

# NEITHER AUSTERITY NOR WAR!

Build an economy for  
the people, challenge  
racism and bigotry



▲ *Never again*  
Our front cover  
reuses John  
Heartfield's  
iconic image. a  
This  
photomontage  
first appeared as  
the front cover  
of the German  
communist paper  
*Arbeiter Illustrierte  
Zeitung*  
(*Workers  
Illustrated  
Newspaper*)

Nick Wright

## CHANGE NOW

THE NOW annual spike in racist provocation – clearly planned by fascist elements and enabled by a climate of wilful misrepresentation about migration by state, media and politicians – is the setting for a critical moment in British working class politics. The movement to block the election of a Reform UK government – undoubtedly with some measure of cooperation from a Tory Party in which the expectations of much of our ruling class still lie – is having some success.



But now right-wing mobilisations are routinely outnumbered by anti racist protestors. The extravagantly funded events promoted by the fascist fringe are now more clearly seen as

fantasy shows subsidised by US billionaires and religious nuts. This years event was substantially down in numbers and vastly outnumbered by a simultaneous anti racist and anti-war mobilisation.

Voters are showing the wisdom of the masses by choosing whichever candidate is best positioned – constituency by constituency – to beat Reform UK. Farage's outfit is both losing votes and challenged by breakaway formations even more explicit in their reactionary politics.

The next general election, because of the economy and the general crisis of politics, may come sooner than later.

Disgust at the performance of the Starmer regime – now unravelling with daily resignations – is mixed with a universal sense that, as Andy Burnham tentatively put it: "It doesn't feel that we're heading in the right direction. It doesn't feel like we're heading to better lives for people."

The Communist Party is calling for a vote for Burnham in the Makerfield by election but we should ask for more from him. His chances of winning in this seat – where Reform UK won every ward in the recent local elections – would be greater if he tackled head on the policy issues which have left Westminster Labour a loser.

It is precisely on the questions of NHS privatisation, the cost of living, inadequate wages, housing for all, social care, pensions and poverty that Reform UK's false solutions can be exposed and working people galvanised to take collective action.

Andy Burnham's election campaign is the beneficiary of a fortunate coincidence. In winning he is able both to give Nigel Farage a bloody nose and set the scene for removing Starmer as leader of the Labour Party and prime minister.

Continued overleaf



Workers of all lands, unite!  
Communist Party June 2026

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# Unity

## Britain is in a cost of war crisis

Judith Cazorla

### CLASS POWER

WE MUST all take responsibility for moving the working class movement in a new direction. The crisis of working class political representation is deepening. Labour – elected on a minority vote with the Tory and Reform UK right divided – promised change but delivered cuts, continuing austerity and entanglement in Trump's war on Iran.

With most of Boris Johnson's cabinet now in Reform UK – pledged to privatise the NHS and opposed to stronger workplace rights – Farage's privately-owned political vehicle is more clearly revealed as just another billionaires' party .

More than fourteen million of our people live in poverty, five million of them children. Our public services are run down and turned over to profiteers.

Starmer's Labour came to power promising change after fifteen years of Tory sleaze. Starmer's Labour has cut international aid to fund war. Starmer's Labour has no answers.

Reform UK spreads division and makes false promises to voters. Reform UK is Tory Plan B. Their policies attack working people to benefit billionaires while Nigel Farage is Donald Trump's lapdog.

Politicians say there's no money for our public services ... but have already given over £13 billion for NATO's proxy war in Ukraine with another £3 billion every year until 2031. Starmer has now dragged Britain into another US war for oil in Iran. It is in this situation that the Communist Party is calling on all class conscious workers to take responsibility to fight first for the changes we need to tackle the cost of living crisis.

Continued overleaf



# REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE

‘It is necessary to instil in the masses our own confidence in the inevitable bankruptcy of evil, so that they will be left with no doubt, so that they will come through this moment in serried ranks, prepared for battle. This is the task of the theoreticians. But the tasks of the others are to lay bare and show up this evil, to lay bare the sufferings and torments of the masses and of the individual fighters torn from their midst by the enemy, to give them the meaning they actually have and which gives them the strength to bear everything courageously, without wavering.’ **Felix Dzerzhinsky** *From a Prison Diary* 1908

## Big Meeting

The 140th Durham Miners’ Gala—the Big Meeting—erupts in Durham City on 11 July 2026, a mass reclamation of space by two hundred thousand workers. From the 8:30am assembly of brass and silk banners to the 3pm benediction in the Cathedral, it remains Europe’s most vital artery of trade unionism and class memory. This is not a heritage display, but an active pulse of collectivism funded by the Marras, ensuring the past we inherit is the future we build.

Official information and Marras contribution:

[https://www.friendsofdurhamminersgala.org/join\\_us](https://www.friendsofdurhamminersgala.org/join_us)

Official camping:

<https://www.friendsofdurhamminersgala.org/camping>

## London stabbings

Unity news team

**ANTI SEMITISM**

**T**HE COMMUNIST PARTY sent a solidarity message and wishes for a speedy recovery to the two Jewish men in stabbed in Golders Green London, in an antisemitic attack and all those affected by it.

The victims of the knife attack were immediately treated by Hatzola ambulances run by the Jewish medical charity that was itself targeted in an arson attack just a few weeks ago.

The Communist Party had earlier warned, these are not isolated incidents but are indications of the rising level of antisemitic hate crime in Britain.

The party stands with the Jewish community and will always oppose those trying to spread hate and division.

In a further statement the Communist Party rejected attempts to link these attacks to the movement for solidarity with Palestine in Britain. “Such attacks do nothing to support the Palestinian people’s right to statehood and to live in dignity, free from fear of Israeli state violence said party chair Lorraine Douglas.

“These attacks target Jewish people and community organisations in order to strike fear into all Jews” she said.

Communist Party said it rejects attempts to use revulsion at these antisemitic attacks to ban protests and marches calling for solidarity with Palestine: “Racist attacks must not be used to legitimise this government’s authoritarian attack on the right to protest.”

## Tolpuddle Festival

**The Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival, the annual event in Dorset that commemorates the six agricultural labourers transported to Australia in 1834 for forming a trade union. It is a significant gathering for the labour movement, featuring political speakers, debates, music, and a traditional march through the village. The festival provides a space to discuss both historical and modern workers’ rights within a socialist framework.**

**Tickets can be purchased here: <https://www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk/festival/tickets>**

## Speak out on Substack

Unity News team

**DEBATE**

**A** SUBSTACK platform has been established to provide a dedicated space for the voices of Communist Party members, ensuring that the experience and analysis found within its branches is shared across the movement.

**The Substack is open to every party member. Whether party members wish to report on the work their branch, offer an analysis of local class politics, or contribute to broader ideological debate, this space is open.**

**The party’s communications director Victoria Holmes said: “We particularly want to encourage those who may not yet feel confident enough to submit work to the Morning Star, Unity or the Communist Review. Writing is a skill developed through practice and collective support. If you have an interest in writing but lack experience, we urge you to use this platform to build your confidence and find your voice.**

**“Let us use this tool to strengthen our internal democracy and document the struggle for socialism across Britain” she said.**

**Articles should be sent to the Communications Director for approval and publishing: [Comms@communistparty.org.uk](mailto:Comms@communistparty.org.uk).**

**\* Substack is an online publishing platform with content directly brought to its dedicated audience independent of social media giants algorithms.**

Continued from front page

In one way and another this would please a decisive majority of British people. Winning Makerfield opens the way to the possibility of new directions for Labour.

The unfeasibly bloated parliamentary Labour Party was hand-picked by the now-disgraced right wing gang that groomed Starmer to replace Jeremy Corbyn.

But even they must understand that the only chance of being reelected is if Labour reconnects with the progressive majority that wants an end to war and privatisation, depends on the social wage of universal education, health care and housing and wants job security, decent wages and better chances for our young people.

One strategic consideration is that most Reform UK voters share these sentiments so a one sided anti racist campaign that fails to tackle the real concerns of working

people, including over immigration, will not cut through.

We should not rely on Westminster Labour MPs if we want deep change in Britain. But even they will respond to the kind of mass pressure that an aroused people and an organised working class can bring to bear.

One success of the ruling elite is the total exclusion of anti war opinion from the dominant media. The aim is to overwhelm anxieties about the economic problems faced by working people with a national state of alarm about supposed Russian threat to our national security and a longer term challenge to capitalist monopoly from China.

It is around these questions that a united front to demand welfare not warfare, to build an economy for the people and challenge racism and bigotry is the way forward.

NICK WRIGHT IS EDITOR OF UNITY!



Continued from front page

We need to put a stop to the war drive and open the way for socialism and working class power.

Britain’s economy works in the interests of a handful of billionaires, big businesses and banks profiting from poverty, privatisation and war. Britain’s banks, supermarkets, energy, oil, arms and tech companies are making super profits.

One in ten of our population own half the wealth while one in a hundred own more than 70% of the rest of us.

The Communist Party says it doesn’t have to be this way for working people.

**Our future is in our own hands.**

The Communist Party is fighting for:

- ★ public ownership of the energy and transport sectors
- ★ halting all forms of privatisation
- ★ investing in public services
- ★ a massive programme to build more public housing.
- ★ a Wealth Tax on the super-rich
- ★ repealing all anti-trade union laws



- ★ an independent Britain: no rejoining the EU by stealth
  - ★ immediate withdrawal from NATO
  - ★ US troops out of Britain
- Working people and our communities are uniting, organising and fighting for an alternative that makes the rich pay and takes power away from big business.

## Roma rights in crisis

Victoria Holmes

**CP STATEMENT**

**T**HE DECLARATION by thirty-three human rights organisations that Roma rights have reached a state of crisis is a forensic map of social murder.

A new report documents a coordinated continent-wide policy of biological and social attrition. In Romania, the state enforces environmental racism by forcing communities onto hazardous industrial zones and toxic waste sites.

In Slovakia and Hungary, segregated education ensures the permanent social exclusion of Roma children. In Bulgaria, police brutality is utilised as a tool of domestic terror. In Britain, this crisis is mirrored in the 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

This legislation is a contemporary weapon of enclosure designed to criminalise a way of life. It is a deliberate manufacture of precarity. During this Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller History Month, communists reject the performance of liberal recognition. We stand in solidarity with the GRT communities of Britain and Europe.

Solidarity is the recognition that the fence keeping the ‘other’ out is the same fence keeping the worker in.

We defend the roadside and the caravan as sites of class struggle. We stand with the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities today and always.

<https://tinyurl.com/mryb4wz3>

We need to fight for a society that works for working people - not the billionaires.

- ★ Join the fight for a better Britain and a better world today!
- ★ Don’t let racist politicians scapegoat migrants for the Cost-of-War crisis – a war Farage supports.
- ★ Reject Reform UK’s attempt to turn working people against each other.

There is an alternative for working people.

This capitalist crisis needs a socialist solution.

Find out how you can get involved in the fight for a real alternative.

The Communist Party is Britain’s Marxist Leninist party of the labour movement.

Organised for socialist revolution, rooted in the working class, working for unity. For more information you can go to [www.comunistparty.org.uk](http://www.comunistparty.org.uk) and follow us on social media @CPBritain.

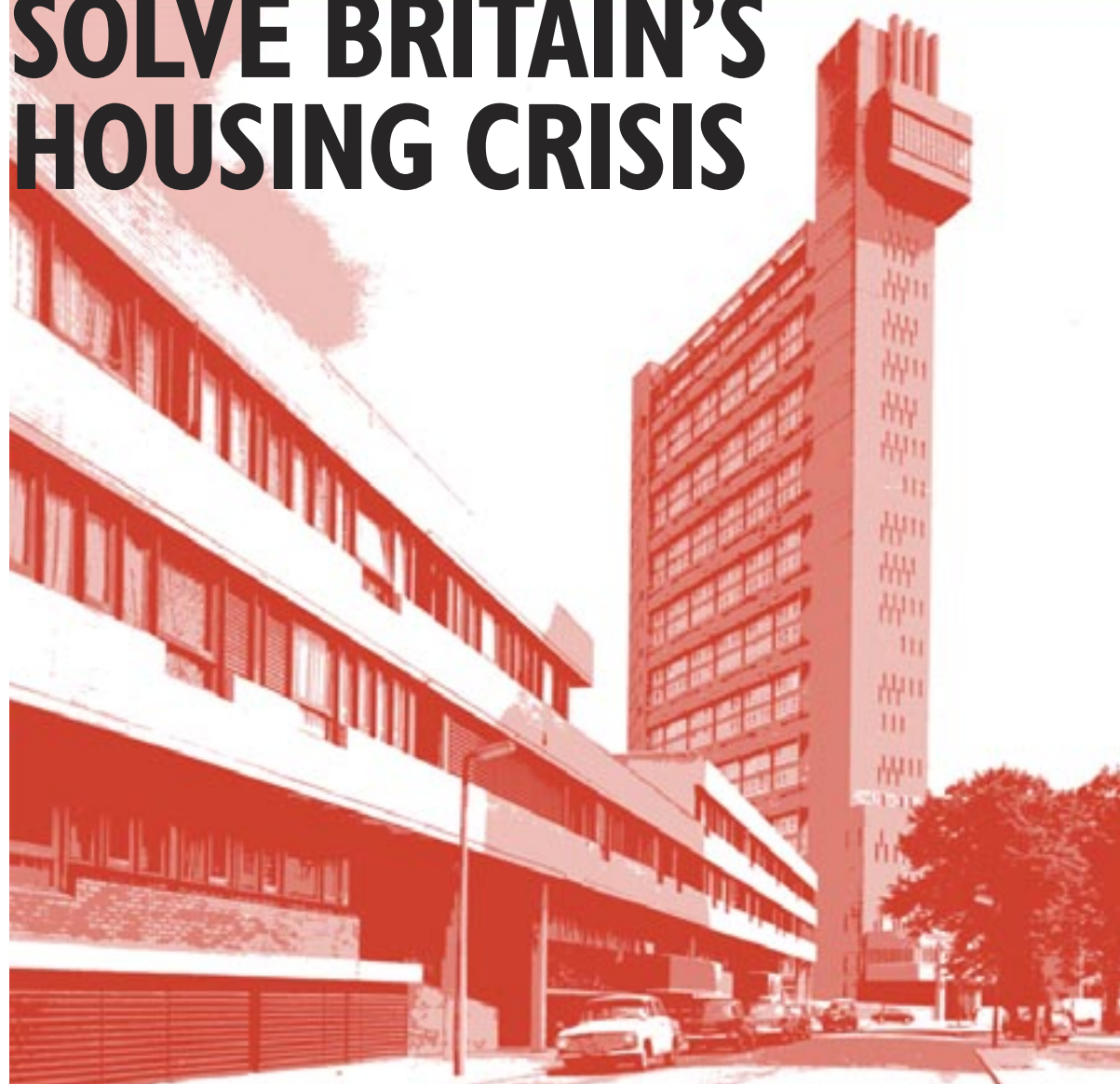
JUDITH CAZORLA IS THE COMMUNIST PARTY NATIONAL ORGANISER



# THE HOUSING QUESTION

'The housing question can only be solved when society has been sufficiently transformed for a start to be made towards abolishing the antithesis between town and country, which has been brought to an extreme point by present-day capitalist society. Far from being able to abolish this antithesis, capitalist society on the contrary is compelled to intensify it day by day. On the other hand the first modern utopian socialists, Owen and Fourier, already correctly recognized this. In their model plans the antithesis between town and country no longer exists.' **Friedrich Engels** on *The Housing Question* 1872

## SOLVE BRITAIN'S HOUSING CRISIS



- ★ Reform housing finance to enable a mass council housing development programme, including the regeneration and replacement of run-down council estates without placing new burdens on tenants in terms of rent levels.
- ★ Stop the sale of public land to private developers; utilise Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) on privately-owned designated housing land where development is unreasonably delayed.
- ★ Progressively tax owners of vacant land and properties.
- ★ Require councils to use their compulsory purchase powers to acquire and refurbish long-term empty or substandard properties and housing land for social use, including unused retail and commercial space.
- ★ Radically extend local authority powers to restrict the growth of holiday lets and second-home ownership in areas of housing need so strengthening fragile communities.
- ★ Bring ex-Council voluntary transfer housing association stock and arms-length management organisations (ALMOs) back under the direct democratic control of local authorities; develop proposals for buying back ex-council properties sold under the Right to Buy (RTB) for social rent, including giving first refusal to councils and community-based housing associations on all ex-RTB properties that come up for sale.
- ★ Ensure social rented housing is genuinely affordable by each local authority setting affordability levels within national frameworks.
- ★ Restore council direct labour organisations and in-house design and development expertise
- ★ Remove the provision to deny long-term security of tenure to social housing tenants in England.
- ★ Amend planning and housing law to make the provision of suitable sites for gypsies and travellers a legal duty rather than discretionary power.
- ★ End the financial incentives for homeownership in favour of investment in housing for lower-income households and individuals.
- ★ Give councils the power to ensure that all housing development is undertaken on the basis of assessed need, locally-agreed plans, environmental, economic and social sustainability objectives.
- ★ Enhance space, environmental and building standards for both conversions and new build and in England tackle the abuse of permitted development rights.
- ★ Remove tax benefits for international and corporate purchasers of residential property.
- ★ Institute enforceable limits on the banking sector's involvement in, and exposure to, the property sector including commercial real estate.
- ★ Establish national and local savings institutions that specialise in housing finance and support national and local housing strategies.

## Communists puts the needs of communities above those of private developers and landowners

Lorraine Douglas

### HOUSING

**EVERYONE DESERVES** a good quality, affordable home. It is a basic human right; but one which is denied to millions of people.

The Communist Party campaigns for a new approach to housing designed to meet the needs and aspirations of the peoples and eradicate homelessness, rather than creating super profits for landowners, developers, their shareholders and bankers.

Progressive housing strategies are needed to tackle finance, development, regulation, quality and standards, the use of vacant properties, homelessness and tenants' rights.

The Communist Party supports organisations at local, regional and national level that campaign for improved tenants' rights and for housing development to be locally-controlled and based on assessed housing need.

CAPITALISM'S 2008 financial crisis was precipitated by the sub-prime mortgage scandal in the US caused by the banks lending more than the value of property. House prices collapsed as they did in the recession of 1990/91 caused by high inflation and interest rates.



When housing is seen as a financial investment there is pressure to restrict supply in the hope of raising prices. This has led to decades of underinvestment and a huge imbalance between supply and demand, affecting millions of people in Britain.

Landowners profit from speculative land values, driven by developers whose prime motive is enriching their shareholders and who fight their obligations to deliver affordable homes with the threat of refusing to develop land they own.

In England, the Government sets targets on the number of homes to be delivered in each local housing area, and with the extension of rules on so-

called permitted developments – the conversion of commercial buildings into housing – means English planning authorities and local communities are almost powerless to influence the shape of a built environment which is increasingly developer-led and determined by land availability, rather than local need.

It results in the wrong homes, of the wrong tenure, being built in the wrong places, unable to meet assessed housing need. Different rules apply in Scotland and Wales.

In Scotland, the Scottish Government's social housing grants are welcome but the building rate by Councils and housing associations is only half of what is needed. Unfortunately, social housing is still seen only as a safety net because the Scottish Nationalists prioritise market provision and boosting the private rented sector.

Official statistics suggest that 325,000 new homes per year are required simply to meet demand caused by demographic change. This would not tackle the current backlog,

and yet this level of house building has not been seen since 1970.

Meanwhile there are over 240,000 homes which have been empty for more than six months throughout Britain. Social housing as an affordable option for the population as a whole has been completely undermined by successive governments despite a million plus households on Council housing waiting lists, indicating enduring demand for the security of low-cost, socially-run housing.

Most recently in England this has included the right of social landlords to replace secure and assured tenancies and succession rights for new Council and Housing Association tenants with fixed-term tenancies – with the provision to make this compulsory within the 2016 Housing & Planning Act. That Act also contains provision for social landlords to sell off vacant high-value homes on the open market resulting in an accelerated loss of social housing in areas where the market provides no affordable housing options for working class communities.

In Scotland and Wales, whilst secure

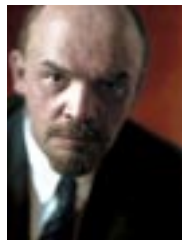
tenancies have been retained and the right to buy ended, social housing is still seen as a narrow welfare tenure rather than one of choice for a range of households.

Deregulation, outsourcing and privatisation culminated in the horrific loss of life at Grenfell Tower with further disasters waiting to happen in the new slums of permitted developments, while a decade of austerity has seen the loss of enforcement resources and expertise in local authorities. In Scotland and Wales, local authorities need to be given the financial clout to turn their notional powers on housing quality and the private rented sector into levers for change.

This crisis illustrates the class basis of inequality and oppression within our society.

Here we see exposed for workers the devastating impact of capitalist speculation.

LORRAINE DOUGLAS IS A HOUSING EXPERT. A LONG TIME UNISON ACTIVIST AND CHAIR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY



# BUILDING SOCIALISM

‘At the present time we are exercising our main influence on the international revolution by our economic policy. All eyes are turned on the Soviet Russian Republic, the eyes of the toilers in all countries of the world without exception and without exaggeration. This we have achieved . . . That is the field to which the struggle has been transferred on a world-wide scale. If we solve this problem, we shall have won on an international scale surely and finally. This is why questions of economic construction assume absolutely exceptional significance for us.’ **Lenin** quoted by Stalin *On the Results of the First Five Year Plan*.



## From revolution to reversal

Eoghan O’Neill on planning, party power and the lessons of the Soviet experience

By Eoghan O’Neill

### SOCIALISM

ON 17 MARCH 1991, over 148 million Soviet citizens voted in a national referendum on whether to preserve the Soviet Union. In those republics where it was held, 113 million—or 77.85 per cent—voted in favour. At the moment of victory of the counterrevolution, a clear majority supported the continuation of the Soviet Union.

This challenges the assumption that the Soviet Union fell because it lost popular support. Its dissolution was the result of decisions taken within the Party and state apparatus, layers that would soon become the basis of a new oligarchic class. The system was not rejected from below. It was dismantled from above.

To understand how this became possible, it is necessary to examine the longer trajectory of Soviet development, and in particular the shift that occurred after 1953.

The October Revolution emerged from decades of struggle and took power in a country that was economically backward, largely agrarian and devastated by war. Russia at this time was not comparable to advanced

capitalist economies, but closer to the least developed regions of the global economy. Industrial capacity was limited, infrastructure weak, and the majority of the population remained tied to low-productivity agriculture.

Socialist construction therefore unfolded under conditions of profound backwardness, civil war and external threat. Within a generation, the Soviet Union emerged as the second industrial power in the world. No country at a comparable level of development in 1917 achieved a similar transformation.

From 1917 to the early 1950s, the general direction of development was clear. Socialised production expanded and commodity relations were increasingly subordinated to planning. Under Lenin, the New Economic Policy recognised the persistence of small commodity production, but within a framework in which the commanding heights remained under state control.

This orientation hardened during rapid industrialisation. It was driven not only by economic necessity, but by survival. The rise of fascism and the hostility of capitalist powers made clear that the Soviet Union faced an existential threat from the prospect of invasion and annihilation. The development of heavy industry, energy and machinery was therefore inseparable from defence.

The decisive principle was not simply state ownership, but the allocation of resources through plan targets rather than profitability. Industrialisation, electrification and defence were pursued according to social priorities rather than immediate return.

From the late 1920s through the postwar period, the Soviet economy developed along these lines. Heavy industry expanded even where it was not immediately profitable. Entire sectors were constructed that would not have survived under market discipline. This transformation underpinned the Soviet Union’s ability to defeat Nazi Germany and establish itself as a major industrial power.

Even nonsympathetic economic analysis recognises this. Robert C. Allen shows that Soviet growth before 1970 was among the most rapid in the world, driven by high levels of investment and structural transformation rather than market incentives, and that the stagnation of the 1970s and 1980s was not a byproduct of planning per se, but of misdirected plans by the state apparatus.

However, it is possible to trace the origin of the decline of Soviet socialist economic planning. By the early 1950s, Soviet economic organisation had reached a relatively coherent form.

Commodity production persisted, particularly in consumer goods, but the law of value did not regulate the economy as a whole. As argued in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, the means of production were to be allocated through planning decisions rather than profitability.

With the death of Stalin and a new leadership in charge, Khrushchev’s 1956 “Secret Speech” marked a decisive political rupture. Beyond its denunciation of abuses, it reframed the preceding period as distortion rather than foundation. The ideological language of ongoing class struggle under

competition. Enterprises were expected to respond to profitability without facing full market discipline. Prices remained administrative, but increasingly reflected cost and return.

This generated structural contradictions. Under earlier planning, new technologies could be introduced through deliberate allocation. Under the reformed system, enterprises faced high costs without clear incentives for innovation. Conservatism became rational behaviour, and technological development slowed.

The slowdown that followed was not simply the result of planning itself. As



socialism was gradually replaced by the notion of a “state of the whole people.” The sense of socialist construction as a contested process gave way to administrative normalisation.

Economic reforms accompanied this shift. Planning indicators were reduced or restructured. Greater emphasis was placed on profitability and material incentives. Enterprise managers gained expanded autonomy. These measures were presented as technical improvements. But they also altered the system’s regulatory logic. The means of production were progressively treated as commodities, allocated in ways that approximated capitalist categories.

This shift reflected the development of a bureaucratic layer within the Party and state apparatus whose interests became increasingly tied to managerial control and enterprise performance. Over time, this orientation was accompanied by a weakening of class struggle as a guiding principle and a decline in systematic Marxist education within the Party and in its relationship with the wider population.

As this layer consolidated its position, those committed to deepening planning were increasingly marginalised. The growing separation between the Party apparatus and the working class weakened the social and political foundations of the system, contributing to a situation in which the Soviet Union lacked the organised capacity to resist its eventual dissolution.

The result was a hybrid system. It was neither coherently planned nor governed by genuine market

the phase of rapid industrial catchup came to an end, new challenges emerged. Investment decisions became increasingly complex. Resources were directed toward energy extraction in remote regions such as Siberia, often requiring high levels of capital and infrastructure for relatively lower returns. At the same time, there was a continued emphasis on domestic production even where more efficient alternatives may have existed, and significant resources were allocated to upgrading ageing industrial and energy facilities rather than constructing new, technologically advanced systems.

Taken together, these shifts reduced the overall efficiency of investment and contributed to declining productivity growth compared to earlier periods of rapid expansion.

At the same time, a growing share of scientific and technical capacity was directed toward the military-industrial sector. The diversion of research and development resources toward military priorities contributed significantly to the decline in productivity growth. The most advanced technical capacity was increasingly directed toward strategic rather than civilian development. The issue was not the absence of planning, but the direction of planning.

By the 1970s and 1980s, the effects of these shifts were clear. Growth slowed, innovation lagged, and the system’s coherence weakened. Planning remained, but its ability to direct development had been diluted. The final phase of reform did not attempt to restore planning discipline. Instead, it expanded market mechanisms further. In

# UNITY! INTERNATIONAL

## reports

doing so, it deepened the system's contradictions and accelerated its disintegration.

The events of 1991 must be understood in this context. The population did not demand the system's destruction. But the bureaucratic layers that had developed over decades stood to gain from its transformation. The transition to capitalism allowed sections of the Party and state apparatus to convert administrative control into private ownership. The emergence of the postSoviet oligarchy was the outcome of this process.

Two errors dominate discussion of the Soviet experience.

The first is the claim that planning is inherently inefficient. The historical record does not support this. Planning drove rapid industrialisation under extremely difficult conditions. The second is the failure to distinguish between phases of development. Treating the entire Soviet period as a single system obscures the real shifts that occurred. The key question is how the balance between planning and commodity production evolved over time.

For contemporary socialist strategy, the implications are clear. Socialism is not reducible to state ownership. The decisive question is what regulates the allocation of the means of production. If profitability increasingly determines that allocation, the system will tend toward capitalist restoration.

At the same time, the Soviet experience shows that socialist transformation is a process. Commodity forms may persist, but they must be subordinated to planning if development is to remain socialist. It also demonstrates that socialist construction remains a site of class struggle. Bureaucratic layers with distinct material interests can emerge within the system itself. Without mechanisms to maintain the primacy of the plan, the direction of development can shift.

The significance of 1991 lies in what it reveals about that process. A society in which the majority supported its continuation was dismantled by layers positioned to benefit from its transformation.

### References

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Stalin, J. V. (1952). *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*.

Eoghan O'Neill's new book: *Breaking Dependency: Ireland's struggle for class power and sovereignty* is now available from [www.connollybooks.net](http://www.connollybooks.net) [connollybooksdublin@gmail.com](mailto:connollybooksdublin@gmail.com)

**Above left** Soviet graphic: Five for the years of the socialist plan and four for the four years taken.

**Above Right** Yeltsin and Gorbachov saw the end of socialism

## SACP condemns xenophobic attacks

**The South African Communist Party issued the following statement on Friday 5 June 2026**

THE SOUTH AFRICAN Communist Party (SACP) overtly rejects and opposes the xenophobic violence and threats of violence against immigrants. There is no justification for the abuse of any migrant, regardless of their legal status. As the SACP, we call for unity, not division of the working class and poor. We call for peace and not violence or vengeance. We need more working-class solidarity and not mutual elimination of workers, not destruction. We also call for the implementation of a sound and humane migration policy, not abrupt witch-hunts and abuse.

The SACP, of course, recognises the pervasive crisis of illegal immigration as a legitimate political issue for South Africa, with state authorities over time unable to effectively deal with the crisis. We thus call for proactive and effective state mechanisms to deal with the matter in line with the law.

Migration has been a persistent challenge over time, occasionally surfacing at key moments and at other times remaining dormant under the surface but still consistently present. At all these times, however, there has not been a predictable, measurable, effective and consistent all-encompassing policy response to it at the state level to address it or even to understand it fully. Any interventions that have been implemented have been misaligned, unstructured and

inconsistent, leading to a distorted view of both its nature and its gravity. For the average working-class person residing in areas with high poor migrant populations, this crisis was always likely to spring up and escalate into an uncontrollable disaster.

At this critical juncture in South Africa's history, one characterised by a crosscutting capitalist crisis that has led to mass unemployment, poverty and a severely diminished state apparatus unable to effectively respond to migration and poverty, we are compelled to find solutions where the state system has failed. The state's inability to coherently respond to the crisis of poverty and migration emanates from the known systemic capacity problems of the state that predate the flare-up of the present violence. The working class, whether migrant or citizen, objectively faces the most severe economic limitations that manifest in various ways in their daily lives.

At its material base, therefore, this is a manifestation of the failure of the capitalist system in a country with some of the highest unemployment rates and the most unequal country in the world. These challenges are not accidental but flow from the laws of motion governing global capitalism. Imperialism and colonial legacies have produced extreme uneven development across the African continent. Wars, economic instability, and poverty in neighbouring countries push desperate workers and families to seek opportunities outside of their own borders. Within our own

borders, capitalism creates a massive reserve army of labour, using competition to suppress wages and conditions.

The South African economy, anchored in a neoliberal trajectory, is objectively proving unable to create more work given its inability to industrialise, among others. These economic limitations manifest through mutual confrontation between members of the same working class in the context of diminishing resources, dwindling job opportunities and virtually non-existent economic prospects. Solely blaming fellow African workers for these systemic problems serves only the ruling class and distracts from the real enemies of the working class: monopoly capital, corruption, and policies that prioritise profit over people. The war between documented and undocumented workers is unjustified.

The solution lies in a multidisciplinary approach which involves thoroughgoing working-class solidarity rather than violent attacks and other acts of aggression rooted in dehumanisation of migrants. We call for the construction and implementation of a comprehensive and effective migration policy and system founded on appropriate and effective enforcement measures while building the state's capacity to manage migration on a sustainable basis and the building of a rigorous labour law enforcement system through the expansion of the department of labour.

## No to sectarian racist violence

BRITAIN'S COMMUNISTS have condemned as 'horrific' knife attacks in Belfast. In a statement the party said: We salute the bravery of witnesses who intervened to save the victim of the knife attack. Our thoughts are with their family and witnesses.

Working people everywhere are appalled by this despicable attempted murder. While police investigations are ongoing and the full facts are not yet public, reports indicate this crime likely reflects a broken asylum system, a failure of mental health services and other government agencies to intervene earlier which might have prevented this.

The criminal justice process must be allowed to proceed and the perpetrator should face full and proper punishment for this horrific crime. Predictably, and as they did in July 2024 following the horrific murder of three young girls in Southport, the usual far right and

fascist voices have instantly seized on this crime to stoke racial tensions and call for violence in the north of Ireland and across Britain.

Last night saw racist attacks and riots in Belfast targeting black people irrespective of immigration status or country of origin. These pogroms of black families in Belfast take us back to the sectarian pogroms of the 1960s and 70s. In towns and cities across Britain there were also racially charged demonstrations aimed at stoking these same racist tensions and creating a culture of fear among black people, migrants and asylum seekers.

The role of social media in amplifying fascist voices such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon ('Tommy Robinson') and Rupert Lowe by billionaires including Elon Musk on X and their amplification of racist disinformation and fascist propaganda on Facebook cannot be overstated.

The original knife attack on Monday night, the violence witnessed in Belfast

and other cities on Tuesday night and the increasing confidence of the far right to spark racist riots must be a wake up call for the left and trade union movement in Britain.

The labour and trade union movement must engage with the genuine concerns of working class communities regarding crime, housing, jobs and access to public services and point to the real causes of our society's problems: big business, the politicians who serve them and the capitalist system.

We must combat and expose everywhere the rise of the far right and fascist groups, and their billionaire backers, who seek to cynically exploit attacks like this as part of their efforts to distract and divide working people and blame minorities for the problems caused by the system itself.

No to violence on our streets – build working class unity to end the system which creates it.

## Solidarity with Indian communists

Kevan Nelson

### REPRESSION

BRITAIN'S COMMUNISTS have condemned the politically motivated raids by Indian government agencies on the Thiruvananthapuram residence of comrade Pinarayi Vijayan former chief minister of Kerala (until May 2026), and current leader of the Opposition.

The Communist Party further condemned the arrests of several leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) who protested publicly in support of comrade Vijayan outside the Delhi headquarters of the Enforcement Directorate.

The party statement condemns the use of lawfare and police repression by right wing, conservative governments as weapons against progressive popular forces. These have become an international phenomenon from the Czech Republic, to Jordan, to Kenya, and now India, the world's largest democracy.

In a statement the Communist Party's general secretary Alex Gordon expressed the party's total solidarity with India's communists and with its sister party, CPI(M) in its struggle to resist the repressive and undemocratic attacks by politicised agencies of the Indian state on freedom of association, freedom of expression and on the political rights of communists to organise.

India's Communists launched the independence struggle to free India from British imperialism one hundred years ago paying a heavy price of repression. Today CPI(M) stands alongside India's workers and farmers in their fight against repressive anti-working class policies of the Modi government.

The struggle to reclaim and expand political space for the working class will be protracted, but Indian Communists' line of march remains entirely unbroken said Alex Gordon.

**Unity! is published monthly by the Communist Party and for Labour movement, liberation and solidarity events and union conferences.**

**It appears frequently as an insert in the Morning Star and always as a social media product.**



# REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE

'Hitherto our government trembled at the mere thought of an uprising. It now itself organises uprisings of the Black Hundreds, and hopes to provoke a civil war. Terrified at the prospect of the impending revolution the government has seized on such of the latter's weapons as organisation, propaganda, and agitation. With the aid of these double-edged weapons and with the help of the Black Hundreds, the government is beginning to stage scenes of popular indignation, of counter-revolution.' *The Black Hundreds and the Organisation of an Uprising* VI Lenin writing in *Proletary*, No. 14, August 29 (16), 1905.

## Forged in counter revolution

Steve Silver recalls the world's greatest conspiracy theory



▲ Five of the 40 victims of the Kishinev pogrom



▲ Pyotr I. Rachkovsky (1851 - 1910)  
Head of the Tsarist secret police, the Ochrana

On the Easter weekend of 1903, the streets of Kishinev, a provincial trading hub on the southwestern fringe of the Russian Empire, ran with blood.

"The Jews were taken wholly unaware and were slaughtered like sheep," wrote the renowned Irish nationalist and veteran journalist Michael Davitt, who bypassed imperial censors to act as a primary conduit for the truth of the massacre to the Western world. "At sunset the streets were piled with corpses and wounded... forty-nine Jews had been killed, hundreds had been wounded, and the homes of poor, industrious people completely gutted.

Steve Silver Substack <https://leadenskies.substack.com>

festivals overlapped, colliding Passover with the Orthodox Christian Holy Week. Capitalising on ancient prejudices that branded Jews – rather than the Romans – as Christ-killers, the local press flooded the city with fabricated reports claiming that a Christian boy had been ritually murdered and drained of his blood by his Jewish neighbours. By superimposing this absurd medieval blood libel onto modern anxieties of revolutionary subversion and industrial unrest, they transformed a season of religious devotion into a state-sanctioned hunting season, convincing an intoxicated mob that mass murder was an act of defence.

Faced with unprecedented international condemnation over the subsequent slaughter, local right-wing propagandists required an immediate ideological shield. They found that shield in France, behind the gilded facade of the Russian Embassy on the Rue de Grenelle in Paris.

### The laboratory of forgery

It was from this diplomatic sanctuary that Pyotr Ivanovich Rachkovsky ran the foreign intelligence bureau of the Okhrana – the Tsarist regime's dreaded secret political police apparatus. Rachkovsky was no crude provincial enforcer; he was a highly sophisticated operative who spent nearly two decades embedding himself in the highest echelons of French political and journalistic society. Operating out of a discreet network of backrooms, he managed deep-cover informants, double agents, and rogue journalists. Under his stewardship, the Paris bureau became less of a traditional surveillance outfit and more of a laboratory for the dark arts of political provocation, targeted characterisation, and clandestine disinformation.

The exact intent behind the fabrication that emerged from this office remains one of the most enduring debates in the history of espionage. Because clandestine operations rarely leave a tidy paper trail, historians still clash over whether the text was directly ordered from the top down or assembled by rogue agents acting on instinct.

While the precise origin remains obscured, the strategic function of the document was unmistakable. By the mid-1890s, Rachkovsky was watching the Tsarist autocracy fracture under the weight of escalating industrial strikes, peasant unrest, and a rising tide of revolutionary Marxism. To a modern

**T**O THE OUTSIDE world, Kishinev appeared to be a horrific, spontaneous eruption of medieval religious fury – the ancient, dark undercurrent of the deicide charge ignited by a local newspaper's manufactured blood libel. However, Davitt's published dispatches explicitly challenged this narrative of spontaneous religious sectarianism. Drawing on a lifetime of political activism – which included organising the Irish peasantry against British landlordism – the veteran journalist identified the pogrom as a deliberate mechanism of imperial control. In his analysis, the violence functioned as a calculated tool deployed by a decaying autocracy to fracture the burgeoning unity of the oppressed by turning one group of workers against another.

The lethal potency of this local violence relied on a calculated campaign of psychological warfare waged in print. Local agitators exploited the fact that the Jewish and Christian



# FIGHTING FASCISM

‘We can now see the real motive of the fascists which is concealed behind the smoke-screen of Jew-baiting: it is the destruction of the working-class movement and the slavery of the workers. And the workers delivered themselves into this bondage by falling for the anti-Jew campaign. Truly did Harry Pollitt say recently, “There are millions of German workers at this moment who will regret to their dying day that they were ever taken in by the anti-Jewish campaign of Hitler” Communist MP **Willie Gallacher** writing in the popular Communist Party pamphlet *Antisemitism. What it means to you.*



bureaucrat of subversion, crude domestic repression was no longer enough to save a decaying empire; the autocracy required an all-encompassing counter-narrative.

The text his bureau synthesised functioned as a grand theory of subversion. When it landed in Russia, it served a dual purpose: it was utilised by court reactionaries to convince the insecure Tsar Nicholas II that democratic reforms were a fatal trap, while simultaneously redirecting the grievances of the Russian populace away from the Tsar’s palaces and toward a traditional, easily identifiable scapegoat. In practice, the document operated as a piece of political engineering – a fabricated explanation for domestic instability that allowed the state to maintain its grip on power.

## The French blueprints

The circumstances for this experiment was uniquely provided by Rachkovsky’s surroundings in Paris. The Dreyfus Affair provided a contemporary template for the political subversion his bureau sought to master. In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army, had been falsely convicted of treason on the basis of a forged dossier manufactured by French military intelligence. While the case appeared to be a narrow military matter, it rapidly mutated into a totalising civil war that split the French Republic in two. In the hands of the reactionary Right, Dreyfus was transformed from an individual officer into the personification of an internal enemy, whose very existence in the military was framed as proof of a hidden, global disloyalty to the nation

## Alfred Dreyfus in 1894, the year of his prosecution

Operating from the Rue de Grenelle, the Okhrana bureau sat at the geographic heart of a crisis that demonstrated the power of a manufactured narrative. The French conservative establishment successfully deployed antisemitic hysteria to shield the army’s high command from accountability, effectively transforming a forensic case of military corruption into a crusade for national survival. The crisis provided a real-time demonstration that a fabricated narrative, if repeated with enough frequency in the press, could cripple a republic, proving that a manufactured crisis could insulate an absolute monarchy against the forces of reform.

Rachkovsky’s bureau maintained close ties with the editors of the most vitriolic anti-Dreyfusard journals, extracting from the street-level chaos of Paris the very machinery of psychological warfare intended for export back to the East. The Paris operation observed how a secular, political target could ignite the same ancient, visceral fury as the medieval blood libel. This served a dual domestic purpose: it would paralyse the Tsar’s impulse toward democratic reform by framing liberalisation as a hidden trap, while providing the security apparatus with a permanent, retroactive alibi for state failure. The resulting fabrication was not an outburst of medieval religious fury, but a clinical, state-sanctioned execution of political forgery designed to preserve an absolute monarchy at all costs.

## Plagiarism and inversion

The physical manufacture of the text that would achieve global infamy as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* relied on a literal, deeply cynical architectural inversion. To understand how a text warning against tyranny became a handbook for global hatred, we have to look at the mechanics of a forgotten 1864 French political satire, *Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, written by a Parisian lawyer named Maurice Joly.

Joly had constructed his text as a covert, satirical assault on the authoritarian regime of Emperor Napoleon III. In his staging, the philosopher Montesquieu speaks for the ideals of liberalism, the rule of law, and constitutional democracy, while the Florentine statesman Machiavelli serves as the mouthpiece for raw power. Joly’s Machiavelli argues that a modern despot can easily dismantle a republic from within by subverting the free press, manipulating national debts, centralising financial control, and manufacturing public distractions. Joly’s work was a warning – a forensic analysis of how easily a contemporary dictator could pick apart the fabric of liberty while maintaining a democratic facade.

The fabricators inside the Tsarist security apparatus took this sophisticated defence of freedom and inverted its structure completely. By systematically lifting Machiavelli’s monologues almost word-for-word, the plagiarists simply removed the references to French politics and placed the authoritarian blueprint directly into the mouths of a mythical Jewish cabal.

The warnings Joly intended to issue against state despotism were transformed into a literal confession of a hidden global plot. A plot by the Jews. In this new, distorted context, Machiavelli’s observations on how an autocrat can control public opinion and engineer economic instability were presented to the world as the top-secret, verbatim minutes of an ancient conspiracy determined to bring Christian civilisation to its knees. The warning had become the weapon.

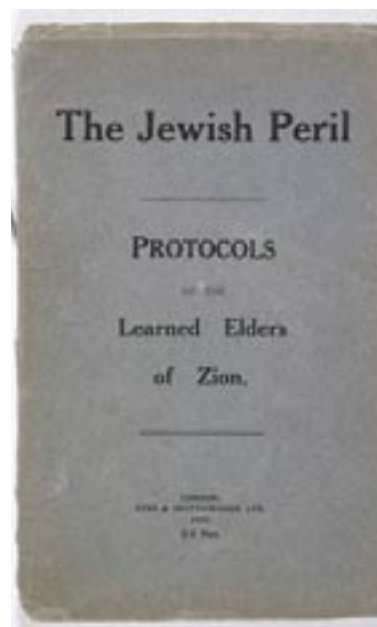
## The ideological trap

This was no longer just a primitive project of religious defamation; it was a sophisticated piece of economic subversion designed to function as a tool of statecraft in the twentieth century. Under the stewardship of the Paris bureau, the fabricators shifted the target of hatred from the theological outsider of the Middle Ages to the symbolic architect of predatory modernity. They lifted Joly’s monologues regarding a despot’s manipulation of national debt, the engineering of stock market panics, and the subversion of the gold standard, and simply rebranded these tactics as “The Jewish Programme”.

This transition represented a lethal

ideological pivot. By presenting a hidden cabal as the invisible puppet-masters of international finance, the *Protocols* offered a shortcut for those navigating the bewildering complexity of global capital. It generalised that poverty, hyperinflation, and economic instability were not the result of systemic flaws in the capitalist order, but the deliberate malice of a specific group of people.

Whether by design or coincidence, this functioned as an ideological trap to neutralise the radical Left. By framing a traditional scapegoat as the literal embodiment of predatory modernity, the Okhrana’s output served to fracture revolutionary movements. It redirected the anger of the dispossessed away from the state and toward a racialised caricature of the capitalist banker – offering a seductive, structural mechanism to preserve the Tsar’s throne.



▲ The 1920 London edition cover of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders*

## The reusable fiction

When the momentum of Western condemnation over the Kishinev massacre triggered an unprecedented international backlash for the Tsarist regime – sparking protests in New York and condemnation in the British Parliament – the autocracy found a highly convenient ideological shield waiting in the wings. In August and September 1903, loose fragments of the text were rushed into print by right-wing provincial propagandists under the headline: *The Jewish Programme for the Conquest of the World*. By presenting the document as a captured plan for global subjugation, the autocracy sought to invert the narrative completely, signalling to a critical world that the butchery in Kishinev had not been a barbaric riot, but an act of domestic self-defence against an imminent existential threat.

Far from a static text, the forgery was a fluid, evolutionary document that

mutated through numerous editions over subsequent decades, frequently changing its title, its structural arrangement, and its purported origins to match the shifting anxieties of the day. In its most successful and enduring repackaging, propagandists retroactively anchored the document to the First Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. The text was newly presented not as a loose manifesto, but as the top-secret, verbatim minutes of a clandestine side meeting conducted by the “Elders” behind the backs of ordinary delegates. By 1905, the mystic writer Sergei Nilus had heavily padded these chapters and appended them to his apocalyptic book, *The Great in the Small*, reframing the political forgery as a theological prophecy of the Anti-Christ.

The enduring potency of the forgery lay in its elasticity. By stripped-down design, the text named no individual conspirators, identified no specific dates, and anchored itself to no single historical event. This deliberate emptiness transformed the text into a perfectly modular conspiracy theory – a blank canvas that could explain almost any subsequent political cataclysm.

Rachkovsky’s laboratory had synthesised something permanent. The reality of the text itself was incredibly tedious and practically unreadable – a repetitive bureaucratic slog that read like an endless set of minutes of a meeting. Yet, when it arrived in the West following the trauma of the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution, the text achieved a sudden veneer of respectability; in 1920, the English translation was published in London by Eyre & Spottiswoode, the official printers to the British government and the Crown. Fuelled by this unearned aura of institutional authority, and supercharged by its subsequent industrial distribution by figures like the car manufacturer Henry Ford, the forgery mutated into a universal template for explaining the anxieties of the industrial age.

The exposure of the fraud by *The Times* of London in 1921 proved that the *Protocols* were a fake, but it could not prove that the conspiracy was a fiction to those who felt their world was collapsing around them.

Rachkovsky’s ultimate export was a shape-shifting mind virus. It established a recurring pattern of scapegoating – a structural flaw transcending left-right politics that lies dormant during times of relative stability, only to be reactivated as an explanation for every subsequent crisis of the modern age. The theory behind the *Protocols* has become detached from the work itself. The Okhrana built a conspiracy theory that would outlive the Tsars and their empire, fuel the Hitler regime, and continue to haunt our political landscape today.

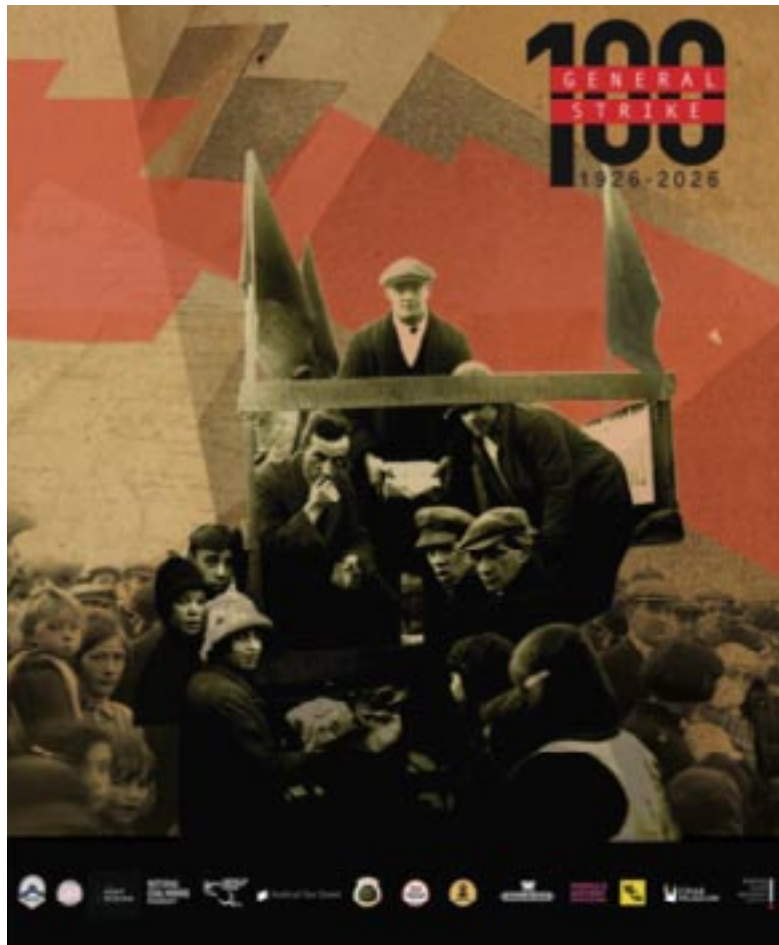


# REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE

The mass strike is merely the form of the revolutionary struggle and every disarrangement of the relations of the contending powers, in party development and in class division, in the position of counter-revolution – all this immediately influences the action of the strike in a thousand invisible and scarcely controllable ways. But strike action itself does not cease for a single moment. It merely alters its forms, its dimensions, its effect. It is the living pulse-beat of the revolution and at the same time its most powerful driving wheel. **Rosa Luxemburg** *The Mass Strike* 2022

## General Strike 1926

Mary Davis reviews a concise history highlighting the strength of rank-and-file action and the limits of trade union leadership in Britain's greatest industrial conflict.



▲ The General Federation of Trade Unions is actively marking the 100th anniversary of the 1926 General Strike in 2026, which was a historic nine-day, 1.7 million-worker protest. A national partnership is organizing events, an interactive map, and educational resources to commemorate the strike's impact on UK labour history. <https://gftu.org.uk>

**R**OB GRIFFITHS' *Red Flag or White? The Communists, the Working Class & the 1926*

*General Strike* offers a compelling exploration of one of the most pivotal moments in British labour history. Griffiths provides insightful analysis, drawing on a wealth of historical sources to paint a vivid picture of the era's political landscape.

It packs an enormous amount into its 40 pages.

Griffiths starts in 1921 in order to trace "the road to 'Red Friday'," July

1925. Red Friday saw a victory, albeit temporary, for the miners. Although it would have been better to commence in 1919, he briefly sketches the economic and political background to the General Strike, covering the ill-fated 1924 minority Labour government, the deleterious effects of the reintroduction of the gold standard and the adoption of the Dawes Plan.

However, British capitalism as a whole was in crisis after WWI and the most severe impact was felt by Britain's staple industries — coal, cotton and engineering. All three industries were faced with savage wage cuts and worse conditions after the defeat of "Black Friday" in 1921.

Illustrating the degree to which the government was preparing itself for

what it knew was to be an all-out battle, Griffiths draws our attention to a little known Cabinet paper written by the minister of labour, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland. He pointed out that the government had defeated the trade union Triple Alliance 1921 (Miners' Federation, TGWU, NUR) and thus presumed that it could do it again, relying as usual on the complicity of such right-wing trade union leaders as J.H. Thomas of the NUR.

Griffiths points out that the success of Red Friday was due to the fact that the now Quadruple Alliance (Engineers had joined) was now an alliance of rank-and-file workers (inspired and organised by the National Minority Movement), and thus it was not solely reliant on the leaders.

Again, as evidence of the preparedness of the government after Red Friday 1925, this time on the ideological front, Griffiths quotes the home secretary Sir William Joynson-Hicks who suggested that if working-class opinion wouldn't support wage cuts, they would support the British constitution. This was exactly how Baldwin framed the General Strike — "Who rules Britain?" — the very question that the TUC never wished to answer and hence insisted on framing the General Strike as a mere industrial dispute.

The government's preparations were stepped up in earnest during the 10 months between Red Friday (July 3, 1925) and May 3, 1926. To avoid the Red Friday strike the government had climbed down and established the Samuel Commission (officially the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry) and announced a subsidy to the ailing mining industry (this expired in April 1926). During this period the

government was busy with its meticulous "unostentatious preparations" (the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin) for what it knew was the inevitable battle ahead.

This included the strike-breaking privately run Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (OMS). Griffiths traces the 1919 origins of this body—the "Supply and Transport Committee" set up to deal with post-war strikes — but notes that its newer form relied on volunteers, many of whom were recruited from the British Fascists. (Inspired by Mussolini, the BF was formed in 1923 — the first political organisation in the Britain to claim the label of fascism and with strong links to the Conservative Party.)

The TUC saw the OMS as a benign body formed to deal with civil emergencies. In contrast the CPGB recognised it for what it was — "the most complete scheme of organised black-legging and strike-breaking."

This clear ideological difference characterised the division between the left and right of the labour movement and helps explain the prevarication of the TUC, its unwillingness to prepare for the forthcoming struggle which it was anxious to avoid.

If trade union leaders were unwilling to face the class enemy, their members took a different view, as was shown at the 1925 TUC Scarborough Conference. Influenced by the campaigning work of the National Minority Movement (led by Tom Mann and Harry Pollitt) . The Scarborough Conference marked a high point of militancy in the British labour movement, passing radical resolutions against wage cuts and for increased factory-level organisation. Clearly the TUC general council had

## Police provocateurs at Orgreave 1984

Nick Wright

### PROVOCATEURS

**E**VIDENCE HAS emerged to further expose provocative police behaviour at the Battle of Orgreave. This was a key event in the 1984/85 miners strike when the state mobilised a mercenary legion of police to confront miners picketing the Orgreave coking plant.

On 18 June 1984 ninety-five striking miners were arrested after riot police, equipped with shields, truncheons, and backed up by mounted officers and dogs, attacked the unarmed pickets. Immediately the state and the monopoly media, led by the BBC, tried to represent the event as an attack on the police by miners. Infamously BBC News reversed footage to supposedly show this sequence of events.

The miners were charged variously with riot or unlawful assembly with the prospect of life prison sentences.

The police effort to sustain a false narrative collapsed after six weeks of court hearings when the cases against the miners were discredited as systematic fabrication and incompatible versions of the event were presented to the court.

Now, a active figure at the centre of events has presented new evidence of police acting as provocateurs to kick start the violence that lent a spurious credibility to the false narrative promoted by the state, media and the police.

Hilary Cave worked in the national office of the miners union and was a key figure in organising rallies and mobilisations around Britain.

The author of the authoritative account of the strike *Recollections of the Miners' Strike*, now in its second and much enlarged edition (Manifesto Press 2026 London) she first interviewed key witness Jack Smith early in 2024, when preparing the first edition.

Jack Smith, Hilary Cave, says was deputy transport manager for the NCB North Derbyshire area. He was not a member of the NUM, but a member of BACM, the union for Coal Board management.

She says: "In 2024 he had a very clear memory of events in 1984, which I typed up and submitted to him for approval about accuracy and tone, before including it in the book"

Asked why this account is relevant Hilary Cave says: "The new development is that the Orgreave enquiry is underway and I have





# WORKING WITH THE MASSES

‘How many times have I wondered if it is really possible to forge links with a mass of people when one has never had strong feelings for anyone, not even one’s own parents: if it is possible to have a collectivity when one has not been deeply loved oneself by individual human creatures. Hasn’t this had some effect on my life as a militant – has it not tended to make me sterile and reduce my quality as a revolutionary by making everything a matter of pure intellect, of pure mathematical calculation.’ **Antonio Gramsci** 1926 *Letter to his wife Julia*.

no intention of implementing the will of Congress — it had moved to the right with the addition of J.H. Thomas (the villain of Black Friday) and the new TUC general secretary, Walter Citrine. Nonetheless, once the miners were locked out, the TUC was forced to act. The rapacious coal owners had refused to compromise, and the miners had refused to surrender.

Following the rejection of the Samuel Commission’s report and the miners’ refusal to accept the imposition of worse contracts (a 13 percent wage cut and an extra hour on the working day), the gloves were off and the General Strike was on.

Remarkably, in the space of 11 pages, Griffiths manages to present a whirlwind account of the nine days of the General Strike covering action in all parts of the country. In particular he highlights the role of the Communist Party and its championing of councils of action. This is a matter of historical accuracy and not historical bias.

Whereas the TUC saw this as an industrial struggle, Baldwin’s government did not — for the ruling class this was a battle to preserve the survival of their state, and the main obstacle to this was the Communist Party. Hence the trial and imprisonment of the leaders of the CPGB. (Much more could have been said about the party’s role — the evidence can be found in the unique archives held by Marx Memorial Library).

The role of both the repressive and ideological apparatus of the state is well covered by Griffiths. This included the OMS and other bodies backed by special statutory powers and, on the ideological front, the newly established BBC and the government’s paper, *The British*

*Gazette*.

The TUC’s betrayal of the strike and the secretive machinations of J.H. Thomas are well known. The revised Royal Commission proposals in the form of the Samuel memorandum were approved by as the general council as spurious “formula” to end the strike. This “formula” was rejected by the Miners Federation and the miners were left to fight alone. In his postmortem, Griffiths attempts to answer the question “why did the strike fail?” His answer is both thoughtful, and inconclusive reflecting the changing view of the Communist Party itself.

While all on the left could accept the view that the TUC betrayed the strike, the conclusions to be drawn from this differed. During the “Third Period,” 1928-34 (“class against class”) the CPGB sought to end co-operation with social democrats and advocate direct confrontation against the capitalist class and state, thus reversing the Minority Movement’s strategy. When this line was overturned it also meant that the General Strike and every other defeat could not and cannot simply be explained by class treachery.

As Griffiths says, we have to look at the weaknesses of our movement and in particular its political leadership — a vitally necessary task if trade union consciousness can ever transcend to socialist class consciousness. And so he raises the question as to the limitations of trade union action in a battle with the state as 1926 turned out to be. His inconclusive conclusion is — lessons? What lessons?

Rob Griffiths’s analytical narrative is both accessible and rigorous, making it suitable for readers new to the subject as well as seasoned historians. His approach ensures that the

Mr Smith is physically frail but has an exceptionally clear memory of the events he described.

Hilary Cave interviewed him again at his home on May 27 2026. His account matches the account he first gave to me in 2024. That original account appears in the second edition of the book.

Hilary Cave is insistent that she neither prompted him during the first nor the second interview, but merely wrote down and then typed up his account.

She says: “I have shown him the transcript of the second interview and he is happy that it is an accurate account of what he said. He has signed a hard copy of this transcript, which I have submitted to the Inquiry via the postal route, as well as sending this account attached to an email.”

This is his recollection of an incident following the Orgrave events of June 18 1984.



complexities of the strike are neither oversimplified nor romanticised.

Overall, *Red Flag or White?* stands out as an essential read for anyone interested in the history of British socialism, labour movements, or the intricate relationship between political ideology and collective action.

In foregrounding the vital role of the Communist Party, today’s communists can embrace and take pride in our own history and hopefully answer Griffiths’s important but unanswered lessons.

*Red Flag or White?* Rob Griffiths (Communist Party pamphlet, £5) [www.communistparty.org.uk](http://www.communistparty.org.uk)

Book by Mary Davis books include *Comrade or Brother? A history of the British Labour Movement 1789-1951* (2009); *Marxism & Struggle* (1998); *Fashioning a New World: a history of the Woodcraft Folk* (2000), *Sylvia Pankhurst: a life in Radical Politics* (1999) and *Class & Gender in British Labour History* (2011).

“I was on nights, so walked into the office to take over from our Fleet Engineer. (Police officers were present in our office, as often happened at that time.) I noticed as soon as I walked through the door that he looked upset. The first thing he said was “Could I have a word with you in private?”

“We went outside and he told me he’d listened to the police officers talking about what had happened at Orgrave the previous day, June 18 1984. They were recalling — police had instituted the act of violence. Some of them had been actively involved. They were standing behind pickets and throwing things over their (pickets) heads. They were boasting about it. Police in the front line wouldn’t know it was police throwing from behind.

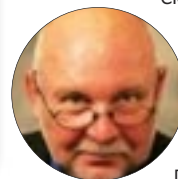
“Most days they (police) came past my office, down to Markham Colliery in police vans. They would return minutes later dressed as pickets and would mix in with ordinary pickets.”

## False Memories/Real Plans

Bill Greenshield

### OPINION

FOLLOWING LAST month’s elections, Reform etc want people to falsely remember a huge far-Right ‘surge’ of mass support — an ‘unstoppable tide’. Support for this false memory comes from powerful



elements in our ruling class, the State and a media that aims to incorporate them into the mainstream of the political system. This ties in with greater state repressive measures in response to Britain’s economic and political crisis.

The electoral reality was not so dramatic. Largely ignored was the 66% of the electorate who didn’t vote at all. Not ‘apathetic’ or ‘apolitical’ but disillusioned, disaffected, demobilised and ground down by a system that, fails and despises our class.

In fact, of the roughly 9% of the potential electorate who voted for Reform or fellow Rightists — many were expressing their frustrations, fears and anger at the system and just hoping to find a voice from someone who listens to working class people. Not a positive use of a protest vote — but given all the media hype, it would have been surprising if it had not happened. We need to find ways to express these feelings productively and in an organised way.

The argument in favour of choosing the ‘least worst’ establishment party to defeat far right candidates is seen by many as necessary at present, but it cannot be a strategy. The economic and political crisis of capitalism has put an end to that. Asking people to vote for anything but Reform UK doesn’t cut it with those who have already rejected the ‘anyones’.

Far-Right and fascist groups have long existed, but it’s only in periods of economic and political crisis — that creates insecurity, fear, anger and the threat of social unrest and resistance — do they assume any real significance and become useful to the State itself.

Now all the frustrations, fears, anger and injustices remain — the economic and political crisis at home and abroad continues to deepen, the drive to fascism and war is ratcheted up.

It is only against that background of crisis and that extreme ruling class response that we can fully understand the current significance of the populist far Right and fascist groupings and their importance to the ruling class. They need them not just to divide the working class, but also to help create the conditions, though increasing public disorder and fear, for increasingly

repressive legislation, policing and courts. The recent violent attacks on migrant and black communities are intended by the fascist perpetrators to continue and escalate.

It isn’t the first time in Europe’s living memory that the ruling class has turned to such violent and destructive methods to save their system — even overseeing the elevation the perpetrators to government.

When we say never again to fascism and war — do we have a working class strategy to ensure it won’t be?

We need not to just protest against the far-Right and fascism, but organise and mobilise a powerful working class United Front response to the economic and political crisis.

Building such a United Front within our trade union movement and other working class organisations is the vital step which can, together with broadly based community movements such as the Peoples Assembly and the rapidly developing Together Alliance.

This recently put half a million people on the street — not just to challenge the far-Right, but to promote popular policies and actions that working class people can identify with and organise for.

So lets make a start in as many towns, cities and villages as possible! Maybe starting with lively activities around a street or house to house consultation about immediate priorities, longer term plans etc. — as the local trades union council, or via People’s Assembly or the Together Alliance... as suits local conditions.

We need a strategy and action that puts us at the heart of communities, workplaces and trade unions. A strategy that gives us the initiative, rather than leaving it with the far Right.

We shouldn’t tell people what to do, but invite them to discuss and agree main social and political issues and priorities for organisation and action.

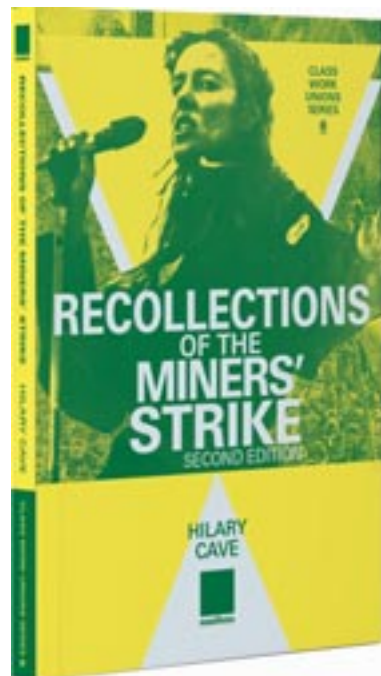
A United Front approach at local level educates and trains; organises workplace activities; recruits to community and street committees and develops cultural and family activities.

Taking part in all kinds of community campaigns for a better life including electoral struggles helps organise a deep defence of communities under attack and goes beyond formulaic demonstrations and counter demonstrations.

It’s a strategy that springs from the development of the United Front, that can and will defeat the far-Right, and open our road to Socialism.

Seize the Time!

BILL GREENSHIELDS IS A FORMER NUT PRESIDENT AND A FORMER CHAIR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY



submitted the second edition of my book to the Inquiry as evidence.



# SOVIET ETHNIC POLICY

‘The possibility of seeing with my own eyes the practical realization of Lenin's ethnic policy will be of tremendous help in our own struggle of resolving the ethnic problem in the United States. ‘The United States authorities don't want Americans to know the truth about life in the Soviet republics because the ruling circles of the United States, which also has many ethnic groups, are making every effort to divide people along ethnic and racial lines.’ **Angela Y Davis** Quoted in the *New York Times* after a workers’ meeting in Uzbekistan.

**Stop the War coalition**  
International Conference Against War

**JOBS NOT CONSCRIPTION**

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE **AGAINST WAR**  
SAT 20 JUNE - LONDON

**Communist Review 123**

Centenary of the 1926 General Strike and Miners' Lockout

## Communist Review

Theory and discussion journal of the Communist Party

Marking the centenary of the 1926 challenge to capitalist power in Britain

Articles by contemporary figures writing during and after the 1926 General Strike and writers today. They include Robin Page Arnot, John Foster, Jack Cohen, Mick Jenkins, George Short, Sue Bruely, and Nick Moss  
[www.communistparty.org.uk](http://www.communistparty.org.uk)

## A woman's place in the struggle

**Book Launch sponsored by Manifesto Press.** Women have always fought. Orgreave. Dagenham. Greenham. Schools. Hospitals. Trico factory. We organised. We led. Sometimes we won.

This new project brings together women writers, activists and fighters. Not just to feel seen – but to fight class struggle. Plain and simple.

We'll talk about the past, the present, and where we go next. What worked. What didn't. How we keep going. And how we pass this on to the younger women walking into union meetings for the first time.

**Speakers** Anita Halpin – Journalist, lifelong union activist, ex-TUC General Council member; Sally Groves – author and one of the women from the famous Trico strike; Bernadette Keaveney – Print manager at the Morning Star; Victoria Holmes – poet, journalist, Roma community activist; Hilary Cave – author, education officer, strike organiser, National Union of Mineworkers. Chaired by Judith Cazorla – national organiser of the Communist Party.  
18 June, 7.30pm – 9.30pm  
Ballroom, Mercure Seafront Hotel  
149 Kings Road, Brighton, BN1 2PP

## Manifesto Press offers

Manifesto Press offers 20% off all orders on [ManifestoPress.studio](http://ManifestoPress.studio) to all Communist Party members using discount CPND20OFF26 (this is on top of any existing reductions or deals on the website!)

Communist Party District and National committees get 40% off all orders. You can place your order direct via [office@ManifestoPress.studio](mailto:office@ManifestoPress.studio).

**Socialist Voice**

WAGES FIGHT  
Workers need a strategy of power, not petition against Total Cullinane

▲ **Socialist Voice** is published by the Communist Party of Ireland <https://socialistvoice.ie>

**Unity Books** ★

Open every Saturday 10am-6pm

Find us at Unit 15, GovanHill Workspace  
68 Dixon Road, Glasgow G42 8AT

**Communist Party Cuba Appeal '26**  
**£26,000 for the 26<sup>th</sup> of July**  
**Break the US blockade!**

The USA is trying to strangle socialist Cuba into submission. We can't allow that to happen. The Communist Party is running an emergency appeal to raise £26,000 for emergency aid to Cuba, closing on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July.

Please send all donations to -  
Bank: Unity Trust Bank  
Name: Communist Party of Britain  
Account Number: 50725694  
Sort Code: 60-83-01  
PLEASE INCLUDE REFERENCE: CV26

**26 de JULIO**  
FIDEL CASTRO  
**CPB**  
COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN

In just a week donations raised from branches, districts and nations have reached £3,496.42 of our £26,000 aim. This is a strong start and a testament to the party's collective commitment. However, we must remain realistic about the scale of the task ahead. We are still over £22,500 short of the funding required to secure this work. The struggle for these resources continues and we must maintain this momentum to reach the full target.

## Industrial aggregate meeting

All Communist Party members active in their trade union or trades council are invited to an online Industrial aggregate meeting on 23 June 7pm convened by the party's Industrial Committee on Tuesday 23rd June.

This will be an opportunity to get an update on the Party's industrial work and priorities for the next few months.

This will include more details of plans for a forthcoming publication aimed at trade unions, plans for a Kevin Halpin Industrial Cadre School in September and an early discussion of the urgent needs of the hour.

Go to the party members area on the website for the zoom link

## Battle of De Winton Field

The 90th anniversary of the Battle of De Winton Field commemorates a defining moment of working-class resistance when six thousand local people drove Oswald Mosley's blackshirts out of Tonypanyd. Held at the Cambrian Colliery Club on Saturday 13 June 2026, the event features the unveiling of a blue plaque and addresses the continuing struggle against fascism in the Rhondda Valleys and beyond. This gathering features Alex Gordon, General Secretary of the party, alongside speakers from the labour movement to honour the bravery of those who stood firm in 1936. It serves as both a tribute to a radical heritage and a contemporary call to arms against the resurgence of the far right.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-battle-of-de-winton-fields-90-years-on-blue-plaque-unveiling-tickets-1989140986236>

## YCL Harry Pollit School

The Young Communist League are pleased to be running the Harry Pollitt School once again for 2026, convening in Manchester on 10 and 11 October for a weekend of rigorous Marxist-Leninist study and socialist coordination. This school serves as a foundational site for trade unionists and students to refine the theoretical frameworks essential for genuine on the ground organising and the broader struggle for socialism in Britain. Tickets are priced at £20 for unwaged attendees, £30 for waged, and £35 for solidarity. For further information, contact [marxisteducation@ycl.org.uk](mailto:marxisteducation@ycl.org.uk).



I read the Morning Star because I want a paper I can trust. It tells me about the issues I want to read about, the news I want to read about. It touches on issues the other papers don't

**Maxine Peake**  
Morning Star Ambassador  
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