

For a United Front against Monopoly Capitalism and War!

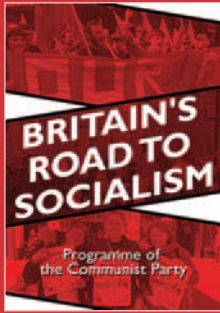


**Resolutions of the 57th Congress
of the Communist Party of Britain
4-5 November 2023**



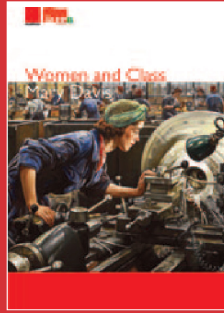
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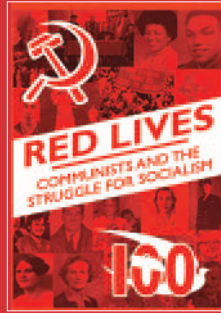
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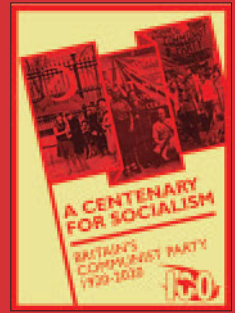
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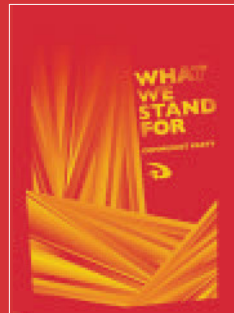
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For a United Front against Monopoly Capitalism and War!

Resolutions of the 57th Congress of the Communist
Party 4-5 November 2023

CONTENTS

- 2** General Secretary's Address
- 6** Main Political Resolution For a united front against
monopoly capitalism and war!
- 31** Emergency Resolution
Solidarity with the Palestinian people —for a ceasefire
now

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General Secretary's address

Comrades, distinguished guests, friends,

This 57th Congress of the Communist Party in Britain meets in the shadow of one of the most blatant and horrendous ongoing massacres of recent times.

The mass murder of civilians in Gaza is taking place in front of our very eyes, in lurid technicolour, on our television screens and – for the Palestinian people – in real times, as their hospitals and refugee camps are bombed and shelled by the so-called Israeli Defence Force.

This is not Israeli self-defence, it is Israeli state terrorism.

The Hamas attack of October 7, which included civilian targets as well as military ones, was brutal enough. But what we are witnessing now is a genocidal attack on the Palestinian communities of Gaza and the West Bank, intended by Netanyahu and his fascist allies to destroy the Palestinian people as a distinct nationality, as a nationality with the potential for full nationhood. And, make no mistake, this barbaric assault is being carried out with the full support and complicity of the British and American governments, the European Union and NATO.

Likewise, the leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition, Sir Keir Starmer, cannot bring himself to utter one word of criticism of Israeli barbarism. Like Western imperialist politicians everywhere, and their allies in the Arab dictatorships, he pays lip service to human rights, international law and to the rights of the Palestinian people, while endorsing the Israeli regime's death sentence.

For our part, the Communist Party of Britain congratulates the hundreds of thousands of people across England, Scotland and Wales who have demonstrated their solidarity with the Palestinian people over the past four weeks.

We reaffirm our support for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and those courageous activists in Palestine Action who have exposed the role of the British state and the armaments companies who – along with their counterparts in the USA, Germany and Italy – arm the Israeli war machine. We pay tribute to our sister parties: the Palestinian People's Party – represented here today by Nawal Musa and her two comrades – and the Communist Party of Israel.

We salute all those in Palestine, Israel, the Middle East and beyond – Jews, Christians, Muslims, people of other faiths and none – and including here in Britain Jews for Justice for Palestine and Jewish Voice for Labour, who uphold the human, democratic and national rights of the Palestinian people.

We reaffirm, too, our demand for the establishment of a sovereign

Palestinian state alongside a sovereign Israel, within internationally recognised borders.

The Israeli ruling class and its corrupt politicians such as Netanyahu intend to make such a two-state solution impossible, by stealing yet more Palestinian land, expanding Zionist settlements and destroying Palestinian communities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as well as in Gaza. Their aim is to establish a Greater Israel. That is the only kind of 'single-state solution' on the cards in the foreseeable future.

So to our friends and allies in the Palestine solidarity movement who imagine that any other kind of 'single-state solution' is possible, we have to say, in the words of Aesop the Greek slave and story teller: 'Be careful what you wish for'.

Meanwhile, only a worldwide intensification of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign – rather than any kind of sham peace process – will help force Israel to contemplate a settlement that secures justice for the Palestinians.

The world has also stood by and watched the carpet-bombing of Yemen, carried out by the murderous Saudi Arabian dictatorship and its allies, armed to the teeth by Western imperialism.

In Ukraine, we see Britain, the USA, the EU and NATO doing everything in their power to prolong the war caused by Russia's reckless and ruthless invasion of February 2022. The imperialist powers spend billions of pounds, dollars and euros pouring armaments into the cauldron – a fortune that should be spent alleviating poverty and deprivation around the world.

The military stalemate must be broken by a ceasefire, negotiations and a settlement that guarantees the sovereignty and security of both Ukraine and Russia, with a right of return to Russia for the Crimean population and no further expansion eastwards of the EU-NATO bloc.

As for NATO itself, it was founded on a big lie – that a war-ravaged Soviet Union was planning to invade and occupy western Europe – and it has been sustained by a succession of lies ever since. The latest is that China – without a single military base outside its own territory – somehow presents a mortal threat to the West and its largely illusory freedoms.

The SNP and the Green Party have succumbed to those lies, expressing their support for membership of this aggressive, expansionist, nuclear-armed alliance led by US imperialism, but the Communist Party of Britain will never cease telling the truth about NATO.

We stand for an independent foreign and defence policy for Britain and its constituent nations, based on cooperation, solidarity and the peaceful settlement of conflict between countries.

Militarism and war contribute enormously to the world's carbon emissions, although this is often excluded or grossly underestimated in the official statistics. The world burns as we continue heading towards global catastrophe, with unstable weather systems wreaking havoc in Britain and across the planet.

The COP-28 summit is due to be held in Dubai at the end of this month. Yet there is no sign that this will produce a plan that radically cuts the world's carbon emissions and meets the challenges of global warming and climate chaos, while respecting and supporting the right of poorer nations to develop their economies and societies to the same levels as the wealthiest nations.

As Communists we are clear: there can be no permanent, stable and equitable solution to the climate crisis for as long as the giant transnational corporations and the states which promote their interests are free to exploit the earth's natural resources in the pursuit of capitalist profit.

Public ownership and national and international planning, in the interests of the planet and its population as a whole, are the only basis on which future catastrophe can be avoided. 'Socialism or Extinction', as proclaimed on the banners of our dynamic Young Communist League, is indeed a prophetic slogan for the 21st century.

Here at home, the great strike wave continues as workers defend jobs, vital public services and living standards against the profit-driven policies of the Tory government and its big business sponsors.

As ever, the Communist Party and the *Morning Star* will continue to fight for unity and solidarity within and between trades unions and their reinvigorated, non-sectarian 'broad left' networks. In particular, we have put the case for coordinated industrial action between unions within each sector of the economy.

But we also put forward the perspective of politicisation within the unions, especially around a left-wing programme of free collective bargaining, public ownership, price controls and the repeal of all anti-trade union laws.

The Tory government response to the strike wave has been the new Minimum Service law to force workers to break their own union's strike. Our message to the trade union movement is the same as that when the movement defeated similar laws in the early 1970s, led by Communists and their allies in the engineering, docks and miners' unions and the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions: mass defiance and coordinated industrial action are the key to throwing back the ruling-class offensive!

Every day throws up examples of the Tory government's deeply

reactionary, anti-working class and anti-human agenda.

The Covid-19 Inquiry has provided proof of how little Boris Johnson and his cohorts really care about human life. Clearly, the elderly in particular were sacrificed on the altar of corporate profit.

Whether it's another round of austerity cuts to the Welfare State; the refusal to tax the super-rich and resolve the crisis in housing and the NHS; or the inhuman treatment of refugees fleeing destitution, persecution and war, the crooks, liars and sociopaths in office have to go – and the sooner the better. But we also have to ask: what will replace them?

Starmer's new New Labour government-in-waiting pursues the same neoliberal agenda as the Tories. Their policies in office will change nothing fundamentally in late-capitalist Britain. Only mass campaigning and mass action, led by an organised and politicised working class has the potential to change them, to force them to the left.

But then we come to the underlying agenda of every majority Labour government since 1945. This is to protect and promote the interests of British monopoly capital around the world, of British imperialism, in a junior, subservient alliance with US imperialism.

This is one of the fundamental differences between the Communist Party and the Labour Party. And we are part of an international Communist movement which still proudly proclaims the old slogan of James Keir Hardie that 'Socialism is the hope of the world'.

Comrades and friends,

At this Congress, we will set our priorities for the coming period, developing and refining the policies that flow from our Marxist-Leninist analysis of society and the forces within it.

Our main organisation resolution outlines how we intend to educate, equip and mobilise our party and its members, including the growing number of recruits to the cause of socialism and communism.

Over the next 12 months, our membership will include hundreds of comrades from the Association of Indian Communists in Britain. The Politburo of its parent party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) – represented here today by Comrade Arun Kumar and in Britain by Comrade Harsev Bains – has endorsed a protocol and the proposed amendment to our rules that will facilitate this joining of forces.

Our party faces the future with renewed confidence, enthusiasm and determination. On the basis of democratic centralism and Marxism-Leninism, we say:

Consign capitalism and imperialism to the dustbin of history!

Long live the Communist Party of Britain!

Long live the international Communist movement!

MAIN POLITICAL RESOLUTION

FOR A UNITED FRONT AGAINST MONOPOLY CAPITALISM AND WAR!

The British people, like people all over the world, are facing multiple crises: mounting living costs and a stuttering economy; the growing danger of nuclear war; and the dire threat of climate change. All stem from the drive of the banks and big business for ever higher profits, the dominance of state monopoly capitalism. While Communists see the building of a socialist society as the only basis for a lasting solution to these problems, the next step on the road to socialism must be to resist and defeat the present ruling class offensive on all fronts.

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 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 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-UKUS) 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 buildup 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. In addition, we will work to persuade trade unions and the TUC to support a negotiated settlement to the war in Ukraine. We will also highlight the extreme neo-Nazism displayed by some Ukrainian nationalists as well as the persecution of Communists, socialists, and trade unionists in Ukraine.

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. This underlines the case for escalating the BDS movement in Britain and internationally led by the Palestinian BDS National Committee representing numerous Palestinian civil society organisations including trade unions.

Specifically, the BDS campaign calls upon the trade union movement to oppose arms sales to Israeli governments which continue to flout international laws and UN Resolutions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Golan Heights. 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.

We salute 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.

Britain's Communists also welcome other 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 and Nicaragua, this represents a continent-wide rejection of neoliberalism, the New Cold War and domination by US imperialism.

We must, however, remain alert to losing sight of material conditions in which progress, like in Venezuela, has turned so sharply towards the repression of progressive forces. The Communist Party of Britain has always proudly defended the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela against oppression by US imperialism. We recognise, however, the increasingly anti-worker and anti-popular direction of the PSUV government. It is in this context that the government in Caracas has initiated state repression against the Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV), resulting in the Party being effectively declared illegal. We demand an immediate end to the repression and the restoration of full political and democratic rights to the PCV as an organisation and to its legitimate leadership and membership. Britain's Communist Party stands in solidarity with Haiti's working people facing repression by Ariel Henry's gangster regime in collusion with imperialism. We call for the withdrawal of all occupation forces from Haiti, for the Haitian working class to take power and for the imperialist powers — particularly France and the US — to pay full reparations to Haiti for centuries of cruel colonial exploitation.

We also reaffirm our solidarity with the Communist Party of Swaziland (CPS) in its ongoing revolutionary struggle against King Mswati III and his absolutist monarchy. The British government should cut its ties with the Swazi monarchy until it ends the use of force against protestors, frees all political prisoners and agrees to the formation of a transitional government.

A major development in the latest stage of imperialism's ongoing plunder of raw materials in the global South is the resultant environmental degradation and climate change. This plunder also requires monopoly capital's political control, which denies self-determination to local and indigenous peoples and generates proxy wars in the most oppressed parts

of the world. These, in turn, create greater poverty and fuel mass migration.

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'.
- Build the WPC's affiliate in Britain: the Peace Assembly.
- Support and publicise the work for peace done by the Women's International Democratic Federation and its affiliate the National Assembly of Women.

A world to save

The disastrous impact of carbon emissions on our planet and its ecosystems 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 particular, the silence about the link between arms production, military operations and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be broken. The world's armed forces and armaments industry account for more than 6% of global GHG emissions and rising, yet there is no systematic approach by international agencies or UN member states to calculating, reporting or publishing the relevant figures. Nor is the need to reduce military GHG emissions included in any national or international policies to combat climate change and global warming.

One of the biggest challenges we must face is the inability of the capitalist state to change course or to reverse the ecological devastation generated through its own operations. Never able to apply the brakes to the endless process of capital accumulation, capitalism is heading towards a collision with the viability of life itself.

To address this crisis rooted in capitalism, we need a movement that is up to the challenge. The Communist Party must engage proactively with environmental movements to root environmental politics in class politics and anti-imperialism informed by our Marxist-Leninist analysis. Green New Deal campaigns represent a useful initial attempt to channel working-class material interests into environmental politics. We must build trade union and working-class power within the systems we so need to dramatically transform, while promoting global North-South solidarity for an alternative model of economic and social development. These tasks could not be more urgent.

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. Specific targets should include the big privatised water, gas and electricity companies, as well as the state regulators Ofgem and Ofwat which are complicit in polluting and profiteering. We must uphold calls for public ownership of the energy monopolies, with compensation for pension funds and small investors. 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.
- Highlight and publicise the ongoing environmental achievements of socialist and progressive governments.

Britain's 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 (EPC) 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 European Free Trade Association). 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 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 politics in the north of Ireland 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 and mainstream parties, 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 nonviolent 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 freeports 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 pledged to repeal any new law if in government. But this will not happen without substantial and concerted trade union pressure.

In the event of the 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. Trade Union Councils help foster good relations between local unions and their activists and should be supported.

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. Proposals for a 'new party of the left' are a diversion. Crucially, the Communist Party needs to continue to build its membership and influence within the wider movement. It has 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. Indeed, the ‘Toothless in England’ campaign against the closure of NHS Dental Services is a classic good practise example. Starting in a small town in Suffolk, it has grown into a nationwide campaign that has been recognised by parliament.

Essential elements of this new United Front at local level will be trades union councils and 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.

Social crisis 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. Privatisation delivers poor quality services and jobs. In particular, the private 'care industry' super-exploits the labour of women, economic migrants, and Black and minority ethnic workers. Local government cuts mean the local support infrastructure has been dismantled, breaching basic rights. Responsibility for providing care has shifted even further onto women, as access to community services is rationed or removed and people left to struggle alone.

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.

Transport remains poor and dysfunctional across much of Britain, and mostly reliant on the car. Local authorities talk about public transport reform but lack the coherent political structures and financial powers to enact such reform.

Canals, wetlands, and large coastline areas around Britain have the capacity to move people and goods effortlessly, yet they are starved of investment and support. Supertram systems, light rail and guided buses could also revolutionise public transport without harming areas of natural beauty. They would both enhance movement around the region and benefit those needing access to work, towns and city centres while taking cars and heavy goods vehicles off the road.

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 further develop proposals to:

Require local authorities assess the social consequences of gentrification and ensure council housing is available to meet local need in all areas undergoing re-development.

Protect communities threatened by second home ownership, with a particular emphasis on the impact on Welsh-language communities.

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

joint campaigning including days of action at local and national levels. In particular, the *Morning Star* can give a voice to local communities currently going without.

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.

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.

The Communist Party also reaffirms its commitment to combating discrimination against LGBT people, noting the increasing incidence of homophobic and transphobic attacks and growing right-wing rhetoric attacking LGBT people. Misogyny and toxic masculinity represent a threat to both women and trans people, and we reject any attempts to create divisions in the fight against this and seek to find common ground between feminists and LGBT activists based on genuine and respectful dialogue.

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. Thus we seek to uphold the principles embodied in the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Refugee Convention.

Communists will continue to challenge all forms of racism, including its anti-Muslim, anti-Gypsy, Roma and Traveller manifestations, and support the work undertaken on reparations for slavery. Notably, Islamophobia is used to further Britain's imperialist agenda, especially British military operations, in the Muslim-majority Middle East.

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.

The Communist Party recognises that the decline in trade union membership has left many local communities vulnerable to racist and fascist rhetoric. This is even more the case in areas hit hard by deindustrialisation, poverty, unemployment, job insecurity and the deterioration in public services. Therefore Communists will work to build campaigning alliances with local trade union, political, anti-racist, anti-fascist and community organisations to combat racist and fascist activities. An important dimension of such work is to identify the real causes of the economic and social problems facing local communities and to engage residents – not least local trade unionists and other workers — in the fight for jobs, services and facilities.

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. Communist Party branches will be promoting the highly acclaimed 'London Recruits' film due for general release in 2024. It highlights the work of young Communists and other socialists recruited in Britain by the African National Congress for clandestine work in South Africa against the Apartheid regime.

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. It is important that this is not the purely constitutional federalism that lies at the heart of current Labour Party proposals and which assumes a large measure of private-sector corporate partnership. We need instead a Progressive Federalism that is committed at all levels to a redistribution of wealth and power in favour of working people, delivering real economic powers to democratically elected bodies, including local government. 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.

Communists need to take our position confidently into the labour and trade union movement at all levels, including through trades councils and regional TUCs. In different communities and neighbourhoods, we need to take into account the impact of economic and political crises on people's consciousness and participation. We need to be specific about how problems of economic and social provision might be resolved on terms set by them together with the labour movement and what new powers of accessible decision-making and participation are required locally, regionally and nationally. All Party bodies should promote John Foster's pamphlet *Nations and Working Class Unity in Britain* to enhance understanding of Progressive Federalism in the Party and the wider labour movement.

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 which lost Labour 52 Leave-voting seats in the 2019 General Election.

Wanting a Labour victory next time would normally mean urging people to vote for its candidates, except where there's the opportunity to vote Communist. But Communists should also urge workers to support existing left MPs elected as Labour MPs in 2019 who are denied the chance by the Starmer leadership to re-stand as Labour candidates. The incoming CP Executive Committee will decide whether there may be other constituencies, such as those of members of Starmer's witch-hunting Shadow Cabinet, where the Communist Party might support a non-

sectarian left candidate instead of putting forward a candidate of its own. 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 that 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, opposition to NATO and imperialism – and for socialism.

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

Emergency Resolution

Solidarity with the Palestinian people for a ceasefire now

The 57th congress of the Communist Party of Britain endorses the statement on Palestine agreed at the 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties held in Izmir, Turkey, 19-22 October 2023. We send our condolences to all those who have lost family and loved ones in the recent upsurge of violence perpetrated by the extreme right-wing Netanyahu government.

The unacceptable Hamas attack on Israeli civilians on October cannot justify the subsequent murder of more 10,000 Palestinians and the mass destruction of homes, hospitals and refugee camps in Gaza by the so-called Israeli Defence Force.

Our party adds its voice to those demanding a ceasefire now, an end to the collective punishment and forced displacement of the people of Gaza in what are crimes against humanity, and call for the immediate, organised supply of medical, food and fuel to Gaza's citizens.

We call on the leadership of CND, Stop the War and Palestine Solidarity Campaign to meet and create an ad hoc United Front for Peace, coordinating direct action and demonstrations to block any involvement by the British government in war moves in the region and with the aim of mobilising millions for peace.

We condemn the outrageous government-inspired land grab by the Zionist settler movement which aims to forcibly destroy historic Palestinian communities on the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza which has now spiralled into plans to drive its citizens off their own land.

Further we call for the immediate release of all hostages held in Gaza as part of a negotiated peace and the release of political prisoners held in Israeli jails. We demand that Israel ends the punitive incarceration of Marwan Barghouti.

We will campaign for the immediate withdrawal of all NATO navy and military forces from the region and an end to the illegal occupation of lands seized after the 1967 War.

In particular, we condemn the role played by the British government in supporting the war drive of the Netanyahu government, deploying military hardware, surveillance aircraft and warships in support of the invasion of Gaza.

The uncritical support of the Labour leadership for Israeli crimes against humanity is a shameful betrayal of the Palestinian people. We urge

the labour movement to exert the maximum pressure on an incoming Labour government to work for the establishment of a sovereign, independent Palestine alongside an independent and secure Israel within internationally recognised borders.

In the meantime, the Communist Party will intensify its support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, taking its case to working class communities and into the heart of the labour movement. We reject British government attempts to outlaw the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) policy and to restrict the right to demonstrate in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The Communist Party of Britain restates its support for a lasting peace based on a two-state solution, institutional reparations and the right of return. In this anti-imperialist struggle for a Palestinian state which requires unity between workers and peoples of all ethnic and religious identities, there can be no place for the deeply reactionary and divisive ideology of antisemitism.

We therefore reaffirm our solidarity with the Palestinian Peoples Party, the Communist Party of Israel, their allies and all those democratic, progressive and left-wing forces in the Middle East who uphold the objective of a free, sovereign Palestine.



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MORNING STAR AMBASSADOR



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CPGB
Workers of all lands unite!
Communist Party
February 2024

Gaza: make every vote count

Thousands of thousands are protesting in the streets of Gaza. But in the UK, we are not protesting. We are voting. We must vote to make every vote count. We must vote to make every vote count. We must vote to make every vote count.

The Labour government has made it clear that it is not interested in ending the conflict in Gaza. It has made it clear that it is not interested in ending the conflict in Gaza. It has made it clear that it is not interested in ending the conflict in Gaza.

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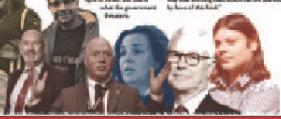
Defiance not compliance

The Labour government is in a state of defiance. It is not complying with the demands of the people. It is not complying with the demands of the people. It is not complying with the demands of the people.

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Thursday 7th March
 10.30am - 12.00pm
 1pm - 3pm
 4pm - 6pm
 7pm - 9pm
 10pm - 11.30pm
 12.30am - 2am



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