on the Ukrainian Communist Party since on 2015 to all other pro-peace and left-wing political organisations.

The eastwards expansion of NATO and the EU; NATO's military build-up in eastern Europe and the Baltic states and in the waters around Russia; the US- and fascist-backed coup to topple Ukraine's democratically elected president in 2014; the massacre at the Odessa trade union HQ; and the escalating attacks on the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk since then, as recorded by Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) observers ... all created the conditions for the Ukraine War.

The urgent need now is for a ceasefire and negotiations to bring forward a settlement which takes full account of the legitimate rights of all parties to the conflict and provides all-round security guarantees. One objective should be a demilitarised and neutral Ukraine whose sovereign borders are respected and upheld. The British government should be using its permanent membership of the UN Security Council

to this end, working alongside China, instead of war-mongering and sending yet more military forces and armaments into eastern Europe and the Baltic states.

Sanctions against Russia will not only make any progress more difficult. They will also damage the well-being of the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and the rest of Europe including Britain, while denying vital grain supplies to the people of Africa and making Europe more dependent on energy supplies from US corporations and Middle East dictatorships. The giant oil and armaments corporations of the US, Britain and Western Europe are making enormous profits out of the war and sanctions.

The Communist Party of Britain stands in solidarity with all peoples and movements who demand an immediate end to military action in Ukraine. Pressure will be needed on NATO governments to stop arming the Zelensky regime and to push for a peace process. We will, therefore, take steps to increase the involvement of CP members, supporters and allies in CND, Stop the War and local peace groups. We will also oppose any further moves to silence anti-war voices whether in Britain, Ukraine or Russia.

Solidarity with the world's oppressed

We will continue to act in solidarity with the Palestinian people who face a particularly right-wing Israeli government which is intensifying the attacks on their national, human and civil rights. The extension of illegal settlements across the occupied West Bank is clearly intended to make a two-states future for Palestine and Israel impossible and underlines the case for escalating the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement in Britain and internationally.

British government legislation to outlaw BDS measures by local councils, universities and other public bodies must be opposed and repealed at the earliest opportunity. The Communist Party will enhance its contribution to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and seek ways of expressing solidarity with Palestine Action in its non-violent direct action campaign against arms companies supplying weapons to the Israeli state.

The Communist Party salutes the people of socialist Cuba and their Communist Party and pledges our continued solidarity with their fight for self-determination and sovereignty in face of the brutal US blockade which has received worldwide condemnation. We reaffirm our support for the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela and call for the broadest unity in the fight against imperialist destabilisation and sanctions. This requires an immediate end to state persecution of the Communist Party of Venezuela and its cadres. The Communist Party welcomes contemporary developments in Latin America, notably the election of progressive presidents and governments in Brazil, Chile and Colombia. Together with progressive-led governments in Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela this represents a continent-wide rejection of neoliberalism, the New Cold War and domination by US imperialism.

The Communist Party's international commission will carry forward its research, publication and solidarity work with communist parties, liberation movements and oppressed peoples around the world, not least in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

A peace policy for Britain

In 2022, after the outbreak of the Ukraine War, Britain joined the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) military project, itself a product of the militarisation of the EU in alignment with NATO as set out in the EU Lisbon Treaty (2009). Successive Conservative governments have committed themselves to a major nuclear rearmament programme and, in tandem with NATO and the PESCO project, a ring-fenced military budget of 2% or more of GDP. Globally, more than £2,000 billion is spent on the military, ten times more than the total spent on development aid to countries where war, famine and hunger kill people or force them to move in their millions. Britain is the world's sixth biggest military spender behind the US (which spends as much as the next nine states put together), China, Russia, Japan and Germany; the seventh biggest exporter of armaments behind the US, Russia, France, China, Germany and Italy; and one of only nine states in possession of nuclear weapons.

The Communist Party continues to stand unequivocally for the peaceful resolution of conflicts between states, not for escalation and war. We reject Britain's involvement in wars around the world, from

Libya to the former Yugoslavia, from Iraq to Afghanistan. We understand that these imperialist interventions are invariably to serve the interests of British and Western monopoly capital and to promote the geo-political and military strategy of US-led NATO. Invariably, too, they further destabilise the countries in which the military action takes place at great cost to the resident populations.

We support groups such as the Campaign Against the Arms Trade and Scientist Rebellion in their non-violent actions against arms companies, universities and arms fairs which facilitate the supply of weapons to repressive regimes. The Communist Party will continue to:

- Oppose the expansion of Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system and call for all its weapons of mass destruction to be scrapped.
- Demand a cut in British military spending from its projected 2.5% of GDP to at least the average European level (about 1.6%) and the closure of all US military installations in Britain.
- Campaign for the withdrawal of Britain from NATO and AUKUS and the dismantling of these aggressive Cold War bodies.
- Oppose all arms exports to repressive regimes and all state subsidies and other aid for the corrupt arms monopolies.
- Urge trade unions and academics to cooperate to produce plans setting out how the skills and technologies in Britain's armaments industry could be redeployed in socially useful production in such areas as healthcare, education, transport, civil rescue, land development and environmental protection here and abroad.

Britain's Communists will work to overturn the resolution passed at the 2022 TUC conference calling for increased 'defence' expenditure and arms exports to Ukraine, supporting NATO, cancelling previous TUC policy to diversify manufacturing into civilian production, and welcoming the prospect of AUKUS-related employment opportunities. Despite this setback, unions and trades councils succeeded in winning a resolution at the Scottish TUC conference in April 2023 opposing the formation of the AUKUS pact.

Strengthening and rebuilding the peace movement in the labour movement and working-class communities must now be a top priority for socialists and progressives across England, Scotland and Wales. To this end the Communist Party and its peace commission will place renewed emphasis on its work with CND and Stop the War, while also making the case for peace — and the costs of militarism and war — to be a major focus of campaigning for the People's Assembly. We must also use our position as part of the international Communist movement to:

- Coordinate anti-war actions internationally, as we have done against AUKUS.
- Promote the anti-imperialist analysis of the World Peace Council (WPC) with its slogan 'No to NATO, Yes to Peace'.
- Support and publicise the work for peace done by the Women's International
- Build the WPC's affiliate in Britain: the Peace Assembly and the Womens International Democratic Federation and its affiliate the National Assembly of Women..

ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND STATE CRISIS

Britain remains one of the world's major imperialist powers. Economically, its GDP continues to be the fifth biggest, while the stock of British direct investment abroad is larger than that of any other capitalist class except those of the US and the Netherlands; China has also overtaken Britain in total GDP, although this reflects the growth of Chinese enterprises which are mostly under state ownership or control. Politically, the UK is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and scores of other international bodies. Militarily, Britain is one of only nine states in possession of nuclear weapons, and a leading member of NATO with a close but subservient relationship with the US.

Nonetheless, British state-monopoly capitalism has entered a phase of intensified, all-round crisis. The neoliberal offensive of monetarism, deregulation, privatisation, marketisation and financialisation — which began in the late 1970s — has been exposed as the fraud that it always was. The disintegration of the neoliberal new order has laid bare the structural weaknesses and contradictions of British monopoly capitalism.

Far from boosting investment, productivity and innovation, neoliberal policies have increased the domination of City of London markets and institutions over the British economy with the disastrous consequences seen in the 2008-09 financial crash and subsequent economic recession. They have enriched the biggest monopoly corporations and undermined job security. Private sector investment in labour and technology remains low and the British capitalist class has recommenced the substantial export of capital overseas.

Following the 2008-09 crash, the costs of tax cuts for big business and the rich, nuclear rearmament, PFI, prestige infrastructure projects and Covid have produced record levels of state borrowing and debt. In an effort to boost the economy after the Covid collapse, new Prime Minister Truss introduced a mini-budget in September 2022 to cancel planned increases in

Corporation Tax, slash taxes on the wealthy and compensate the energy corporations for only doubling gas and electricity prices instead of trebling them. Facing a huge increase in government borrowing, the City markets turned against Treasury bonds, attacked sterling and pulled the rug from under Truss and chancellor Kwarteng. Truss was relying mostly on tax cuts and extra government borrowing to kick-start the economy, as more wealth for the wealthy 'trickled down' to the working class, albeit risking an inflationary spiral.

Replacement prime minister Sunak has reverted to a more orthodox neoliberal approach: putting the fight against inflation first, using interest rate rises where necessary, slashing working-class incomes and — going into the medium-term — cutting government borrowing and spending on education, social security, transport and local government (details to be announced after the General Election). He has reversed some of his predecessor's tax-cut policies, while extending the energy subsidy. Yet he still relies to some extent on unlikely levels of economic growth to reduce the levels of government borrowing and debt, which are running at around twice those set out in the EU Maastricht Treaty of 3% and 60% of GDP, respectively.

Both strategies were doomed to failure while the capitalist monopolies are free to hike up prices and cut labour costs in order to maximise profits. Interest rate rises can have inflationary as well as deflationary effects and should not be driven by City markets via a Bank of England beyond government control since 1997.

Moreover, Britain's financial and economic crisis has been joined by a prolonged political crisis. As a result of the 2016 referendum, the ruling capitalist class lost its clearly defined role inside the EU as a champion of economic neoliberalism and US-NATO foreign and military policy. Its Conservative, Labour and LibDem politicians were divided over whether or how to leave the formal structures of the EU while retaining as many advantages as possible of its pro-big business rules and policies. Five Conservative prime ministers later, no new comprehensive economic and political settlement with the EU has been reached.

Britain's membership of the new European Political Community initiated by French president Macron in 2022 represents another attempt to reforge relations with the EU, in this case to strengthen cooperation in economic, security (including immigration), energy and climate change matters. The EPC also includes former socialist countries and republics of eastern Europe and the FORMER Soviet Union as well as Turkey and the members of EFTA. The Truss government's lack of enthusiasm for the EPC and a comprehensive trade agreement with the EU also contributed to its downfall at the hands of the City of London.

Attempts to forge an exclusive economic relationship with the US have so far proved unsuccessful, although the 2023 Atlantic Declaration contains commitments to intensify cooperation in such areas as investment, new technology, clean energy, health security and the military. Britain's political crisis has been compounded by the threat to the very existence of the union posed by the rise of the SNP in Scotland and Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland. It remains to be seen whether the recent crisis in the SNP and its popular support has reduced this threat beyond the short-term, while the future course of Northern Ireland politics could be affected by the territory's position in EU-UK relations. The Communist Party of Britain maintains its support for the principle of Irish reunification, the terms of which are matters for the people of Ireland alone.

All these developments since 2008 — and especially since 2016 — are turning Britain's prolonged political crisis into a crisis of the British state. Many millions of people have lost trust in establishment politicians, show little or no enthusiasm for voting, and have lost confidence in parliaments, local government, the police service and the law to change things for the better.

The ruling-class response

How does the British ruling capitalist class propose to resolve its political and state crisis?

More repressive state measures against strikes and protest movements and an escalation of racist rhetoric against refugees and immigrants appear to be the order of the day. We are already in a period of class confrontation rather than class collaboration. In particular, the intention is to make the working class pay for this economic, financial, political and institutional crisis of British state-monopoly capitalism.

In circumstances of economic regression and corporate control of news and social media, scapegoating has become the staple of an increasingly authoritarian political culture.

Migrants, asylum seekers, the homeless, the elderly, young people and even — for pro-EU fanatics — the much-reviled English working class are demonised and blamed for 'broken Britain'. Baseless conspiracy theories — often promoted by wealthy far-right patrons — claim that secretive, sinister cabals lie behind the actions of ruling class governments. Some such theories target Jews and descend rapidly into the sewer of Holocaust denial.

As well as playing the anti-migrant and anti-trade union cards, successive Conservative governments have legislated to restrict rights to protest. The Inquiry into Undercover Policing has already indicated the lengths to which the state will go to monitor, infiltrate and sabotage non-

violent and legal protest movements in Britain. The evidence presented to it underlines the case for a full-scale public inquiry into the past and present anti-democratic activities of MI5, MI6 and the Special Branch, including the opening of all the state files still being withheld after 30 years.

There will be further efforts to rectify the damage done to ruling class interests by Brexit. All the post-Brexit free trade agreements together so far do not compensate for British capitalism's loss of easy access to European markets and their investment opportunities. In particular, the City of London wants the 'passporting' of financial services into the EU to be sorted. Sections of British big business want 'frictionless' trade with the EU restored and the position of Northern Ireland settled. Think-tanks, institutes and conclaves of pro- and formerly anti-EU politicians are discussing how to turn a growing rapprochement with the EU into some form of re-entry into a European common market, probably as the precursor to an application to rejoin the EU by 2035 or 2040.

It may be significant that the Sunak government has scaled down its legislative plans to scrap 4,000 retained EU laws and — except for its freports initiative — has refrained from utilising the benefits of Brexit by expanding state aid to industry, radically restructuring VAT, introducing a comprehensive system of agricultural support not based on high prices and stockpiling of food, or rebuilding an effective regional development policy in place of its patchy and politically biased 'levelling up' project.

For its part, the Communist Party will work with its allies to oppose all steps towards re-entry into a neoliberal, undemocratic, militarised EU or a European common market designed to protect the interests of the capitalist monopolies rather than those of workers and

consumers. What we need are governments in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff that are willing to utilise the sovereign powers over public ownership, domestic procurement and investment and thus realise the potential benefits of Brexit for the peoples of Britain.

The ruling class has also begun to prepare for the possible election of a Labour government.

Economically, capital exports have soared above pre-Covid levels since Labour overtook the Conservatives in opinion polls and then widened the gap between the two parties. A steady rise in interest rates — under the guise of fighting inflation — has been promoted by the Bank of England and the City, which would be used to impose fiscal 'discipline' on a government seeking to borrow and spend more at the expense of monopoly capitalist priorities. Politically, big business has been very receptive to the approaches by Keir Starmer and his Shadow Cabinet members, encouraging Labour's retreat from renationalisation, progressive taxation, social and welfare spending, a large green investment programme and media reform. A series of big corporate donations is making the party less dependent on trade union funding. Ideologically, the state and monopoly media are urging the Labour leadership to sever all connection with the personnel and policies of the Corbyn era, covering up the extent of the party's purge of the left — while at the same time warning readers that Starmer may well be a socialist wolf in sheep's clothing.

THE WORKING CLASS RESPONSE

The great strike wave

Millions of public sector workers have endured more than a decade of real-terms wage cuts. Having been praised for their courage and dedicated public service during the 2020-22 Covid crisis, they expected some financial recognition of their sacrifice in the post-pandemic pay reviews. Many private sector workers, too, have been squeezed in the years following the 2008 financial crash, their terms and conditions undermined by casualisation, zero-hour contracts and 'fire and rehire' practices. In fact, the entire working class needs a proper pay rise.

A real-terms wage cut of more 10% across the public sector was planned for 2022-23 by successive Conservative governments. It was thought that if the big privatised employers could defeat the RMT, ASLEF and the CWU in the earliest industrial battles, workers in the public sector would back down and not give their unions a strike mandate at the ballot box.

This was not to be, plunging a series of Conservative governments into crisis. In particular, the RMT strategy of one-day strikes helped the union win public support, preparing the ground for the big health, education and public and civil service unions to join the struggle for inflation-proof wages, for their jobs and for the quality of public services. In the private sector, too, militant action and high levels of solidarity saw workers winning substantial pay rises. Local disputes often have national and international dimensions such as that waged by GMB in the massive Amazon site in Coventry. Instead of being crushed, the unions were gaining confidence and taking on the government in what became the biggest and widest strike wave for more than 40 years. Public support grew as large picket-lines appeared in many towns and cities, the strikers were seen as fighting for us all.

The Conservative reaction in autumn 2022 was to ratchet up the struggle with draft legislation aimed at curbing transport strikes. This escalated to the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill 2023. The

Labour Party — whose front bench boycotts picket lines — is pledge to repeal any new law if in government. But this will not happen without substantial and concerted trade union pressure.

In the event of a Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) law being applied, trade union unity and solidarity will be essential in order to make it unworkable. Planned joint strike days will make it harder for one union at a time to be picked off and victimised. Many of the public sector wage agreements in 2022-23, although well above the initial offers of 1-2%, have still fallen below the rate of inflation. More strikes are likely. The next British government will still have to choose between raising taxes and cutting other budgets to concede inflation-proof public sector pay rises, or face more industrial action should workers and their unions reject a real-terms wage cut.

The current Labour Party leadership looks like it has already made its choice for the future: to side with employers against the workers. That could mean open class warfare should a future Labour government seek to operate the most reactionary anti-worker, anti-union legislation in over 100 years. It would also raise the question of the future trade union political link with the Labour Party.

During the great strike wave there has been some coordination, but also a significant degree of exceptionalism. Some unions have declared themselves to be a special case and so deliberately avoided solidarity. Nevertheless, local activists in many cases have linked the struggles, setting up shared picket lines, building solidarity and thereby helping to raise class consciousness above their own immediate battle. The continued resistance by some trade union leaders to coordinated industrial action is out of step with what their members want and expect. The latter understand that unity is needed to defeat this government and the employers who are doing its bidding. The Communist Party supports the call from unions for coordination to maximise the impact of industrial action, and to build solidarity and consciousness within and between unions and the wider public.

Lessons from the last year point to the need to escalate coordination and solidarity, to build unity between the unions in each sector and thereby prepare the ground for sectoral trade unionism. Steps towards this could include joint trade union committees and agreements at workplace and national levels. to be regularly reviewed for effectiveness and updated where necessary.

Ultimately, the trade union movement needs something similar to the Liaison Committee for the Defence of the Trade Unions (LCDTU) which brought together workplace activists and union officials in a series of militant initiatives from the late 1960s until the 1980s. In today's conditions, its structures may need to be different. The development of genuinely 'broad left' organisations in a growing number of unions, and their coordination across the movement, could contribute much to this process.

For a 'United Front' and the Left-Wing Programme

The post-Corbyn leadership of the Labour Party has turned its back on workers taking industrial action. This underlines the need to fill a political void in the labour movement by self-organised working-class leadership. The Communist Party has therefore led the call for a 'United Front' to coordinate and reinforce the battles against the ruling-class attack on people's economic, social and democratic rights and conditions.

In the course of this struggle, a United Front would build on the increase in trade union and class consciousness brought about by the escalating strikes since 2021. It would assist the development of a new political consciousness among organised workers and in their communities; their recognition would grow of the leading role of the monopoly corporations — both domestic and transnational — in the sustained and widening ruling-class offensive. Such a United Front will need to avoid the traditional sectarianism of many far-left groups. It should be built and led in unions, workplaces and communities by militant and politically conscious workers and their organisations. New forms of organising could emerge, perhaps along the lines of 'councils of action' and 'unemployed workers centres', bringing together trade union and campaigning groups on local issues related to poverty, housing, public services, local facilities, affordable energy, the right to food, community safety, anti-racism, women's rights and the environment.

Essential elements of this new United Front at local level will be trades union councils and 400 People's Assemblies. The defeat of the Corbyn-led movement by the allied forces of the state, the mass media and influential circles within the party itself has left many past and present activists demoralised and demobilised. The United Front can rebuild that mass movement, but this time more closely linked to the trade unions locally and with a focus on extra-parliamentary action.

Building a United Front can start in many places, from trade union executive committees to activists in all parts of the movement, including in networks and initiatives such as StrikeMap, making use of the media at our disposal. The *Morning Star* has already covered 'united front'-type events in reports and feature articles. It is well placed to convene a conference in 2024 to develop ideas, build networks and help to organise the steps towards a United Front based on a left wing programme. Any moves towards creating a new version of the LCDTU could play a central role in the preparations and proceedings of such a conference.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CRISIS

A world to save

The increasing impact of carbon emissions on our planet and its eco-systems are now plain to see. The early summer of 2023 saw parts of Europe experience unprecedented high temperatures, while North America and China have experienced the hottest temperatures ever recorded on earth. But for other parts of the world, environmental degradation is 'business as usual'. Widespread flooding in Asia and desertification in Africa increasingly make areas unable to sustain human habitation. Proper solutions need to be found for the ever-increasing displacement of people from the 'global south'. But capitalism, with its intrinsic drive to maximise profit, has no solution to the unfolding climate catastrophe while working people and their families around the world suffer the consequences.

In Britain, successive Conservative governments have offered no adequate way forward in the fight against global warming and environmental degradation. Against a powerful fossil fuel lobby, their policies are set to fail to achieve the commitment to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, while approving a new coal mine and North Sea oil exploration and blocking new wind power schemes. Labour has postponed its £28bn commitment to a 'green prosperity plan' and the Green Party has backtracked on its opposition to NATO and nuclear weapons.

Communist environmentalists have a key role to play in educating people both inside and outside the Party — particularly in encouraging trade unions to take action on the environment. The Communist Party must become more active in campaigning, nationally and locally. Our international links should be used both to learn from the experience of others and to join together in tackling the world's most urgent issue.

Therefore, the Communist Party will:

- Support initiatives such as the Campaign against Climate Change trade union group, explaining why capitalism cannot effectively deliver remedies for climate change and persuading that the green transition can create more than enough alternative job opportunities for those who work in polluting industries today.
- Support specific national and local environmental and clean-energy campaigns and continue to engage with groups such as the Climate Justice Coalition and XR (Extinction Rebellion) which share at least some of our views and perspectives.
- Monitor the reaction to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, '15-minute cities', etc, working with local communities to repel infiltration of campaigns by the far right.
- Strengthen the links with communists and environmentalists campaigning worldwide, particularly in areas where indigenous communities are finding solutions for preserving their environment against corporate, political and other climate spoilers.

Welfare not warfare

Our Welfare State has been under sustained attack since the Thatcher administration, but now its very existence is threatened.

The NHS suffers from chronic underfunding and understaffing and — especially in England — accelerating privatisation. Despite the heroic efforts of underpaid and overworked healthcare staff, it struggles to provide a universally high standard of healthcare. Hospital waiting lists have reached all-time record highs. In-work and all other social and welfare benefits are so low that they reinforce poverty and sickness and even generate mental health problems. Meanwhile, private sector profit in health and social care is subsidised by the current system which encourages a low-wage culture. Housing benefit does not cover the rental costs for the majority of people leading to debt, eviction and homelessness. In consequence the vulnerable are dying in increasing numbers from poverty, ill health and the lack of appropriate, properly funded and timely provision of services.

Therefore the Communist Party will prioritise the development of up-to-date policies for health, welfare and social and elderly care, highlighting the reactionary social policies of successive governments and our left and progressive alternatives. These include higher levels of indexed social benefits, a statutory minimum wage set at two-thirds of median male earnings, and strict enforcement of minimum and equal pay laws, rather than pursuing the unrealistic and potentially divisive demand for a Universal Basic Income.

To inform and strengthen the fight to save the Welfare State including the NHS, the Communist Party will also promote a vision of what a properly-funded, comprehensive, integrated and cradle-to-grave welfare state could look like

Housing for people not profit

Since the Conservatives were first elected to office in 2010, we have witnessed a growing housing crisis in Britain.

Homelessness has increased rapidly since 2010, reversing all the progress made under the Blair/Brown governments owing to its reliance on the private rented sector to accommodate the homeless. This became unsustainable after housing benefit was frozen in 2010 while private rents continued to be unregulated. A rampant and largely unregulated private sector has locked almost a whole generation out of home ownership and secure public sector tenancies; escalating interest rates

and a mortgage crisis drive even relatively well-paid households to the brink of poverty, repossession and bankruptcy.

The Communist Party's Housing Charter, Homes for All, sets out the Communist Party's strategy to end bad housing and homelessness, which includes proposals to:

- Reform the housing finance system to invest in affordable council and social housing for all who need it.
- Prevent banks, developers and owners of empty properties from restricting the supply of low-cost housing.
- Ban the sale of public land to private developers, with the compulsory purchase of development land lying idle in order to profit from its increasing value.
- Refurbish and bring structurally-sound empty homes back into use.
- Return transferred council housing stock to local authority control and ownership and abolish the 'Right to Buy' council houses in England, in line with Scotland and Wales.
- Restore local councils' direct labour and design departments, creating secure jobs and apprenticeships for construction workers.
- Draw up housing plans in consultation with trade unions and local communities, not driven by the priorities of developers and landowners.
- Build a truly independent tenants' movement linked to the trade unions and the People's Assembly.
- Reintroduce private-sector rent controls and abolish no-fault evictions.

The Communist Party will work more systematically on housing issues with the People's 500 Assembly, trades councils, tenants' organisations and local communities (especially those earmarked for 'demolition and regeneration').

Women's emancipation

Disproportionately affected by austerity and debt, working-class women and their families have their lives blighted by poverty. Women's oppression in Britain and in capitalist societies worldwide is further intensified by rising sex-based violence against women and girls, continual attempts to restrict their reproductive rights and by financial cuts to the health services and safe spaces they need and use. Women's rights in the workplace and in society are also under sustained attack.

- Reform the housing finance system to invest in affordable council and social housing for all who need it.
- Prevent banks, developers and owners of empty properties from restricting the supply of low-cost housing.
- Ban the sale of public land to private developers, with the compulsory purchase of development land lying idle in order to profit from its increasing value.
- Refurbish and bring structurally-sound empty homes back into use.
- Return transferred council housing stock to local authority control and ownership and abolish the 'Right to Buy' council houses in England, in line with Scotland and Wales.
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- Reintroduce private-sector rent controls and abolish no-fault evictions.

The Communist Party, as the only labour movement organisation with a Marxist-feminist understanding of the origin and nature of women's oppression, has a vital role to play in the fight for women's liberation. We recognise that women are oppressed as a biological sex and that the source of their oppression is class exploitation.

The Party's Women and Class analysis and our policies on women's rights and sex and gender have received enormous support, particularly across the political left. This has led to not only new members for the Communist Party, but also a renewed optimism and sense of potential in women's mobilisation. The need for a women's movement to combat sexism and misogyny is more vital than ever.

The widespread respect for our analysis empowered communist women to convene a very successful meeting of leading women activists in July 2023 to agree the potential benefits and the process of forging a unified women's liberation movement in Britain for emancipation and equal rights. Communist women and their allies will build on this historic initiative as well as strengthening the National Assembly of Women as Britain's affiliate to the Women's International Democratic Federation.

Anti-racism, anti-fascism

The 'stop the boats' campaign by the Conservative government and large sections of the mass media against asylum seekers and other immigrants can only raise tensions and threaten race relations as millions of people confront rising bills, poverty, unemployment, poor housing and deteriorating services. To its disgrace, the Labour Party leadership refuses to campaign against racist policies and racist laws, allowing the scapegoating of ethnic minorities to continue largely unchallenged except on grounds of 'efficiency'.

The Communist Party will continue to support all broad-based initiatives to combat racism, working with trade unions, the TUC anti-

racist network, Stand Up to Racism, Hope Not Hate, migrants' organisations and others. We are also committed to build the new Campaign for Anti-Racist Immigration and Nationality Laws — and for their anti-racist alternatives — launched by our party in alliance with the Indian Workers Association (GB), the Bangladeshi Workers Council and Caribbean Labour Solidarity and since endorsed by Jewish Voice for Labour.

Communists will continue to challenge all forms of racism, including its anti-Gypsy, Roma and Traveller manifestations, and support the work undertaken on reparations for slavery. We will increase efforts internally and in the wider labour and progressive movements to identify and combat antisemitism (whether unwitting or intentional). This will include rolling out our new antisemitism education programme and the vigorously rebuttal in our social media of Holocaust 'relativism' and denial.

The failure of the British National Party's electoral strategy has turned some fascists back to confrontational and violent street activity. Fascists must be opposed on every front and, wherever possible, denied a platform by mass activity. As an internationalist party, we are also committed to fighting fascism worldwide and will intensify our work to this end with Communist and workers parties internationally and their organisations domiciled in Britain.

It is important to commemorate and draw lessons from struggles against fascism and racism internationally and in the past. Therefore, for example, the Communist Party will seek to increase its cooperation and involvement with the International Brigades Memorial Trust. As well as helping to organise major events to mark the Battle of Cable Street, we will liaise with other anti-fascists to initiate broad-based celebrations of other victories over fascist mobilisations in England, Scotland and Wales.

POLITICAL PROSPECTS

Real power through progressive federalism

The Communist Party advocates a progressive federal structure of governance with self-determination, solidarity, progressive wealth distribution, working-class unity and equal status as the foundation for future relations between the nations and regions of Britain.

Political developments since 2021 underline the need for the labour movement, the left and even the SNP and Plaid Cymru supporters to consider the case for progressive federalism in Britain.

Firstly, there is the increased possibility that the General Election will return a Labour government to office in London as pressure grows inside that party for a federal solution to the national question in Britain. The Labour leadership must adopt such a policy if it is to win back more of its lost support in Scotland and secure a clear majority at Westminster. Secondly, problems and divisions in the SNP in particular, but also in Plaid Cymru, could adversely affect their election prospects and thus decrease the likelihood of Scottish and Welsh independence in the near future.

At the same time, there is anger in Scotland and Wales that important powers retrieved from Brussels as the result of Brexit have not been devolved to the two national parliaments in line with the devolution settlement. EU rules limiting the right of devolved and local government to award public procurement contracts locally no longer apply, but Tory policy has been to retain these powers centrally in order to ensure that big business from across Britain and wider afield can continue to snap up most large contracts.

Furthermore, the UK Internal Market Act (2020) has recentralised industrial assistance powers previously devolved to the Welsh and Scottish parliaments and governments. The peoples of those countries should not have to opt for independence before having the powers and resources needed to intervene against monopoly capitalist domination of their economies in order to sustain economic activity, development and employment.

Welsh Communists demand greater freedom from Westminster and Whitehall for the Welsh government and local authorities to raise low-interest funds and to give preference to supporting jobs and businesses in local communities. Scottish Communists aim to win wider public understanding of the critical state of Scotland's productive economy, with its heavy reliance on military expenditure. They seek to expose the coercive policing role in the Scottish economy played by the G7, NATO and the EU, warning against the consequences of continued corporate looting of Scotland's natural assets.

An all-Britain parliament elected by proportional representation should have jurisdiction over foreign affairs, defence, macro-economic policy and national insurance, the power to raise taxes on wealth and income and the responsibility to redistribute income among the nations and regions on the basis of social need. National parliaments in Scotland, Wales and England together with English regional assemblies should have the powers to raise revenue and specifically to advance democratic control through public ownership, state investment and public procurement.

In place of the House of Lords, a federal upper chamber elected by the national parliaments and regional assemblies should have responsibility for upholding national and regional rights and revising all legislation.

A class-based policy of progressive federalism would counter the bogus 'devolution' and corrupt 'levelling-up' agenda of Conservative central governments, which centralises power in the hands of directly elected mayors and their cabinets while favouring the interests of big business.

Continuing to build alliances with anti-neoliberal elements in Scotland, Wales and the English regions, mobilising working class communities, strengthening links with trades unions and trades councils ... all are necessary in the campaign for more devolved powers, public-sector control of utilities, an active industrial policy involving state aid and local democratic control, including community wealth-building and public-sector investment.

General Election perspectives

There remains a prolonged, profound crisis of working-class representation in Britain's political system. This, of course, has always been the intention of the ruling class. Since late 2021, the Labour Party has overtaken the Conservatives in the opinion polls and its lead has multiplied to between 15 and 20 percentage points; support for the LibDems, Greens and right-wing Reform UK is stagnant at 10% or less. In the past, a Labour lead of this size would have been enough to produce a majority or minority Labour government at a General Election. However, the Starmer leadership's reliance on anti-Conservative feeling rather than campaigning for popular left and progressive policies makes Labour's prospects uncertain.

Nevertheless, the Communist Party is clear that a Labour victory at the forthcoming General Election would be the best possible outcome in the interests of workers and their families. It is the only possible alternative to a Conservative victory and a further period of very reactionary right-wing government. A Labour victory — and therefore a Conservative defeat — would raise working-class morale and demands. While carrying the risk of raising people's expectations that will almost certainly be dashed — as on almost every occasion in the past — it also offers the opportunity to win progressive reforms if the working-class and progressive movements can mobilise mass pressure on a Labour government as in the 1960s and 1970s.

Putting mass pressure on a Labour government from the left would be to raise the political class struggle to a higher level than fighting an extended rearguard action against a ruling-class offensive led from the right by a victorious Conservative government. In the former case, an invigorated United Front could go on the offensive for the policies of its left-wing programme, fighting to prevent the Labour government's capitulation to the forces of monopoly capital.

However, the biggest barrier to a Labour victory is the capture of the party's leadership, apparatus and parliamentary representation by the right. Moreover, this right-wing leadership is determined to purge the party of any association with class struggle and socialism. This even extends to the repudiation of such popular policies as a wealth tax on the super-rich, higher taxes on corporate profits and capital gains, and public ownership of public transport, energy and the Royal Mail. But rather than capitalist nationalisation, with its compensation for wealthy shareholders and subsidies for big business, the Communist Party calls for progressive, democratic nationalisation which takes full account of the interests of workers, consumers, local communities and the environment.

Scottish Labour's dogged commitment to neoliberal policies and its failure to make the case for progressive federalism over the past 25 years have not helped it take full advantage of the recent dip in the SNP's fortunes. In Wales, Plaid Cymru's potential for further advance has been halted by Welsh Labour's social-democratic policies, its willingness to govern by consensus with Plaid Cymru and the LibDems, and its commitment to winning extra powers for Wales on the road to full federalism. It remains to be seen whether the problems and changes in the leadership of the nationalist and Labour parties in Wales and Scotland have a significant or longer-term impact on their electoral support.

Labour's pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist, neoliberal and timid reformist policies fail to inspire millions of working-class and young electors to vote Labour. As local and parliamentary elections have indicated, many are more likely to vote LibDem or Green — if they vote at all.

Trade unions, the left and campaigning organisations must put do all in their power to compel Labour to adopt a more radical manifesto, while resisting any temptation to reopen the question of Brexit, the EU Single Market and a second referendum that lost Labour 52 parliamentary seats in 2019.

Wanting a Labour victory next time would normally mean urging people to vote for its candidates wherever they have a reasonable chance of being elected (in 2019 Labour came first or second in more than 500 seats), except where there's the opportunity to vote Communist. However, this should not mean supporting those Labour candidates who have played a prominent part in turning the party to the right, attacking and excluding Jeremy Corbyn and other left MPs, instigating or praising the anti-left purge and advocating neoliberal and pro-war policies. In such cases, the Communist Party executive committee will elaborate its alternative position in consultation with our

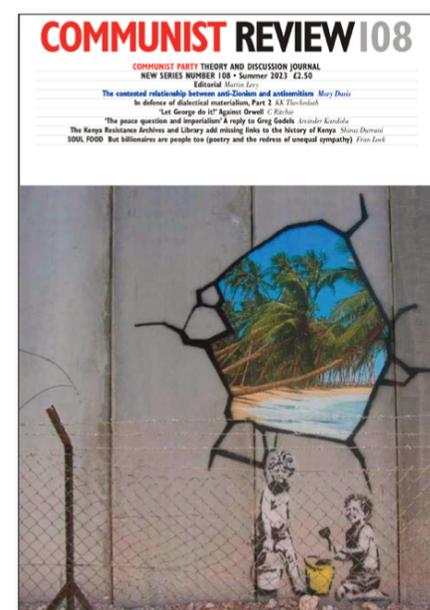
party's district and nation committees.

In the 100 or so seats where the LibDem candidate is best placed to defeat the Conservative, the Communist Party will call for a vote for a left and non-sectarian candidate wherever possible. We cannot help sow illusions in a LibDem party now dominated by neoliberal, anti-working class, pro-EU and pro-nuclear weapons positions.

Furthermore, the Communist Party cannot urge a vote for SNP and Plaid Cymru candidates whose interest is not to win and sustain a progressive government in Britain. Nor can we support any Green Party candidate who endorses the party's betrayal of its anti-NATO stance.

Whichever party or coalition forms the next British government, a stronger and more influential Communist Party will — together with a militant United Front — be essential in order to help provide strategy and direction for the working-class movement and the left. That is why the Communists will contest as many constituencies in the forthcoming General Election as resources reasonably allow in order to raise the red flag for public ownership, public sector housing, a wealth tax, price and capital controls, an end to fossil fuel exploitation in the transition to clean and green energy, the repeal of all racist and anti-union laws, progressive federalism, nuclear disarmament and opposition to NATO.

No Cold War — fight for peace!
Build a United Front of working-class organisations!
For a stronger Communist Party
and Young Communist League!



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COMMUNIST PARTY THEORY AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL
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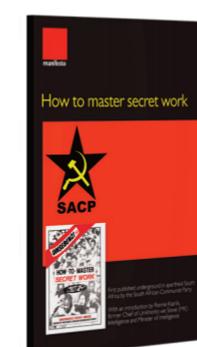
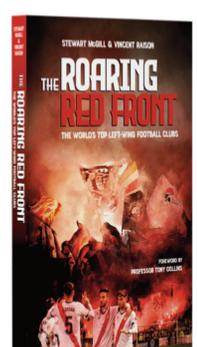
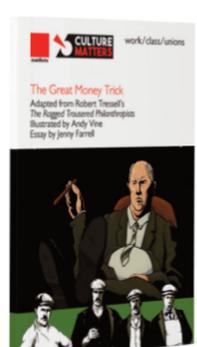
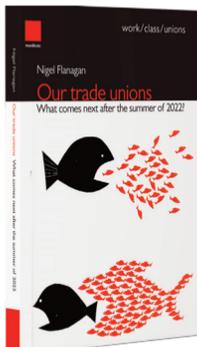
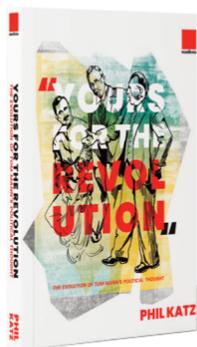
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EVENTS & IDEAS & ACTION

‘Dress suitably in short skirts and sitting boots, leave your jewels and gold wands in the bank, and buy a revolver.’
Constance Markievicz was an Irish revolutionary socialist, and the first woman elected to the Westminster Parliament, She was Minister of Labour in the first Dáil, becoming the first female cabinet minister in Europe.

New from www.manifestopress.coop



Manifesto Press is transitioning from a book publishing coop at the service of the working class and liberation movements to a media hub that builds on a 12 year back catalogue of books and e-pubs.

With an enduring and mutually profitable partnership with the *Morning Star* – every book, e-pub or article of a part sold through the *Morning Star* website generates a 25 per cent boost to the paper's income – to our **podcasts** available on Spotify, Google, Amazon and YouTube, Manifesto Press brings you up to date, relevant and exciting contributions to the politics of resistance to monopoly capitalism and war.

Latest books include *Yours for the revolution* Phil Katz's pioneering account of Labour pioneer Tom Mann's life and thought; Nigel Flanagan's runaway success *Our trade unions: what comes next after the summer of 2022* and John Ellison's *World War Two: a peoples' war?*

Recent books include Andy Vine's

cartoon version of *The Great Money Trick* from Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (with an essay by literary critic Jenny Farrell) and Andrew Murray's update on *The Empire and Ukraine*.

Follow the **Roaring Red Front** – Manifesto's dedicated football YouTube channel documenting the politics and history of world football and the left and hear *Morning Star* sports editor Bella Katz and Stewart McGill.

And sign up for the Roaring Red Front's **Football Supporters' Charters** at theroaringredfront.com

Make a date at **Marx Memorial Library** for Friday 27 October for the launch of our Workers and Students Guides.

Based on Stewart McGill's column in *Unity!* the guides offer a clear marxist leninist analysis of economic problems in capitalism.

Tune in to Manifesto Press podcasts series with our authors and look out for the Manifesto Press Well Read Well Red book tour events with special offers and a chance to meet our authors.

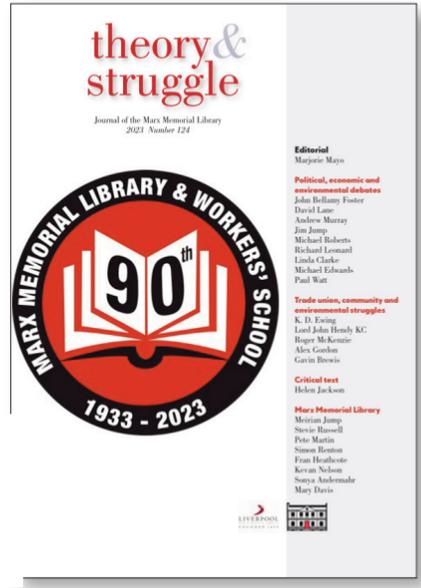
In partnership with the makers of the forthcoming film **London Recruits** – the story of the young people from Britain who worked underground in South Africa to aid the anti apartheid movement – Manifesto has published two books.

The first is the book version of the authoritative study guide to the *London Recruits*. The second is *How to master secret work* originally published underground in South Africa to aid the militants of the ANC and its armed wing.

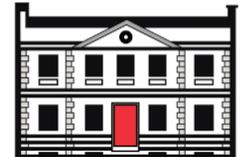
With an introduction by Ronnie Kasrils, the ANC chief of intelligence and later minister of intelligence who organised the *London Recruits* it provides a fascinating insight into the struggle against apartheid.



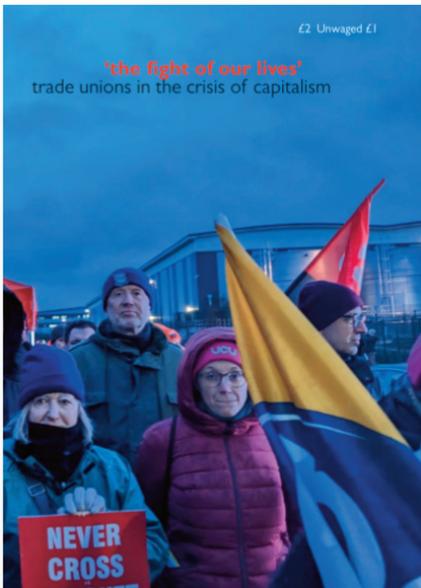
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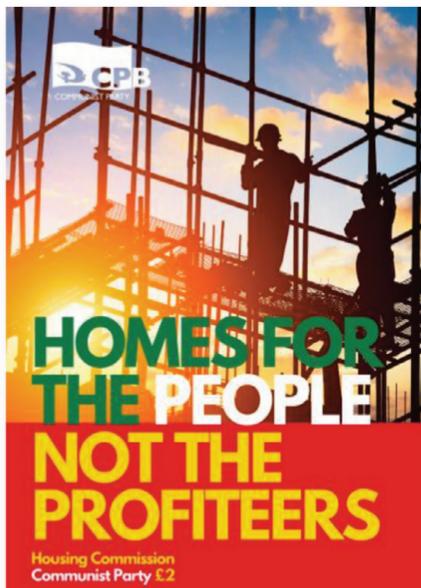
Theory & Struggle is the annual journal of the Marx Memorial Library published by Liverpool University Press. It features articles that grapple with debates taking place within Marxist circles as well studying critical developments in the labour and progressive movements in Britain and internationally, including movements for gender equality, for racial equality and for peace.
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Marx Memorial Library and Workers School Open House Open Day
 Saturday, 16 September 2023 - 11am
 Explore our historic building: join us for feature tours at 11am, 12pm, 1pm and 2pm.
 Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London, EC1R 0DU. 02072531485
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▲ An updated edition of *the fight of our lives* is now available in digital and print
 Author of the best-selling Manifesto Press book *Our Trade Unions* Nigel Flanagan says this pamphlet is clarity – in itself a massive achievement. It is recommended for all working class and trade union activists. a
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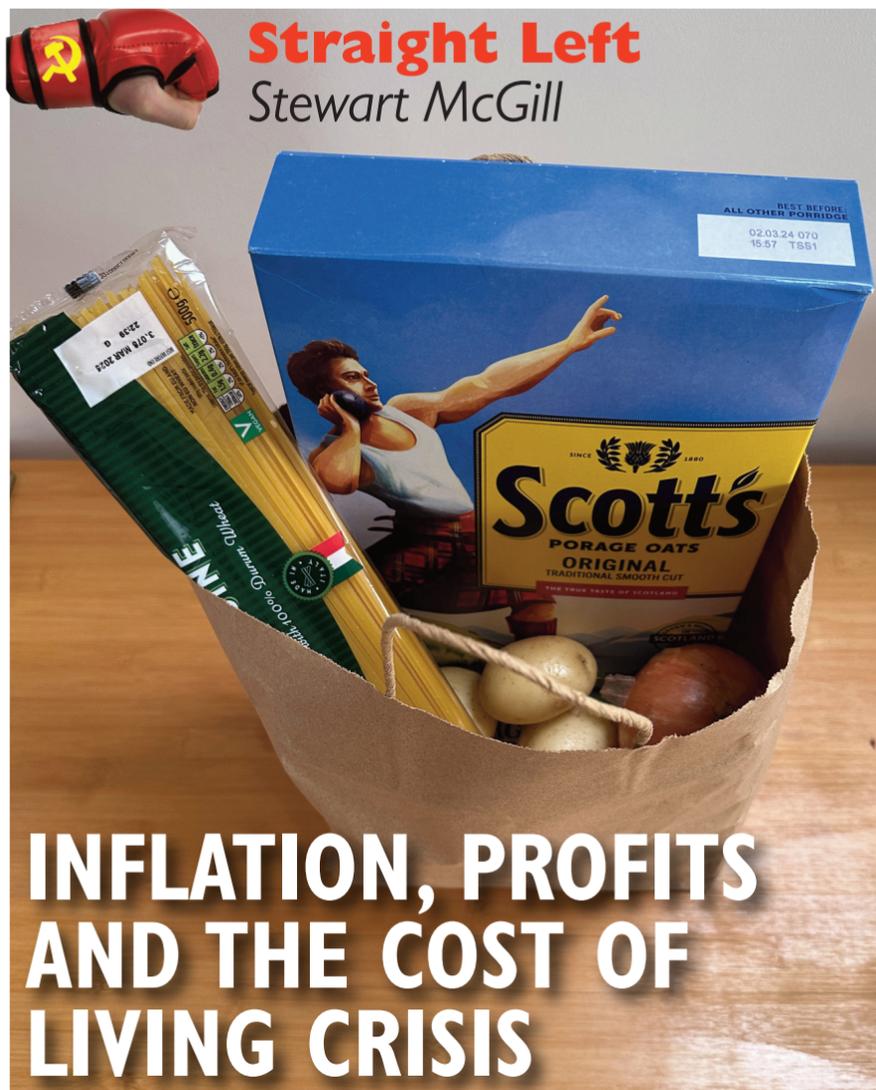
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EXPLOITATION & PROFIT

No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

Karl Marx *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* 1848



Straight Left
Stewart McGill

INFLATION, PROFITS AND THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

RATHER THAN SIMPLY expose the causes of the inflation, the working class movement needs to put forward solutions that would limit the impact of inflation on the poorest and forestall the impact of an inflationary cycle, particularly by limiting the profiteering of energy firms.

Increasing oil/gas/electricity prices provoke and perpetuate price inflation across the economy as they form largely unavoidable costs for the delivery of goods and services. This is why it is important to focus on meaningful caps on energy prices, not just giving money to consumers to subsidise energy firms' profits.

Pre-tax profits for the first six months of 2022 at Harbour Energy, the North Sea's biggest, soared to almost \$1.5 billion, up from \$120 million. This was all down to the global increase in wholesale gas prices, nothing that Harbour had done to improve their business.

Harbour said it would generate up to \$1.7 billion in spare cash in 2022, paving the way for more acquisitions and larger dividends. It asked shareholders to allow it to buy back 15 percent of its shares. We said at the time:

Half of Britain's gas use comes from North Sea producers. If their prices were cut back to where they were before the recent hikes in global prices, 50 per cent of the problem vanishes.

It didn't have to be this way

We need to regulate and take the big firms into public ownership. British Gas owner Centrica will hand £450 million to shareholders in a new buyback scheme after a nine-fold increase in net profits to £969 million from £98 million in 2022.

Inflation in Spain is currently 2.3% compared to Britain's 6.9%. Spain cut VAT on food, introduced travel subsidies and by the middle of 2023 had boosted the state's coffers by €1.454 billion through a windfall tax. It plans to raise a total of around €6 billion from the temporary taxes in 2023 and 2024.

Importantly Spain cut the link between domestic electricity prices and gas prices.

These are all policies that Unity's Straight Left column recommended at the start of the crisis.

Real wages (wages after inflation) have fallen seven per cent since 2008, but the economy has grown four per cent over the same period: Big business pocketed the difference.

The first of the Manifesto Press Workers' and Student Guides, *The Top Ten Economic Myths* says if real wages are falling when the economy is growing then the share of capital is rising: don't blame the workers for price inflation.

According to the Competition and Markets Authority, since 2008, average price mark-ups of the UK's biggest firms have risen from 58 per cent to 82 per

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Millions are being pushed below the breadline as food prices soar, with many struggling to feed themselves and their families.

Food prices increased by 19.1 per cent in the 12 months to March 2023, the sharpest jump since August 1977.

One in seven people in Britain faced hunger last year because they did not have enough money, according to a report published by food bank charity the Trussell Trust.

This equates to 11.3 million people and blamed a dysfunctional social security system, as well as the cost of living crisis.

cent. Sainsbury's profits doubled to £730 million in 2022 on the back of rocketing food prices. By taking advantage and hiking prices Unilever profits last year rose by 20% despite flat sales.

The failure of bourgeois economics and the media

With a few exceptions, the failures of the economics profession and the media to inform and educate the public about the root causes of the recent inflationary crises were depressingly predictable.

In a recent US survey, more than half of retailers admitted raising prices by more than their increase in costs – with larger firms most likely to be doing so. The narrative about inflation offers a convenient smokescreen for fattening margins, as some investors brazenly admit. One asset manager said: 'What we really want to find are companies with pricing power. In an inflationary environment, that's the gift that keeps on giving.'

At the end of 2021, Morgan Stanley said that workers' share of corporate revenues had fallen for two decades to the benefit of owners and investors, and that companies should shift cash from profits to pay, thereby ending a period of corporate excess and bringing a return to profit margins seen in the 1990s.

Even the IMF recently pointed out the role of profiteering in the cost-of-living crisis. Citing research by Isabella Weber at the University of Massachusetts on the IMF blog, the organisation stated in June 2023: 'Rising corporate profits account for almost half the increase in Europe's inflation over the past two years as companies increased prices by more than spiking costs of imported energy.'

This was hardly reported by the media, and was dismissed by the *The Economist* website with typical condescension and lack of cogency. Instead of tackling the issue, they recited the mantra that inflation resulted from "too much money chasing too few goods."

This specious, mechanical nonsense exculpates the corporates who made the pricing decisions that gave us the inflationary crisis, shifts the blame onto governments and implies the need for more austerity.

The latter, like the Bank of England's hiking of interest rates in response to an inflation largely caused by price gouging, represents a disastrous set of policies more about keeping labour under control than implementing real solutions. This recalls the early 1980s: the 'Volcker Shock' and Thatcher's interest rate hikes were about disciplining labour and breaking the trade union movement, not solving the underlying problems of the economy.



▲ **Manifesto Press has published the Workers' and Students Guide Series: which collect Stewart McGill's writings on inflation, the political economy of inflation and the class struggle. They are mostly drawn from the Straight Left column**

EVENTS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Paxton Chadwick Memorial Lecture
Monday 16 September 7pm, the East of England district of the Communist Party is hosting its Paxton Chadwick Memorial Lecture and is proud to host speakers, historian activist David Horsley and Morning Star international editor Roger McKenzie, to discuss 'Black Communist history and the struggle against racism today.'
<https://tinyurl.com/MortonOliverSchool>.

Commemorate the Calton Weavers

Sunday September 24 1pm
Calton Burial Ground, Abercromby Street, Glasgow G40 2DD.
A day of talks, walks, music and entertainment to mark Scotland's first major industrial dispute. The 1787 strike by weavers of the Calton area, for better conditions and wage rises, was brutally repressed. It pre-dates Tolpuddle by a half century.
Book Eventbrite tickets <https://rb.gy/06uw3>.

50 years since the fascist coup in Chile

Thursday, 14 September, 7pm
Marx Memorial Library
A panel discussion on the anniversary of General Pinochet's CIA backed coup against Chile's democratically elected socialist government in 1973.
Panelists: Kate Clark (former *Morning Star* correspondent); Carlos Insunza Rojas (CC CP Chile and CUT Central Committee) & Carlos Patricio Gonzalez (CP Chile in Britain)
Register <https://tinyurl.com/yc8pbj9t>

The selected poems of Clive Branson Online & onsite book launch

Thursday, 28 September, 7pm
The Selected Poems of Clive Branson brings together the best of his surviving poetry. Passionate and committed, it's a first-hand account of the most violent years of the twentieth-century – Britain in the Slump, Spain during the civil-war, Fascist prisons, the London Blitz, the cultural shock of India and its poverty, the war against Japan – recorded with a painterly eye and a communist faith in the power of the people.

Richard Knott is a writer and poet. He has written extensively on aspects of modern history, including the experience of war artists *The Sketchbook War*; war correspondents *The Trio*; and most recently the surveillance of writers and artists by the Security Services over three decades: *The Secret War Against the Arts*. He has also published two collections of poetry.

Andy Croft's books include *Red Letter Days*, *The Years of Anger*, *Red Sky at Night* (with Adrian Mitchell), *Not Just a Game* (with Sue Dymoke), *Ghost Writer*, *Great North, 1948* (with Martin Rowson), *A Modern Don Juan* (with NS Thompson), *Letters to Randall Swingler* and *The Sailors of Ulm*.
Register at <https://tinyurl.com/3kvwrvaj>

international bulletin

THE PCV WILL NOT BOW TO JUDICIAL ASSAULT*

PAUL DOBSON IN CARACAS
VENEZUELA

IT'S UNFATHOMABLE, but, unfortunately, it's true. Amidst the deepening class struggle and tumbling poll numbers, Nicolas Maduro's United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) have pulled the trigger on the long-denounced assault plan against the Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV), ordering the Supreme Court to brush the Constitution, laws and even democracy itself aside to impose an ad hoc leadership of people who aren't even PCV members!

In legal terms, sentence 1160 throws out the PCV's Central Committee, Politburo and General Secretary elected by its branches at its November 2022 Congress and implants obscure PSUV-loyalists with social media accounts, newly printed PCV clothing and plenty of state financing in their place – provoking widespread condemnation of this attempted coup against Venezuela's oldest party.

It likewise guarantees that the PCV's highjacked electoral ticket will beam Maduro's face for next year's presidentials and opens the door for the seizure of all PCV assets and persecution of its members.

It was passed denying PCV the right to a defence and without even looking at the facts, let alone the multiple and evidential lies in the file, including that the PSUV's political mercenaries are "PCV members".

The (real) PCV has vowed to continue its struggle, both in the courts and the streets – where it has firmly supported



PCV NO SE DOBLEGARÁ ANTE ASALTO JUDICIAL

Campaña sucia para vincular al PCV con María Corina Machado, p.5
Una década terrible: un balance de la política laboral, p.6
Drama social: Salud pública y élites políticas en Venezuela, p.12
Justicia misógina: El caso de Naibelys Noel, p.8
Centenario del natalicio de Alberto Lovera, p.10
Muere el poeta palestino Zakaria Mohammed, p.11

massive teachers, doctors and industrial protests demanding wages and pensions above the government's (again, unfathomable) £3 minimum monthly wages, as well as calling out devastating rollbacks in collective bargaining, workplace health and safety, and trade union liberties which force the workers to bear the brunt of both the illegal US sanctions and the government's neoliberal turn and rampant corruption.

It seems we don't have to look very far to discover why Maduro is seeking to (try to) silence the communists.

PAUL DOBSON IS A MEMBER OF THE PCV'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE

* The headline on last week's *Tribuna Popular*

SPAIN'S KING CHOOSES PP

ALAN MCGUIRE IN MADRID
SPAIN

ALBERTO NÚÑEZ FEIJÓO, leader of the Popular Party (PP) has been chosen by the king to form a government, despite not having a majority even with support from ultra right party Vox.

With that said the PP are turning to the 'other party of state' the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE). Feijóo met with the current prime minister Pedro Sánchez in a bid to secure his parties abstention which has happened before.

The Popular Party wants to govern 'as the most voted party' in return for signing six pacts of state and the promise of elections in two years. The six proposals are to 'maintain the integrity of the state' and is framed in the terms of the 1976 Moncloa Pacts even using a photo from this point in the Spanish transition to the present democracy.

This pacts include: Democratic Regeneration, Welfare State, Economic Sanitation, Families, the National Water Pact and the Territorial Pact.

All of the above aim to strengthen the bi-partisan politics that came before 2011 and reduce any influence of the independence parties of the Basque county and Catalonia, play on the current strong wave of Spanish nationalism and marginalise the radical left.

Sánchez has rejected this offer for now. Yet, if Feijóo cannot get the extra seats he needs by his investiture date at the end of September, then Sánchez will have until December to rally his forces. Despite not having negotiated with Sumar yet, many are hoping to avoid repeat elections in January.

Bourgeois electoral politics is having an impact on both extra parliamentary forces to the left and the labour movement. They appear lost. Is everybody demotivated or is being a junior member in the coalition making us soft?

That all said, the feminist movement continues to be one of the biggest forces outside of Congress. It can still rally its forces in the face of macho football bosses, proving the much needed strength that we need to see right now.

ALAN MCGUIRE REPORTS FOR UNITY! FROM MADRID



ISRAELI APARTHEID REINFORCED

ROBERT WILKINSON
ISRAEL

PLANS BY Israel's ultra-right finance minister Bezalel Smotrich to divert funding from Israel's education ministry and interior ministry to benefit the illegal West Bank settlements and outposts are a blatant example of the racist priorities of the right-wing coalition government. Much needed funding for the Arab municipalities in Israel and east Jerusalem has been held back, leading to calls for a general strike in protest and threats of not opening the schools when term begins.

At the start of August thousands of Jews and Arabs marched in Tel Aviv (pictured above) in protest of the government's inaction in the face of the violent crime wave in the Arab communities that has resulted in over 150 deaths so far this year, compared with 111 in the whole of 2022. Later in the month, protestors set up mock graves outside the offices of Smotrich's Religious Zionist Party in Jerusalem.

Knesset Member Ahmad Tibi of the Hadash-Ta'al Joint List demonstrating with other Knesset members said that 'In Israel, there is a strong and professional police force. If it wanted to, it could defeat crime in Arab society, but it does not want to'. He contrasted the defeat of crime in Jewish cities 'but the government relates to Arab communities as a backyard. When Arabs murder other Arabs, it has not moved the government in past years, especially not this one.'

The massive protests against the judicial overhaul to reduce the Supreme Court's ability to block government policy highlighted the lack of accountability of the Knesset majority. A day after the government's victory over the 'reasonableness law', new apartheid legislation was passed that enabled an increasing number of Jewish communities to exclude non-Jews based on 'social and cultural cohesion'.

Previous racist restrictions contained in the 'Village Committees Law' of 2010 were limited to specific areas in Israel (Galilee and the Negev) and to communities of fewer than 400 households.

The recent amendment expands these limitations to 700 households immediately, with further application to wider areas of Israel. Israeli press outlet *Haaretz* reported that the original law enacted in 2010 was intended to circumvent a Supreme Court ruling that banned communities from selling land to Jews only, so they made committees that could exclude Palestinians on the basis of a supposed lack of 'social suitability'.

Israel's Basic Law of 2018 (the nation-state law) declared that 'The State views the development of Jewish settlement as a national value, and shall act to encourage and promote its establishment and consolidation'. Joint List Knesset Member Aida Touma-Sliman denounced the recent decision: 'this is one of the most naked and clear of the apartheid laws... the lands that you don't want us to use. They were mostly confiscated from our forefathers, from the villages that were destroyed in 1948, from people who were expelled from their homeland. And not only did the state steal the lands, it bars us from using them.'

ROBERT WILKINSON IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION MIDDLE EAST GROUP



Fifty years ago, on 11 September, a CIA-sponsored coup by the Chilean military overthrew the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende.

This year comrade Eric Campos, leader of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Chile, (CUT) is at our TUC.

A wide range of events have been organised to mark the anniversary of the military coup against the Popular Unity government and people of Chile, including a conference involving Chilean activists arranged by the Communist Party.

Most events fall either side of 11 September.
<https://chile50years.uk/event/>

Sheffield, Saturday 9 September

Communist Party general secretary Robert Griffiths will be guest speaker at a rally and march to be held in the City Hall.
<https://tinyurl.com/4f6mca2k>

Salford, Sunday 10 September

Chile: 50 years of resistance and solidarity. A day conference with film and speakers from the Communist Party and from the Chilean unions and solidarity movements. Begins at 11am at the Working Class Movement Library. Rob Griffiths and Maria Vasquez are guest speakers.

Organised by International Commission Communist Party Americas group.

THE LAST GASPS OF THEOCRATIC RULE IN IRAN



An heroic uprising of Iranian women and youth against the ruling theocratic regime erupted following the killing of Mahsa Amini by the 'morality' police.

The regime miscalculated that, through brute force, it would be able to pacify the popular movement that took to the streets throughout the country.

NAVID SHOMALI
IRAN

WITH THE MURDER of Mahsa Amini the security forces were unable to quell the uprising. At least 507 people were murdered (including 70 children), more than 20,000 imprisoned, and more than 20 young protesters sentenced to execution since December 2022.

Throughout this uprising and its aftermath, the key symbols of regime's power, including mandatory hijab, enforced codes of behaviour, the sanctity of Islamic clergymen, as well as out-dated and misogynistic 'moral' norms, have been challenged. The regime now faces a crisis of legitimacy entirely of its own making.

While the edifice and superstructure of the Islamic Republic regime is religious, its design and foundation are not only capitalist but fiercely neoliberal. The result of this toxic combination is an vicious, violent, and reactionary capitalist power structure. The Iranian theocracy consists of a politically right-wing and religious core; a rent-seeking/bureaucratic/mercantile/militarist big bourgeoisie; and a bloodily repressive state apparatus.

The result of four decades of such rule is manifest in the long and multifaceted struggle of the Iranian people for dignity, democratic rights and freedoms, and for social justice – all encompassed in the resounding call of 'Woman, Life, Freedom'.

The movement is the continuation of a struggle that has been waged for many years

now – one during which the Islamic Republic has brutally suppressed all left wing and progressive forces, including the Tudeh Party of Iran (TPI).

In the last year alone, there were around 1,200 sustained workers' strikes. There were popular uprisings in late 2017 going into early 2018 and again in November 2019, which had the people's material and economic demands at their centre. Another anti-regime outpouring followed the shooting down of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752, by the Revolutionary Guards in January 2020.

The protests are rooted in factors including the dominance of the religious government; discrimination against women; the suppression of democratic rights and freedoms, including freedom of speech and association; the imposition of neoliberal economic policies; rampant corruption and the looting of the country's wealth; and acute environmental destruction. The Islamic Republic's reckless foreign policies and the imposition of economic sanctions on Iran massively worsened conditions.

The current movement has proceeded beyond the demand for cosmetic reforms and calls for a root and branch overhaul, from Islamic Republic to a secular national democratic government, now resound among the population. The regime has desperately sought to reassert its authority in the streets of the towns and main cities, but the scenes of women – mostly young and articulate – flouting the mandatory hijab and other Islamic codes of behaviour, underline that a fundamental change in Iran is underway.

In the Tudeh analysis, the patchy and slow

engagement of the working class in the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' protests has been one of the key weaknesses. Tudeh maintains that in the absence of united action by the country's progressive forces, essentially under a national anti-dictatorial front, which can present a clear alternative to the people of Iran, the critical threshold beyond which the regime cannot survive will not be met.

The TPI's efforts are around preparing the groundwork for workers' strikes and a national strike to bring the regime to its knees. While the objective conditions for developing a revolutionary situation exist, significant work is required to develop the subjective conditions.

Meanwhile, it is clear that the regime will cannot resolve the deepening socio-economic crises it faces nor its own crisis of legitimacy. Sooner or later, this regime will collapse opening the way for Iranians to establish a national democratic government.

The current regime is a fundamental obstacle to progressive change and the TPI strives for the formation of a united anti-dictatorship front and the transition to a national democratic republic. In this struggle, it relies upon working-class internationalism and principled solidarity with the struggle of the Iranian people, to defend peace and national sovereignty – and to put pressure on the Islamic Republic regime for the release all political prisoners, a cessation of executions, and to respect the democratic rights and freedoms of the Iranian people.

NAVID SHOMALI IS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE TUDEH PARTY OF IRAN



▲ Lebanese communists at a May Day march in Sidon.

Under Lebanon's rigid and undemocratic confessional political system – imposed by the imperial powers – citizens must vote in their ancestral village based on a 1932 census while the presidency must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker a Shi'ite Muslim.

CP MIDDLE EAST COMMISSION
LEBANON

THE LEBANESE Communist Party has expressed concern over moves to normalise relations between Lebanon and Israel. These include a framework agreement, maritime border demarcation measures and the supply of Lebanese gas through pipelines connected to the Mediterranean Forum, which includes Israel.

The party notes that the recent extension of international emergency forces by the UN Security Council – done without coordination with the Lebanese army – aligns with the visit of the American-Israeli envoy Amos Hockstein, who played a role in the maritime border demarcation. Hockstein's visits to Lebanon were accompanied by talks on 'stability' in the region, and this raised suspicions about the impending oil normalisation, particularly in the context of Lebanese gas extraction and supply through pipelines involving Israel.

The party holds the Lebanese government and its ruling parties are responsible for these developments and condemns what it sees as a deceptive and authoritarian approach. It argues that this approach exacerbates the economic hardships faced by the Lebanese people, including new taxes in the upcoming budget, security tensions, and threats to public and private freedoms.

It also expresses concerns about the potential manipulation of the Syrian displacement crisis and the impact of popular demonstrations, US escalation in Syria, and international regional settlements.

The Lebanese Communist Party calls on the Lebanese people, along with national, democratic, political, and social forces, to reject and oppose this destructive path. They emphasise the need to hold the current government accountable for the hardships faced by the Lebanese population, urging unity and mobilisation to deal with the ongoing crisis and safeguard Lebanon's future.

The party also issued a statement regarding the attacks on public and individual freedoms in the country, citing the detention of artists and the prohibition of their works under the pretext of contradicting religious and social norms. The party sees this as a process of gaslighting and public manipulation to disorient the people from the main struggles against political crisis expressed by the inability of the parliament to elect a president and the pressures exerted by the confessional leading parties to impose new reforms that entail increased sectarianism in the country.

These practices also aim to divert the attention from the economic crisis as the exchange rate of the Lebanese Lira has plummeted sixty times – from 1500 LL per one USD in 2019 to about 90,000 LL now.

The economic meltdown pushed more than 80 per cent of the Lebanese population below poverty lines and forced about 15 per cent to emigrate abroad for jobs that would allow them to support their families. This has particularly affected the young and created a social gap in Lebanese society that lacks now its young workforce and its better-educated population.

Public employees have lost most of their purchasing power and have been on strike for several months. All funds related to social security, health and pensions eventually have become incapable of sustaining their beneficiaries. Public schools and universities suffer from extreme underfinancing, leading to strikes, closures and inefficiencies.

The social implications of the economic crisis have been harsh, leading to forced migration, increased violence and crime and a greater dependence on the sectarian forces that sustain their entourage through foreign funding from their regional and international patrons.

The Lebanese communists see that the crisis demonstrates that the current sectarian and capitalist regime is a complete failure that cannot be reformed under existing conditions. It calls for a radical change towards a new secular democratic system that guarantees social and political justice and equity for all its citizens.

CHILEAN COMMUNISTS
ON THE LESSONS OF
POPULAR UNITY
1970-73

1000

DAYS OF REVOLUTION

Praxis Press

▲ Praxis Press is offering substantial discounts to Communist Party and Young Communist League organisations through September. Normally £20, it can be bulk ordered (minimum three copies or more) for £8 each. Set your own sales price to raise money locally. <https://redletterspp.com>

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