



PUSHING BACK RACISM AND THE FAR RIGHT

● Migrant care workers speak out >>Pages 8&9
● Racist knife attack in Edinburgh ● Anti-fascist
wins in Southampton and Birmingham >>Page 7

Socialist Worker

£1 | No 3011 | 24 - 30 June 2026 | socialistworker.co.uk



REPRESSION

Stand with Soas Palestine activist

PALESTINE protesters gathered outside the Old Bailey in central London on Monday morning for the start of Sarah Cotte's trial.

Soas university student Sarah was charged with "inviting support for a proscribed organisation" under the Terrorism Act.

It's part of Labour's clampdown on protest.

>>Page 4

MIDDLE EAST



Eyewitness from Lebanon

THE US forced Israel to agree to a ceasefire with Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah because it's desperate to strike a deal with Iran.

But Israeli strikes killed at least 47 people on Sunday night—and Israeli politicians want to grab southern Lebanon.

In Beirut, Lebanese socialist Ghassan told Socialist Worker that the peace talks have changed nothing in Lebanon.

>>Page 4

THEORY

Stopping climate catastrophe

MATT HUBER is the author of Climate Change as Class War.

He is based at Syracuse University in New York. He will be speaking at Marxism Festival 2026.

He spoke to Socialist Worker about how to reorientate the climate movement on the working class.

>>Pages 10&11



AFTER TWO YEARS OF BACKING AUSTERITY, RACISM AND GENOCIDE...

A KEIRFUL END FOR STARMER

After years of mounting failure, Keir Starmer is finally leaving No. 10. As the new leadership race begins, **Tomáš Tengely-Evans** looks at the legacy he leaves behind

KEIR STARMER has been forced to resign as prime minister in the wake of Andy Burnham winning the Makerfield by-election last week.

The Labour leadership race will begin on 9 July, allowing a new leader to be in place for September.

Burnham has said he will stand, and right winger Wes Streeting said on Monday that he will back the former Greater Manchester mayor.

As anti-Brexit campaigners blared Beethoven's Ode To Joy in the background, Starmer reeled off a list of "achievements" leading up to the crescendo. "Look at what we've achieved in just two years," he said, fighting off the tears.

Starmer claimed that the Labour government had meant "an end to austerity" and rights for workers and renters. But his first acts as prime minister were maintaining the two-child benefit cap—keeping over one million children in poverty—and stealing winter fuel allowance from ten million pensioners.

The Employment Rights Act was watered down to appease big



business while the Renters' Rights Act does not tackle the biggest issue facing tenants—sky-high rents.

The real "achievements" Starmer listed made the world less safe—and fuelled the far right and racism.

He boasted of "the biggest uplift in defence spending since the Cold War", "boat crossings falling" and "asylum hotels closing".

Failure

His appointment of Peter Mandelson—friend of paedophile billionaire Jeffrey Epstein—didn't feature in the speech.

Nor did he recount saying that Israel "has that right" to cut off power and water to Gaza or his support for genocide. Or mention that Labour ramped up the war on trans+ people.

How did Starmer fail so spectacularly after just under two years?

A cycle of crises is feeding through the political system. Since 2007, the British state has been hit by the global financial crisis, Brexit, Covid-19 and the loss of legitimacy over its support for Israel.

We have already lived through a decade of six prime ministers—in contrast, there were only three in the 30 years before the financial crisis of 2007.

The turmoil has deep roots in the crisis of the 1970s. A crisis of profitability returned just as the British state was reeling from its decline as a global power.

The response from the British ruling class was neoliberalism. There was a narrowing of space between the Tories and Labour and a growing gulf between voters and parties.

It reinforced the sense that people cannot have any say over political and economic decisions, however limited they were before.

When the global financial crisis hit, ruling classes turned to austerity and ramped up scapegoating of migrants. They legitimised the far right's racism and allowed them to pose as an "anti-establishment" force taking on the elites.

But neoliberal orthodoxy, too, has not survived. We are seeing a shift to new ways of managing and organising the global capitalist

Starmer's lacklustre list of victories as prime minister moved even him to tears

system that relies much more on state intervention.

This is intertwined with the breakdown of the liberal capitalist order that has dominated the West since 1945.

So, Starmer and chancellor Rachel Reeves talked about wanting to copy "Bidenomics". This saw the previous US administration under Joe Biden use state intervention in the economy to make US capitalism more competitive with China.

Sluggish

Economic growth has been sluggish for the past decade in Britain. And, if the Labour government wanted to boost growth, it would have to increase investment through boosting taxes or borrowing.

But it didn't want to upset the rich and the financial markets. Instead it pushed austerity mark 2. Relaunch after relaunch, lurch rightwards after lurch rightwards followed.

Starmer will go down as one of the greyest and most grotesque representatives of the "Labourite" tradition. Labour fails working class people because of "Labourism"—the idea that parliament is more

important than workers' struggles for winning social change.

The party has articulated working class hopes of a better world, but aims to take the reins of the British state and rule in the "national interest".

The trouble is that there is no such thing as a national interest between bankers, bosses, landlords and working class people.

Any attempt to rule in a "national interest" means working within the parameters of what the ruling class will allow.

When capitalism is booming, it has much greater capacity to allow reforms without upsetting profit-making.

Today, the whole system is in crisis from economic stagnation to climate chaos and the threat of war.

Big business is willing to allow very little right now. And it has demanded Labour waters down the mildest of reforms that could be barriers to profit-making. Starmer and Reeves have been happy to oblige.

There is plenty of money to boost working class living standards, but that requires a confrontation with big business and a break with the market.



**Neoliberal
orthodoxy has not
survived either**

Get in
touch with
Socialist
Worker



Email reports@socialistworker.co.uk
Web www.socialistworker.co.uk
Facebook "Socialist Worker (Britain)"
Twitter @socialistworker



Newsdesk
020 7840 5656
Circulation
020 7840 5601



Write to
Socialist Worker
PO Box 74955
London
E16 9EJ

Will Andy Burnham be a break from Starmer?

WILL ANDY Burnham, who will run for the leadership, be more willing to take on the power of the rich? All the indications say no.

Last year he said the Labour Party should not be in hock to the bond markets. He has spent the past year running away from the comment and trying to reassure big business.

Burnham told the bosses' newspaper, the Financial Times, that he was misinterpreted.

He said, "What I've said is we had a way of running the economy over a long period of time where we just gave up control of the fundamental drivers of the economy."

He made clear that he has no plans to change the "fiscal rules" chancellor Rachel Reeves uses to justify Labour's austerity mark 2.

Credibility

Burnham has brought in three mainstream economists as advisors in a bid to reassure bosses and bankers that he has "fiscal credibility".

One of them is former Bank of England chief economist Andy Haldane.

The second is Richard Hughes who chaired the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR)—a body created by Tory chancellor George Osborne to police austerity.

The other is Jim O'Neill, a former Tory minister and former chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management.

For all his "soft left" posturing, Burnham represents the politics of the neoliberal centre just as Starmer does.

He has not only made clear that he won't step outside the fiscal rules set by Labour.

He has also clearly signalled that there will be no break with the racism and authoritarianism of Labour—the opposite in fact.

During the campaign, he backed home secretary Shabana Mahmood's plans to clamp down on immigration. He was following the same strategy as Starmer of trying to "out-Reform" Reform UK on immigration.

Only a few days later he threw trans+ people under the bus and backed the EHRC's transphobic guidance.

This means a Burnham government will not be a bulwark against Reform UK or Restore Britain—it will be an incubator of the far right and fascism.

Let's cheer Starmer's demise—but changing one centrist for another will not bring the change millions of working class people need.

So let's build mobilisation from below, anti-racism and class struggle to fight for it.

Can Manchester's model be replicated?

LABOUR POLITICIANS breathed a sigh of relief after the Makerfield by-election last week as they believe Andy Burnham can save the party.

But the crisis facing Labour goes much deeper than Keir Starmer's leadership.

Burnham's popularity in the north west of England has come from positioning himself in opposition to Westminster.

He has been able to do so without a major break with the politics of the neoliberal centre.

But he will find it much harder to "run against Labour" if he leads it.

Elections expert Professor John Curtice said Burnham had "not only defied the national

Burnham defied a historic trend

trend, but the historical trend of most governments in most by-elections".

"He didn't just win handsomely, he increased his party's share of the vote by nearly 10 points," Curtice said.

"Can this be replicated elsewhere? Between them, the Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Greens, got no more than 3 percent of the vote.

"There are two crucial elements to Burnham's success. The first is the apparent readiness of those who are minded to vote for parties other than Reform UK or Restore Britain to fall in and back Burnham.

"In some instances, it will be anti-Reform UK tactical voting, but in other instances it's the second element of his success.

"He was riding two horses at once. He was riding as the person who was trying to appeal to the traditional Labour vote. In most contests at the moment Labour has struggled to persuade more than half the people who voted for them in 2024 to vote for them again.

"Burnham gets them back into the fold. But he was able to appeal to those who want to see the back of Starmer among people who voted Labour in the past and those who may be switching to the Greens or Liberal Democrats."

Curtice said that trick won't be easily repeated with Burnham as prime minister.

"Once he's his own man, he won't be able to campaign against himself in the way that he's been able to effectively campaign against Starmer."

'We'll keep organising against the far right'

ANTI-RACISTS ARE celebrating after the defeat of far right Reform UK and Restore Britain in the Makerfield by-election.

"Everyone is buzzing," local Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) activist Malcolm told Socialist Worker. "People can see it was worthwhile and had an effect.

"We feel like we have taken our town back—it feels like a different place."

Malcolm said that one anti-racist had been greeted with applause when they arrived at work last Friday morning.

Activists from SUTR handed out 30,000 leaflets during the election campaign.

"Every time Nigel Farage came to visit, one of the groups in towns in the constituency would spread the word. Within an hour we would have ten people down there to protest," said Malcolm.

"Some people have been out every day leafleting."

Malcolm said that the atmosphere in Makerfield changed throughout the campaign. At the start it felt possible that Reform UK would win.

"The racists had a lot of confidence at the start of the campaign," he said.

"They were bussing people in.



Anti-racists campaigned against the far right every day

They were driving around in huge vehicles like they own the place and were really aggressive.

Atmosphere

"But the atmosphere shifted, especially in the last two weeks. People were saying how fantastic they thought our leaflet was.

"People would tell us they voted for Labour and not for Reform UK or Restore Britain. Some people have illusions in Andy Burnham—but a lot don't. A lot of them said they agreed with the criticisms.

"I got the feeling people were using their vote against Reform UK, rather than for Labour."

Reform UK candidate Robert Kenyon made a series of misogynistic and transphobic comments on social media. His party defended him and said he is "a straight-talking, effective voice for normal working people in Makerfield".

So SUTR used leaflets that exposed the far right party's sexism and its racism.

Anti-racist Peta told Socialist Worker. "We have had a great response from both women and men to our leaflets. They listed all the things Kenyon and Reform UK had been saying.

"Women were saying they had

voted against Reform UK. They said there is no way they were going to vote for a misogynist."

Malcolm added, "Some people are hardened racists but we found some would listen and we did change some people's minds.

"I learnt a lot about how to approach people and argue with them and turn them around."

Makerfield anti-racists are jubilant.

But the more than 15,000 people who voted for Kenyon and the 3,000 votes for the rightwards split party Restore Britain show there is no room for complacency.

Anti-racists in the area say they will continue to organise. "We are going to have a picnic to bring people together," said Malcolm. "We are thinking about Love Music Hate Racism events."

Most anti-racist working class people in Makerfield will have voted for the Labour candidate because they hate Reform UK. And many will have wanted to send a message to Keir Starmer too.

Many of the people who voted for Burnham are a big audience that the anti-racist movement can tap into. It is an opportunity to deepen SUTR's roots and fight the far right—and Labour's war on migrants that fuels it.



'Peace talks change nothing,' socialist in Beirut says

THE US forced Israel to agree to a ceasefire with Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah on Monday.

Donald Trump fears that Israel's war in Lebanon will derail negotiations with Iran over the coming 60-days.

But Israeli strikes killed at least 47 people on Sunday night—and Israeli politicians want to grab southern Lebanon.

"For every tear of an Israeli mother, a thousand Lebanese mothers must weep. All of Lebanon must burn!" Israeli security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said last Friday.

He added that Israel "must not withdraw from any territory that our fighters have captured" and claimed that "Israel is not subordinate to the US."

Iran and the US announced a "memorandum of understanding" last week that was meant to end fighting in Lebanon. And a US official announced last Friday that Israel and Lebanese resistance Hezbollah had also agreed to a ceasefire.

Occupying

In Beirut, Lebanese socialist Ghassan told Socialist Worker that the peace talks have changed nothing in Lebanon. Israeli occupying forces have pushed further north within Lebanon since the start of the war and are refusing to leave.

"Israel is still insisting on maintaining its position," said Ghassan. "It wants to keep a piece of south Lebanon."

"It seems the US is in support of that. There is some give and take from the Europeans, but it is something the US is behind."

"The Israelis have always wanted to control Lebanon and Hezbollah is keeping them from that. Their strategy is to hurt the Lebanese people as much as possible so they revolt against Hezbollah, but that is not happening."

Ghassan explained that the armed resistance is holding Israel back though. And Hezbollah has steadfastly resisted pressure from the Lebanese state to disarm.

**Israeli minister Itamar Ben-Gvir
'Lebanon must burn!'**

"Opposition to the government is growing also," he said. This goes beyond the base of support for Hezbollah. "No-one really trusts them or thinks they can do a good job in the negotiations."

People are raising issues of environmental and social justice. Ghassan explained that the state has given new licenses for rock quarries for cement production "that were eating up the mountains".

Anger

And there is widespread anger that the state wants to go ahead with national exams in schools, even though schools have been destroyed by bombing. People in the bombed areas and beyond are saying the state can't do that.

Trump and vice president JD Vance have reminded Israel's leaders that their country is armed and politically supported by the West. Vance told the Israelis that Trump is "the only head of state in the entire world who is sympathetic to the nation of Israel at this moment in time".

Israel is the West's watchdog in the Middle East. Yet it is a watchdog that is straining at the leash. It is increasingly able to assert its own interests in the region, whether it means sending ground troops into Lebanon, genocide in Gaza or backing illegal settlements and driving people from their homes in the West Bank.



DESPITE ANNOUNCEMENT of a ceasefire, Israeli bombing killed 47 people in Lebanon PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Protest Palestine activist's trial

PALESTINE protesters gathered outside the Old Bailey in central London on Monday morning for the start of Sarah Cotte's trial.

Soas university student Sarah was charged last March for "inviting support for a proscribed organisation" under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act for a speech she allegedly gave in October 2023.

Another student at the same university was also arrested on suspicion of a terror offence.

If Sarah is convicted, she could face a prison term of up to 14 years.

The Defend the Soas 2 campaign said that Zionist organisation UK Lawyers for Israel was involved in alerting the Metropolitan Police to the speech, leading to Sarah's arrest in a dawn raid.

Disgusting

Outside the court, supporter Shoda told Socialist Worker that putting Palestine activists in prison is "disgusting". "It's not how we should treat young people," she said.

"It should be a wake up call to all of us that they are facing that level of punishment. It's a breach of our democracy, rights

and freedom of speech.

"With Keir Starmer resigning we want to see all these charges dropped."

A speaker at the rally said, "The real terrorists are the British, the US and the Israeli states who unconditionally support genocide."

Sarah has said, "The consequences of a conviction go much further than my personal life. It attacks our ability to speak out in support of Palestine, in support of the Palestinian resistance in particular and the right of armed struggle."

"It represses our ability to mobilise, to protest, to maintain

and build up the movement that we have on the streets."

On the same day as Sarah went to court, eight members of the Filton 25 group of Palestine activists were heading in for the second of a series of trials for their alleged actions against the Elbit Systems Israeli weapons firm.

The stakes are high for them. The first trial resulted in four people being sentenced to years in prison as a result of a "terrorism connection" being used in sentencing.

But a political campaign in defence of the right to speak out in support of Palestinians can win. In March, Kwabena Devonish was found not guilty of terrorism charges related to a speech at a Palestine protest in November 2023.

The campaign for Kwabena won broad-based support from across the Palestine and anti-racist movements. It put the charges against Kwabena in the context of a wider crackdown on Palestine solidarity.

"As time went on, cracks in the architecture of repression started to show—and we took strength from this," Kwabena's supporter Hussein told Socialist Worker at the time.

Student Sarah Cotte

Calls for resistance from global anti-war conference

by CAMILLA ROYLE

THOUSANDS OF activists gathered in London for the International Conference Against War last Saturday.

It was organised by the Stop The War Coalition and backed by 11 national trade unions and over 1,100 individual signatories and activists from across 23 countries.

Raphael is one of hundreds who came from France and is part of the left wing LFI party. He told Socialist Worker that French president Emmanuel Macron is a warmonger.

“He wants to cut public services, but every month there is a new announcement of more money for war,” he said.

Ahmad said the anti-war movement is in its infancy in Canada. “That’s why we were interested in coming here,” he told Socialist Worker. “Solidarity should be across borders because war impacts us globally.”

Çiğdem from Turkey told Socialist Worker that the key questions are solidarity with Kurdish people and Palestine.

“President Recep Tayyip Erdogan pretends to be a friend of Palestine,” she said. “But he continues to trade with Israel and work jointly on oil pipelines. We are trying to expose the government’s lies.”

Repression

She explained that Turkish anti-war activists face severe repression. The whole of the capital Ankara will be shut down for a week when Donald Trump visits for a Nato summit next month.

“They won’t allow any sort of protest. They are authoritarian and disregard human rights,” she said.

The event drew together leading anti-war campaigners from around the world. Speakers included Palestinian physician and MP Mustafa Barghouti, Amara Enyia of the Movement for Black Lives in the US and French LFI MP Jérôme Legavre.

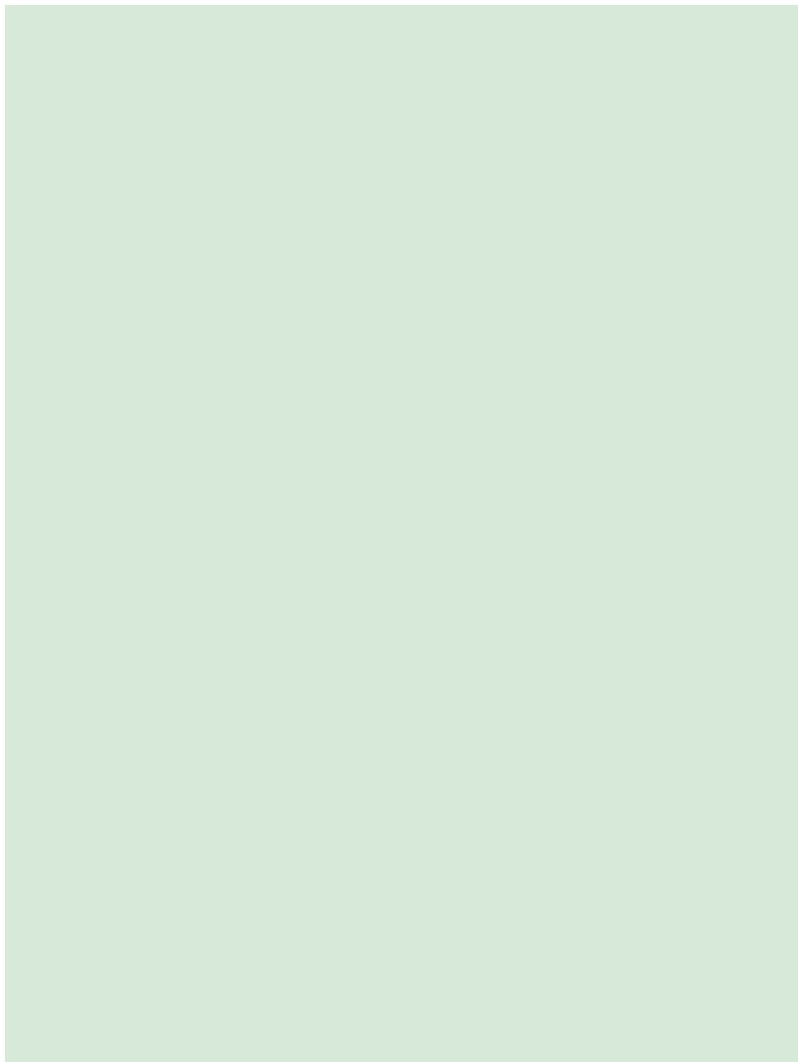
Aleksei Sakhnin from Peace From Below in Ukraine and Igor Romanchuk from Russia spoke on a platform together. They made a joint call for peace in Ukraine and opposition to Nato and Russian aggression.

From Britain, speakers included MPs Jeremy Corbyn, Zarah Sultana and Richard Burgon and the general secretaries of the UCU, NEU, PCS, RMT and TSSA unions.

Sukaina Rajwani is the mother of Fatema Zainab, imprisoned as a terrorist last week, as part of the Filton 25 group of non-violent direct actionists.

To applause from the crowd, she said, “If this was about criminal damage, Fatema Zainab would be out right now.

“But it is more than that. It is about saving Palestinian lives. It is about exposing the fact that the government makes genocidal weapons on British soil.



THE BRITISH Palestine movement opened the conference (top) Some 2,500 people attended (above) Jérôme Legavre, an MP for the French left wing LFI party (left)

itself—it’s called capitalism.”

Sean Vernell from the UCU union said that workers in France, Italy and Greece striking against genocide in Gaza had set a benchmark for the kind of action that is needed to stop the war machine.

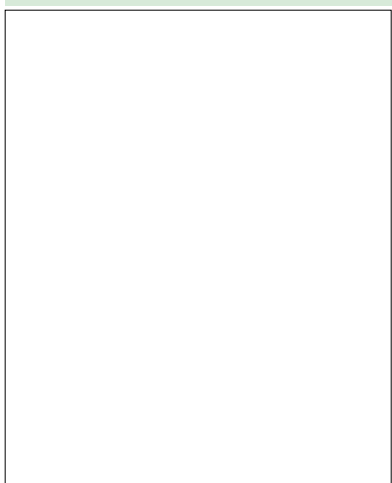
Struggle

“When Trump tried to wage gangster imperialism in the Middle East, he lost. Despite their massive military power, they’re not in a situation they can win.”

He added that the struggle against racism is connected to the fight against war and imperialism. “When they unleash the dogs of war, they unleash the dogs of racism as well.”

Giorgos Gogos is general secretary of the dockworkers’ union at the port of Piraeus, in Greece. He told the rally how workers had blocked container ships of military equipment heading to Israel as well as Israeli cruise ships.

The conference called for an international day of action for Palestine on 10 October, including a national demonstration in Britain, and mobilisations against rearmament on 21-22 November.



“We are at a point in British history where pro-Palestine protests are criminal acts and direct action in saving lives has become terrorism.”

In Germany, some 55,000 students across the country took part in the most recent round of school strikes against conscription.

Protest

Student activist Felix Kreklow Rojas said, “If this is the democracy they want us to fight for, I refuse to kill for it and I refuse to die for it.

“Young people are no longer protesting only against conscription. They have begun to understand that the problem is bigger than conscription

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

RESIST THE FAR RIGHT’S ISLAMOPHOBIC LIES

RUPERT LOWE claims his new report exposes the true scale of “Muslim rape gangs” in Britain. In reality, the Restore Britain fuhrer is cynically using the testimonies of survivors in the report, published last week, to promote a far right agenda.

The report claims to use academic methodology and held public hearings facilitated by a panel of “experts”.

But there is a problem with the report—its key claim is bullshit. Lowe insists that “Muslim” gangs are to blame for abuse because he claims Islam is the root of violence against women.

The “experts”

Lowe’s “experts” are a bunch of rancid Islamophobes.

Carla Lockhart is an MP for Democratic Unionist Party, a party in the north of Ireland, and chairs the parliamentary anti-abortion group. Nick Timothy MP recently whipped up a storm over Muslim people being allowed to pray in public. Esther McVey MP was accused of dog whistle racism when she introduced a bill to label halal and kosher meat this month.

None of these people have any expertise on sexual abuse—but they are experts in perpetrating Islamophobia.

The “findings”

Lowe claims, “It has been previously established that, at the very least, 250,000 young white girls have been subjected to repeated rape, gang rape, trafficking, torture, pregnancy, forced conversion to Islam and life-long trauma.”

But this has absolutely not been established. The 250,000 figure comes from a footnote to a speech given by Baron Malcolm Pearson to the House of Lords in 2019. Pearson talked of the “250,000 victims of radical Muslim grooming gangs, which in itself is probably an underestimate”.

He continued, “If you take the accepted figure of 1,400 victims in Rotherham alone and extend it across the country, you come to a much larger figure”. Pearson then included the figures from inquiries into child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Telford and Oxford and extrapolated them to the whole population.

Pearson is no expert in CSE—but he did once lead far right party Ukip. In 2014, he suggested that the Quran had inspired the murder of British soldier Lee Rigby. Pearson also invited Nazi Tommy Robinson to parliament in 2018.

Baroness Margaret Ann Jay’s report stated that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, between 1997 and 2013.

But this was not a figure for grooming gangs, Muslim perpetrators or white victims—it was an estimate of all sexually exploited children in the area. It is the same for Telford and Oxford. The reports used were for all CSE, not Muslim or Asian “grooming gangs”.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

WE ARE raising the subscription and cover price of our publications, Socialist Worker and the International Socialist journal, from Wednesday of next week.

From 1 July, Socialist Worker will cost £2 and International Socialism will cost £10.

The monthly subscription will rise from £5 to £7.50 for Socialist Worker and from £2.50 to £3 for the quarterly journal. The joint subscription to both publications will increase from £10 to £10.50.

We have maintained the same price for over 16 years while expenses have risen amid the cost of living crisis.

A combination of increasing the price and changes to distribution mean that income from subscriptions will now outmatch production and distribution costs, putting our publications on firm foundations for decades to come.

By subscribing, you help us produce daily news and analysis, reports from across Britain and internationally, and ideological interventions in key debates.

Please support revolutionary socialist media: socialistworker.co.uk/subscribe

**Tomáš Tengely-Evans, Editor of Socialist Worker
Joseph Choonara, Editor of International Socialism**

ANALYSIS

ROB HOVEMAN



Trump's economic time bomb still ticks

"I DIDN'T want to see economic catastrophe. If you kept this going, that could have happened." This was Donald Trump's uncommonly honest explanation for the 14 point memorandum of understanding representing his defeat by Iran.

Whatever Trump claims, that catastrophe is still a possibility.

There are several reasons the oil price didn't reach the stratospheric heights that some oil analysts predicted the Iran war would bring. Saudi Arabia boosted oil supplies to the Red Sea port of Yanbu. Other oil producers, including Russia, also increased oil production.

Oil reserves were also massively run down. And China cut demand for oil by diverting energy production to coal-fired power stations and solar power.

However, the oil price is still around a third above pre-war levels. Reserves now must be rebuilt. Meanwhile, oil refineries have sustained damage in the Gulf and cannot be repaired overnight.

Oil tanker owners want reassurance that the peace will hold before they risk sending tankers into the Gulf again.

The peace is very fragile—Trump keeps threatening to bomb Iran again and Israel's murderous bombing campaign in Lebanon continues. Meanwhile, Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian oil refineries are impairing Russian oil production.

But there are more problems facing the world economy. Fertiliser production vital for food supplies has been drastically cut. A severe El Niño in the Pacific is likely to combine with global warming to produce extreme weather conditions which will further adversely affect food production.

Then, there are mounting concerns over government debt—which is at record levels outside wartime and severe recessions.

US federal debt, already at over 100 percent of total annual US production, is on course to hit 150 percent because of tax cuts, primarily for the rich, increased arms spending and economic growth which is too slow. To fund that debt, the US government has to borrow massively from the bond markets.

Competition

The US government has long been considered the most trustworthy debtor in the world, so funding its debt hasn't been a problem. But there is growing competition for money to fund government debt across the world. And some of that money is now being diverted into funding AI data centres.

The bond markets are also increasingly wary of the growing debt mountain and the threat of inflation arising from the disruption caused by the Iran war. Interest rates on government bonds have been rising.

The effect of rising interest rates generally is obviously to make the cost of borrowing more expensive. That, in turn, discourages borrowing both for investment and consumption and reduces economic growth.

Trump is very chuffed that on the many occasions when he has announced victory in the Iran war, the US stock market has risen. Stock markets in general, and the US stock market in particular, keep rising to record levels boosted by the idea that the AI revolution will bring a productivity, economic growth and profits bonanza.

However, far from the stock markets being more intelligent than anyone—bar Trump himself, as the orange ego proclaims—the maths just doesn't add up. Sooner or later, the AI bubble is going to burst.

An AI crash will likely cause a decline in US consumption spending, which is only growing because the richest 10 percent of Americans have seen their stock market wealth grow.

A drop in wealth and consumption will lead to a fall in US economic growth. This will make the US federal debt even worse and cause further problems in the bond markets.

Nor is China, now the second largest economy in the world, likely to come to the rescue. Despite Trump's tariffs, China is still running an enormous trade surplus and seems unwilling, or perhaps unable, to stimulate domestic consumption—which has been constrained by the bursting of its property bubble.

It seems very unlikely that there will be the peace dividend that Trump wants from the deal with Iran. And when he mentions the possibility of an economic catastrophe, it simply increases the odds of such a catastrophe happening.

LETTERS

Email letters@socialistworker.co.uk Post Socialist Worker, PO Box 74955, London E16 9EJ

The world's first trillionaire makes life unbearable

ELON MUSK is now a trillionaire.

This amount is almost beyond comprehension.

He makes about \$1 million a minute. If he spent that \$1 million every day, it would take 2,740 years to spend it all.

There are few things more unconscionable than such an evil person having such a large portion of the world's wealth.

There are few things scarier than such a hefty amount of money being in the hands of someone who could never be trusted to use it for good.

When I hear the words "Musk is a trillionaire," my mind jumps straight to the rows and rows of wrongly detained people in Ice facilities.

People who are not being fed properly. People who are without the medication that they need.

Cruelty

I think of the cruelty of Donald Trump's welfare system, one that Musk is in support of. A system where people on food benefits are given just \$6 a day.

I think of how Musk is

using his power and influence to help unleash what constitutes a "cleansing" of transgender people from the US. How he's fostering attitudes that allow them to be murdered with abandon and treated at all points like second class citizens.

I remember how he could end world hunger several times over but just doesn't seem to want to. How he pledged to give \$6.6 billion towards it—just 0.66 percent of his wealth—but then gave that money to his own foundation instead.

Not his monkeys, not his circus, right?

Musk being a trillionaire should inspire disgust.

A man, the richest in the world, is using his wealth and power to make the lives of ordinary people unbearable.

It should serve as a reminder of the laundry list of things wrong with the Trump administration and the yes men like Musk who support it.

I'm concerned, and you should be too.

Remy Dharmi
East London

We need militancy

THE GROWTH of the far right in Britain and the north of Ireland has been met with mass anti-fascist mobilisations, such as in Brighton last week.

But the race riots are a stark demonstration of the growing need for militancy on a broad scale.

Already we have far right street mobs burning houses and holding check points. We must also consider the looming threat of what they could do under a Reform UK government.

Nigel Farage is open that his answer to imagined "two-tier policing" will be to set the police—likely in his Trumpian proposed immigration force—against the left.

The show trial of the Filton 4 and proscription of Palestine Action are the latest high-profile instances of repression of the left.

Mass anti-racist organisations choose to distance themselves from or undermine militant anti-fascist groups, but they must be asking themselves now if the image of establishment respectability is more valuable than doing what it takes to defend our communities.

Not everyone can be frontline, but part of the work of all serious anti-fascists should be to support those who are.

Anna Price
South Wales



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Will the Greens buckle under Zionist pressure?

LABOUR HAS been the dominant party in Hackney for all but eight years since 1964.

A factor that saw Labour humbled in Hackney in the recent by-election was its continued loyalty to Israel.

Hackney Green Party made a pledge to divest the council's pension fund from Israeli firms. It has also committed to de-twin the borough from the Israeli port of Haifa.

But the council is being tested.

UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) wrote to the council complaining that

a photo of Brenda Puech, a Green councillor, on the council website showed her wearing a keffiyeh. UKLFI claimed it was "antisemitic".

Hackney council removed Puech's picture. Zoë Garbett, Green mayor, condemned the removal.

If a council with a Green majority, headed by a Green mayor can't overturn this or stand up to Zionist bullies, how is it going to disinvest from firms that are complicit in the terror state of Israel?

Sasha Simic
East London

The real terrorists

IN THE past few weeks we've seen terrorism on the streets of Belfast. But not the terrorism ascribed to people holding signs and sitting cross-legged in public places.

The assault on the Palestinian people is terrorism. Terrorism the British government supports.

The two thousand plus dual British nationals who served in the Israeli forces are fine returning home. And we're in no danger apparently, even though war crimes have been committed.

Louis Shawcross
County Down, north of Ireland

Politicians’ anti-Muslim hate behind Scottish knife attacks

In the aftermath of racist assaults in Edinburgh last weekend, Frankie Murden spoke to Stand Up To Racism activists in the city about how they plan to respond

POLITICIANS PUSHING racist lies about Muslims and migrants led to a violent attack in Leith, Edinburgh, last weekend.

A white man attacked five men with a large weapon before being arrested. Campaign group Mend Scotland said that several of the victims were from the Muslim community.

The attacker shouted as he was arrested, “I’m protecting the country from these fucking Muslim bastards raping our young daughters.”

Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) Edinburgh said, “We stand in solidarity with the victims of a racist attack on Leith Walk.

“Two men were apprehended at the scene, with footage of one of the men brandishing a large knife circulating widely on social media.

“Attacks like these are the direct consequence of Nigel Farage’s call for people to respond with ‘pure, cold rage’ to the tragic murder of Henry Nowak.

“Politicians and pundits who pour fuel on the fire of some tragic incidents are strangely quiet now that the perpetrators are white British men.

“SUTR stands with the diverse community of Leith in the aftermath of this frightening attack. As one woman shouted from her window following the attack, ‘Leith won’t stand for racism’.”

Felix, a local SUTR activist, saw the immediate aftermath of the attack. “Since the pogroms in Belfast and the racist riots around Henry Nowak’s murder in Southampton, there’s been a marked shift,” he said.

Electric campaign launch

SOME 800 people attended the London People of Women Against the Far Right (WAFR) last week. It came shortly after racist pogroms in Belfast, in the north of Ireland.

Fiona Ferguson from the Irish socialist group People Before Profit (PBP) said that, “The far right riots were never about protecting women and children.”

Samira Ali, co-convenor of WAFR, said, “We’ve seen similar scenes here. In Southampton, we saw a horrific attack whipped up for racist gain.

“These are being whipped up by Nigel Farage and supported and attended by Tommy Robinson. And they all have the backing of the world’s first trillionaire, Elon Musk.

“But we’ve also seen brilliant



Anti-racist demo in Glasgow

Felix and his partner have lived in Leith their entire lives. But recently she was racially abused on her way to work. “This doesn’t normally happen—Leith is a very diverse place,” he said.

“This racist attack is exactly what Farage has created with his divisive scapegoating of migrants and refugees.”

Appalled

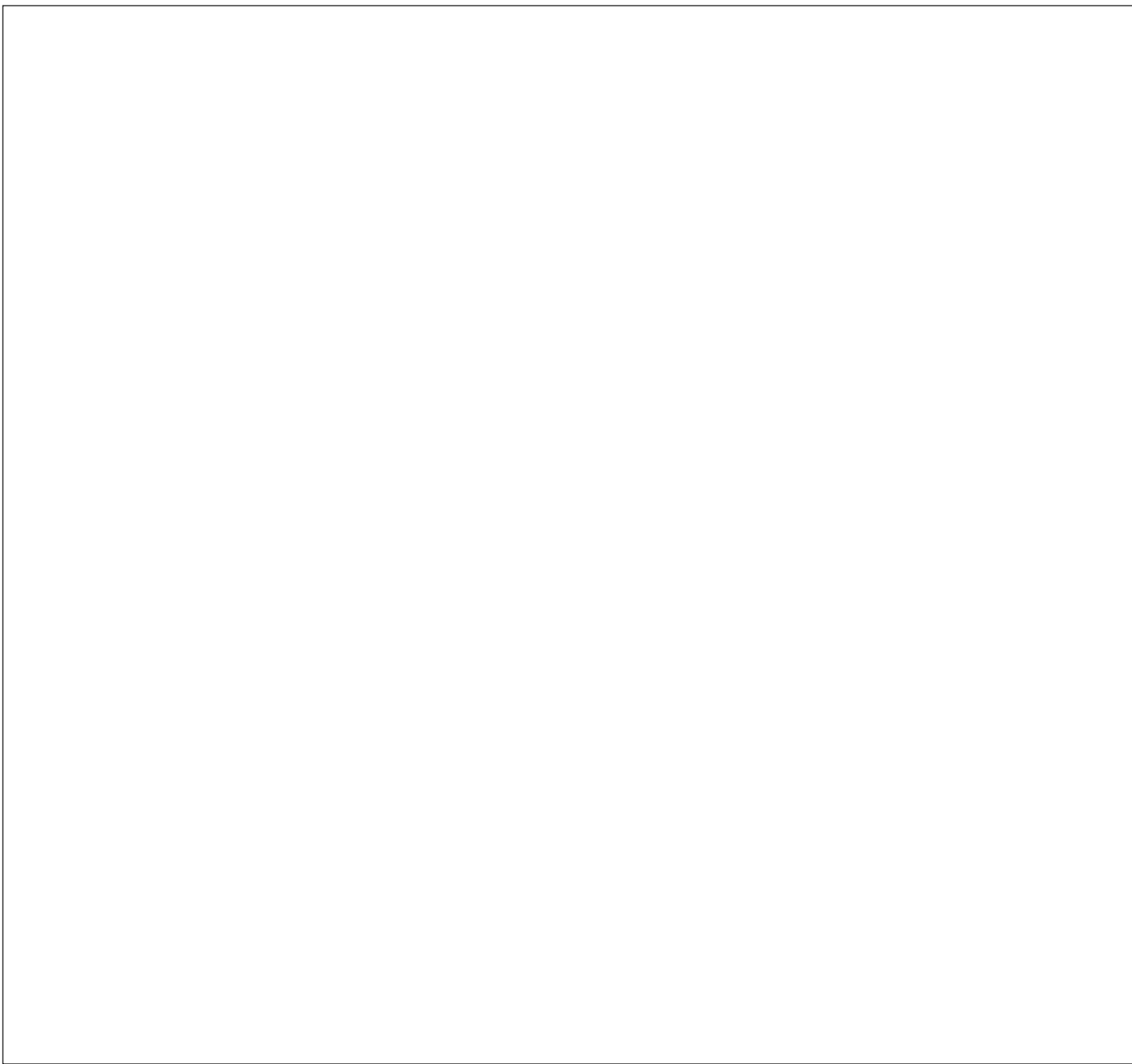
Felix said that following the attack it’s important to show that “the majority of people in Leith are absolutely appalled by this racism.”

“We just need the anti-racist majority to show that, to show that people are welcome here and people are safe,” he added.

“There needs to be a response like in Glasgow where anti-fascists out-numbered the far right 100 to one.”

SUTR Edinburgh have called a solidarity rally to reclaim the streets of Leith for anti-racists.

■ Join the rally on Saturday 27 June, 1pm. Further details to follow



ANTI-RACIST ACTIVISTS outnumbered the far right by more than four to one in Birmingham

Fascists humiliated by anti-racists

By JUNE BUDD and FRANKIE MURDEN

ANTI-FASCISTS outnumbered the far right in Birmingham and Southampton last weekend.

In Birmingham, more than 800 people joined a Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) counter-protest against Britain First.

The Nazis, who claimed that “thousands of patriots would be descending on Birmingham”, managed to muster only 200.

Anti-racists demanded that the fascists not be allowed to march. But instead the cops let Britain First march but barred anti-racists from doing so.

Sid, a student from the University of Warwick, told Socialist Worker, “The police surrounded us on all sides and

wouldn’t let us march. Though we were static, morale was still high and we managed to outnumber them.”

A group of counter-protesters tried to push forward to prevent the march, but police responded with violence and arrested four people.

Convicted

The fascists slunk off after a short route, with Britain First’s leader Paul Golding—the convicted terrorist and alleged sexual predator—in a foul mood.

But anti-fascists held their ground. Shea, a local activist in SUTR, said, “We were there long before they started and stayed there long after.

“It was important that

we had so many people out, because the police are not going to stop the fascists.

“The council leader and the mayor said that they didn’t want the far right in Birmingham, but then they didn’t do anything about it.”

Around 175 anti-racists outnumbered 40 fascists in Southampton.

Simon, an SUTR activist in the city, said, “It still feels a bit raw in Southampton, but today was excellent.

“The far right wants a rerun of the summer of 2024, where racists terrorised the country demonstrating outside hotels housing asylum seekers.

“But that’s not happening—this is because of anti-racists and groups like SUTR.”

Longer version available at socialistworker.co.uk

UNION DEMANDS 'FAIR VISAS'

MEET THE MIGRANT CARE WORKERS TAKING ON DEPORTATIONS

Labour is threatening to deport the workers who care for you and your relatives in health and social care. But the migrants are fighting back—and you should support them. They spoke to **Jude Mckechnie** about their lives and campaign

FOUR YEARS ago the Tory government put out a call for migrants to come and work in Britain's understaffed health and care sectors. Now, a Labour government wants to deport them.

Samuel is one of the tens of thousands of migrant workers keeping the sector running.

He moved to Britain from Uganda on a Health and Care Worker visa, which promised that after five years he would be eligible for settled status.

But the current government has removed this right, leaving workers liable to deportation.

"When I came to this country, I was told the policy was five years, it should be five years. We don't want to have anything less than what we were promised."

He told Socialist Worker that the government sees migrant workers as disposable and treats them like second class citizens.

"We want mutual respect. You can't change the goalposts for workers in the middle of the game. We've been working to the bone night and day, looking after vulnerable people."

Workers like Samuel, whose visas have expired, have 60 days to find another employer willing to sponsor them or they have to leave.

"I have a month left or I will have to go back to Uganda," he said.

"The chances of finding an employer to renew my visa in that time are very low. I don't know how I'm going to find the money for a plane ticket."



Under current rules, many migrant care workers have visas tied to their employer. Losing a job can mean losing the right to remain in the country.

Labour's deeply racist white paper on

immigration is proposing to raise skill thresholds for work visas, increasing salary requirements and extending the time it takes to reach settlement status.

"What people don't realise is that most of the sponsor companies are abusing the situation we've been put in and are taking advantage of it," Samuel said.

"Because your visa is tied to your employer, the employer can do anything they want to do with you."

"We have some colleagues who have actually died due to unfair treatment and because of the hostility from employers."

"We cannot just move to another job and there is no access to funds so if we get sick, we still have to go to work or risk losing our visa."

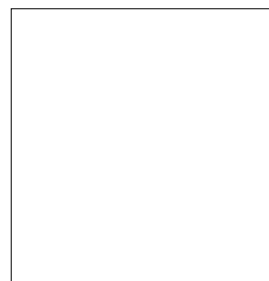
"We have no other options. And the



You can't change the goalposts for workers in the middle of the game



MIGRANT HEALTH and care workers rally in Parliament Square and march on Downing Street in London on 10 June to demand 'fair visas' PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN



Labour home secretary **Shabana Mahmood** wants to push through a crackdown on migrants (top) Unison union leader **Andrea Egan** has slammed her proposals as 'shameful' (above)



only option, the only route to a bit of independence, was Indefinite Leave to Remain. And they're trying to move it to 15 years from five.

"This government's expectation is that we will just live with that. It's immoral, it's wrong."

But migrant care workers are not prepared to accept their unjust treatment and are organising a fightback.

They are leading a fair visa campaign—demanding that they are not left at the mercy of bosses or the Home Office.

Supports

Sameer currently supports adults living with mental distress in east London. He told Socialist Worker he moved from Pakistan nearly three years ago.

Despite having a master's degree, he makes not a penny more than minimum wage.

"I only make £12.71 an hour. There are other places that pay £15 an hour for the same job I'm doing, but I can't leave my current workplace because I can't risk my visa."

"I pay rent just like everyone else. I'm struggling with the cost of living just like everyone else."

"I have to work long hours to be able to pay rent and bills."

"If we had pay that reflects the importance of the work we do, life wouldn't be so hard. All carers would benefit."

Sameer told Socialist Worker that the changes to the government's immigration policy have made him "sick with worry".

He sold all his belongings before



Labour peddles anti-migrant lies and boosts right

MINISTERS PRAISED migrant workers when they filled the gaps in our services caused by years of underfunding, staffing shortages and privatisation.

Yet the far right's scapegoating of migrants for the problems that plague working class communities has pulled politics rightwards.

Prime minister Keir Starmer's answer has been to legitimise the far right's racism by attacking migrant workers for a cost of living crisis they did not create.

Hope is a migrant care worker in Glasgow, Scotland. She told Socialist Worker that changes to migrant workers visas are a product of an increasingly hostile environment to immigration.

Contribution

"When you hear Nigel Farage saying that a Reform UK government would not let migrants stay in social housing, it makes you feel like your contribution means nothing.

"That you are not recognised as a human being.

"One of the main challenges that we face is that we are being blamed for everything that's wrong in this country. It is making things very dangerous for us," she said.

"We are being treated as collateral damage by this government because they want British workers to blame us for why their lives are so bad and for why things are so hard.

"But we are not to blame for poor housing, we are not to blame for waiting times in the NHS, we are not to blame for any of it.

"We are not the burden they make us out to be.

"We are part of the solution."

We are being blamed for everything that is wrong in the county, it's dangerous for us

Unison union leads fair visa campaign

THE UNISON union is fighting to make sure that no worker has to choose between enduring exploitation and risking deportation.

The Fair Visa Campaign, led by migrant workers, is calling for employer-sponsored visas in social care to be replaced with a sector-wide visa, protection of settlement rights, and a Fair Pay Agreement for every worker in social care.

This demand is about more than immigration policy. It is fundamentally about workplace power.

Taibat is part of the Migrant Worker Network. She told Socialist Worker how migrant workers were taking the fight for their rights straight to Downing Street.

"This struggle has been going on for months. We started this in December, when the government brought out the policy and were trying to apply the new laws to Indefinite Leave to Remain retrospectively," she said.

"So, we had to start demanding that they change the policy and we started organising ourselves.

"We lobbied our MPs, letting them know that it was not fair because of the treatment that we get from all our employers, to keep us in that kind of sector for 15 years or ten years. It wouldn't be fair on us.

Delegates

"We went to parliament on 2 February. We sent delegates from each region to go and speak to them.

"After that, we never heard anything. Nothing positive came out of it.

"The government is still hellbent on going ahead with their policy."

She explained that the prime minister refused to engage with the campaign and seemed to be committed to bringing out Labour's new visa sponsorship policy for migrant workers by September.

"So, we started organising again and we decided to write a letter to the prime minister, which we delivered.

"Migrant workers are not the problem of this system. We care for the vulnerable. We are becoming vulnerable ourselves.

"We must have a fair visa and we must have fair pay. We will keep organising as migrant workers because we know our members are suffering. That's what keeps us going.

"We will always stand up to injustice."

moving to Britain and paid thousands of pounds in fees to have his wife join him on his visa. "Months later the government introduced a ban on dependents for all care workers, which took effect on 11 March 2024," he said.

"I managed to bring my wife over before they stopped allowing families. I would never have brought my family over if I knew this was going to happen. Everything we have is here in this country and they tell us we might have to start over again," he said.

"I have a baby who is only eighteen months old. Our future is so uncertain."

Ngozi, who works in community services in the south of England, moved to Britain from Nigeria.

She told Socialist Worker that she paid large sums in recruitment fees before arriving, only to find the promised hours never materialised.

"I have to travel two hours a day for three hours of work. And I cannot turn it down," said Ngozi.

"It doesn't matter that some days it costs me more to travel to work than what I make there. My visa is attached to my employer, so I have no choice."

"For years, many of us have been afraid to raise our voices about victimisation, exploitation and low pay. If my manager wanted to, he could just call up the Home Office and have me deported. The fear of that hangs over all of us.

"I can't go out and look for better opportunities or better working hours elsewhere."

Ngozi remains defiant in the face of the government's scapegoating and



racist attacks. "This country is built on migrant workers, and I am proud to be one of them," she said.

"We dream of providing for our families. Our journey is one of hope and sacrifice. This country needed us, they put out a call for migrant workers to come and care for the sick and dying.

"In return, we were promised a pathway to a better life, education and integration into the society that we help sustain.

"Migrant workers have come with aspirations of our own and for our families. We paid fees for our children, set aside our lives in our home countries, to answer this call. We're not going anywhere."

Workers names have been changed

MATT HUBER is the author of *Climate Change as Class War*. He is based at Syracuse University in New York and will be speaking at Marxism 2026 on socialism and degrowth.

Tell me about your book and why you think the Marxist analysis is so important?

MY BOOK really came out of frustration with climate politics.

There was a lot of discussion of climate change as a problem of class inequality. But it tended to talk about class inequality purely in relation to income and consumption patterns.

This struck me as not a very Marxist way of thinking.

It is not really about income or consumption, it's about your relationship to production.

The main culprits of the climate crisis are not rich consumers with high carbon footprints.

It's really about capitalists who, as a class, own and profit from carbon intensive forms of production like steel or chemicals or fossil fuels.

We need to think more strategically about how we build a movement that can take on the power of that class of owners and profiteers. Their power needs to be significantly eroded.

It then struck me that the main people who are exercised and involved in climate politics also come from, if not a class in the Marxist sense, like a stratum of the working class, which I call a professional class.

It is people who are highly educated, journalists and NGO staffers and academics.

What I thought was really lacking in climate politics was a real working class perspective.

And particularly one that took seriously that it is the working class that is the strategic agent of change that can transform society.

No other force in society has the structural power that the working class has.

Can you say more about your critique of degrowth?

THERE IS a category of the professional class environmentalists who I call the anti-system radicals who do have a kind of anti-capitalist politics.

I situate degrowth into that perspective. I think it comes from a radicalisation about the severity of the climate crisis and ecological crisis.

But it does not represent any sort of mass political movement.

Degrowth has these connotations of what I call a

YOUNG PEOPLE have protested in huge numbers against the destruction of the planet

'TAKE ON ENTIRE CAPITALIST CLASS TO END CLIMATE CATASTROPHE'

Matt Huber, author and climate activist, spoke to Camilla Royle about how to reorientate the movement against climate catastrophe on the working class

Matt Huber

"politics of less". Because of its negative connotations, it is just not going to be a winning politics.

If we're going to build a mass majoritarian working class politics, we need to be crystal clear what working people who are struggling now with the cost of living crisis stand to gain from our politics.

But as I've been part of the debate over degrowth, I've realised that there's a lot of common ground.

A lot of degrowth advocates



We need to grow a lot of the good things, like clean energy, public transit and green housing

are very aligned with a more socialist politics of decommodification of people's basic needs.

What they actually want is to degrow the bad stuff in society, like fossil fuels and the military.

But they will acknowledge that we need to grow a lot of the good things like clean energy, public transit and green housing.

I would say that is what we want, it is socialist planning, which is taking conscious

control over investment and production and planning it according to human needs.

A lot of degrowth people, if they think of a struggle between different actors, it's often framed as between the Global North and the Global South.

That papers over the fact that within the Global North there are significant class divisions.

There's a majority of working class people in rich countries who are being exploited by the capitalist class, just like workers in the Global South are being exploited by the capitalist class.

It's more beneficial to talk about a global capitalist class that exploits a global working class.

Yes, there are divisions within that working class and there are certain levels of benefits and consumption in the Global North that we should think about.

But when it comes to my country, the US, people are just getting their ass kicked.

They can't afford healthcare, which we should consider a basic human need. Housing is out of reach for millions of people.

People are having to choose between paying electric bills versus putting food on the table.

Can you explain your views on nuclear power?

OBVIOUSLY I am very worried about climate change.

I think it's a real civilisational, existential crisis for our species.

You can generate electricity with nuclear power and it's very, very low carbon, particularly once you have constructed the plants. I think this is something we just can't afford to take off the table.

From a socialist perspective, the ultimate dream is that we could take more democratic control over production and plan it in a more rational way. Plan it to produce not for profit, but for use value.

I know it's not popular on the left, but I actually think nuclear power has unbelievable use value in Marxist terms.

It's got very high energy density. Tiny bits of uranium can generate enough power for hundreds of thousands of homes.

It takes way less mining, way less materials than a lot of the green alternatives, renewables in particular.

You need silicon for solar panels. Lithium, cobalt and other types of minerals are needed for a lot of these green technologies.

We should be concerned about the waste that is produced by nuclear power plants. It is highly radioactive

and highly dangerous.

But the actual amount of waste generated by nuclear power plants is incredibly small.

In fact, coal power plants produce way more radioactive waste by orders of magnitude.

The final thing is what energy scholars call power density, which is how much land or space it takes to generate a certain amount of energy.

Nuclear power is orders of magnitude better on that front as well.

Perhaps most importantly, outside of maybe hydroelectric power, it's the most reliable source of power where you can generate it basically 24/7.

In places that are cold and have lots of cloud cover you do need more reliable sources of power, which nuclear can provide.

There is on the left this somewhat romantic idea of energy democracy, that everyone is going to participate in the governance of our electricity system.

But my sense, and I might be wrong, is that most actual working class people don't particularly care about how electricity is governed.

They just want it to be on. And they want it to be reliable. And they want it to be cheap.

I think socialists should argue for it to be decommodified. And I think when it comes to the nitty gritty of managing it, you actually need a whole lot of expertise.

So I think there are certain things in society that we as socialists should be comfortable with being governed on a large scale.

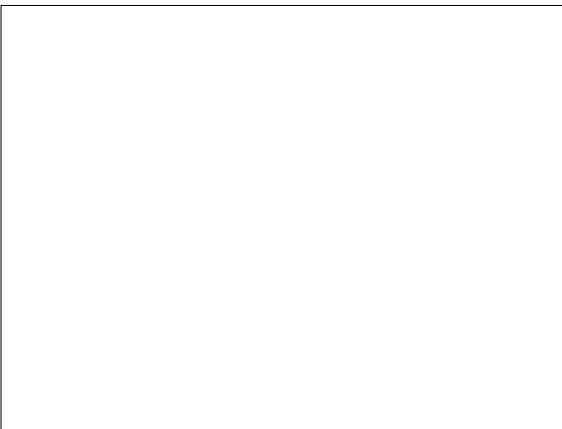
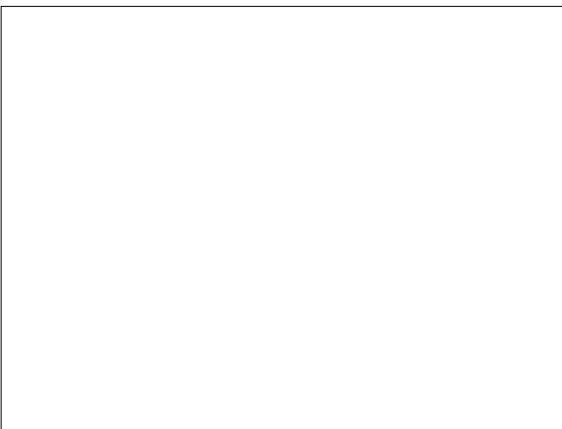
How do you assess the state of the environmental movement?

I THINK we can all agree that the environmental movement feels pretty out of steam and is at an impasse.

I'm working on a critique of what I call movementism.

It frames this struggle as a climate movement against the fossil fuel industry, analogous to movements like the suffrage movement or the civil rights movement.

I don't think this type of movement is going to be up to the challenge of dealing with the climate crisis.



Luxury yachts are just one symptom of the destructive capitalist system (top) Devastating floods in Mozambique show who feels the most impact (above)

Hear Matt Huber speak at Marxism Festival

The four-day political festival, hosted by the Socialist Workers Party, takes place from 2-5 July in east London. Tickets to Marxism can be found here



That requires an incredible restructuring of our entire energy infrastructure.

The only movement I think it's analogous to is the movement for the abolition of slavery. That was a fundamental challenge to a class that controlled a certain form of production.

But I don't think you could say that slave plantation production had infiltrated society to the extent that fossil fuels have today.

I think it requires attacking not just the fossil fuel industry, but the entire capitalist class and the rich and the wealthy as a whole.

I've been inspired by New York mayor Zohran Mamdani, who ran a socialist campaign on the cost of living, on housing. Even on things that can be related to climate change, like free public transit.

But he didn't centre climate change in his politics.

He had this laser focus on working class material needs in order to build a mass base.

I think we have to build that large-scale working class movement.

We have to rebuild the labour movement in general, and rebuild the capacity of workers to fight and win concessions from capital on a large scale.



TEACH YOURSELF MARXISM with Judy Cox

What is an organic intellectual?

SOCIALIST organisation needs working class militants rooted in workplaces and communities.

Sometimes, these militants are also Marxist intellectuals engaging with new academic research.

The Marxist historian E P Thompson wrote, "The fashioning of coherent ideas, the understanding of the complex phenomena of contemporary economic, social, political life, demands time, access to books, leisure and submission to intellectual or cultural disciplines."

This "is extraordinarily difficult for the industrial worker, or, indeed, the average overworked teacher."

But we also need another sort of intellectual to challenge capitalism.

The Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci considered the role of intellectuals. He described "hegemony"—the way the ruling class maintains its rule not only through brute force but through consent.

This isn't just about propaganda—it is based on a "common sense" made up of assumptions people share about what is just, fair and inevitable.

Every social class, Gramsci argued, produces its own intellectuals who give that class its sense of identity, purpose and direction.

Traditional intellectuals—priests, scholars, philosophers, lawyers—present themselves as above all class interests.

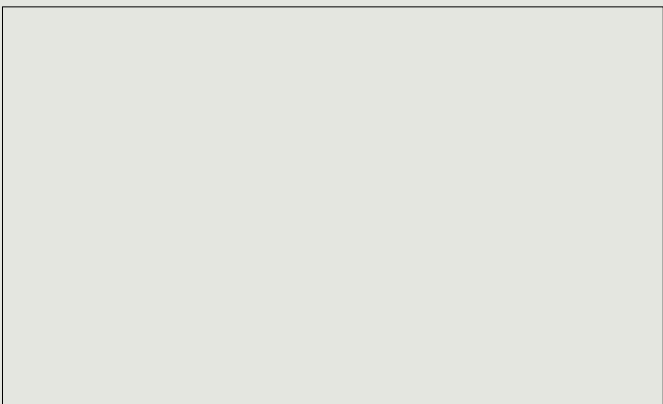
Illusion

But their neutrality is an illusion that hides their service to the ruling class. They present the ruling class's world view as "universal truth".

Organic intellectuals, by contrast, come from within the working class. They make no pretence of neutrality but promote the interests of the working class.

Ruling class hegemony is never unopposed. Organic intellectuals from the working class play a crucial role in encouraging opposition.

Gramsci distinguished these organic intellectuals from traditional intellectuals by



FANNIE LOU Hamer was an inspiring voice

their roots in a social group and their commitment to advancing its interests.

Their knowledge is a tool for changing the world rather than just describing it.

They are not defined by academic qualifications but by their capacity to express collective experiences and to organise.

A black woman, Fannie Lou Hamer, a sharecropper's daughter with little education, became one of the most powerful voices of the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. She was an organic intellectual and a leader.

Historically, working class intellectuals, who were denied much formal education, tended to develop from a process of leading struggles, reading and giving and attending lectures.

Today, organic intellectuals can emerge in new ways. An undocumented immigrant describing their experience on TikTok can create a shared understanding of the impact of racism and imperialism.

But social media complicates this because the reach of an activist depends on

algorithms.

There have always been tensions between oppositional movements and institutions that aim to neutralise and coopt them.

Social media provides a potential mass platform. But social media also works against Gramsci's idea of intellectuals who are accountable to those they influence and are rooted in the working class.

Encourage

Online communities can only affect change if they encourage action in the physical world.

Distrust of experts is rooted in frustration with the absence of organic intellectuals, who are grounded in shared conditions and opposition to the establishment.

Protest movements need to counter ruling class lies, find ways to connect individual experiences to the system and suggest ways to win. Organic intellectuals are the people who provide these ideas and arguments.

Gramsci writes that organic intellectuals must participate "in the practical transformation of the real world".

Any movement must combine theory and practice to be effective. Not every member of a revolutionary party has to be an expert on every question. But they need to be confident that someone in their party is.

A socialist society would transcend the artificial division between mental and manual labour and narrow specialisms and develop everyone's capabilities to the full.

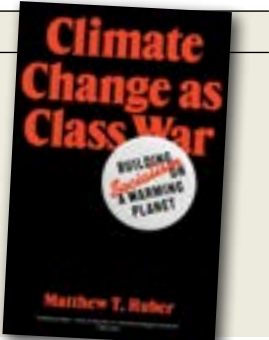
READ MORE

- Climate Change as Class War: Building Socialism on a Warming Planet by Matt Huber, £16.99

●Lifeblood: Oil, Freedom and the Forces of Capital by Matt Huber, £19.99
- Crude Capitalism: Oil, Power and the Making of the World Market, by Adam Hanieh, £14.99

Available from Bookmarks bookshop

Bookmarks bookshop.co.uk



Any movement must combine theory and practice

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class.

They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence.

We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, go to socialistworker.co.uk/join-swp

Come to a socialist meeting near you

THE Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has branches all over Britain. We meet most weeks, usually on a Wednesday or Thursday, to discuss politics and to plan activities.

The branch meeting normally has a speaker who opens a discussion in which all are free to join in.

Afterwards, we plan the party's involvement in local and national movements.

Our meetings are open to the public and we encourage participation.

For a local branch, look at the list and scan the QR code.

Scotland

- Aberdeen
- Dundee
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow North
- Glasgow South

North

- Lancaster and Morecambe
- Manchester
- Newcastle
- Liverpool
- Wigan

Yorkshire and Humberside

- Bradford
- Huddersfield
- Hull
- Leeds
- Sheffield and South Yorkshire
- York and Scarborough
- Wakefield

Midlands

- Birmingham
- Black Country
- Coventry
- Crewe and Stoke
- Chesterfield
- Derby
- Leicester
- Nottingham

London

- Hackney
- Haringey
- Islington
- Newham
- South London
- South East London
- Tower Hamlets
- Waltham Forest
- West and North West London

South west

- Bristol
- Devon and Exeter
- Dorset

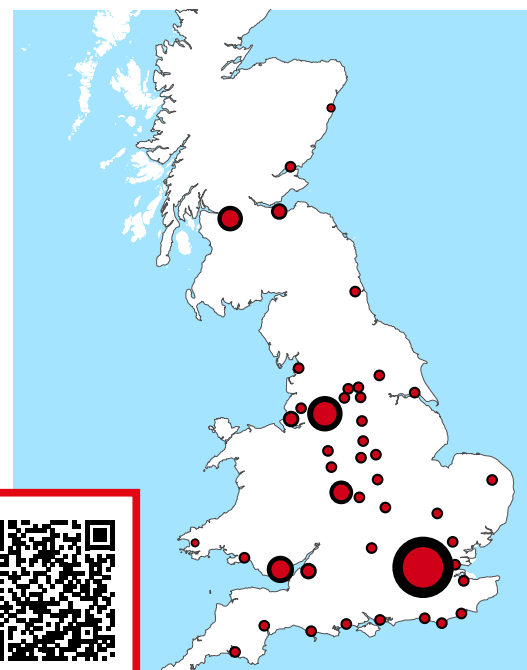
- Plymouth and Cornwall
- Portsmouth

East and south east

- Brighton and Hove
- Bournemouth
- Cambridge
- Colchester
- Eastbourne
- Harlow
- Hastings
- Kent
- Northampton
- Norwich and East Anglia
- Oxford
- Southend

Wales

- Cardiff
- Swansea
- West Wales



MARXISM 2026

2-5 JULY, LONDON

HOSTED BY  **THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST LEFT WING FESTIVAL

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

YANIS ●●●●●
VAROUFAKIS ◆

◆ **GARY ◆ YOUNGE**

ZARAH ◆ SULTANA

RICHARD ★ BOYD
◆ **BARRETT** ◆◆◆◆

◆ **JEREMY** ◆◆◆◆◆
◆ **CORBYN** ◆◆◆◆◆

◆ **JODI ★ DEAN** ◆

◆ **SHAHED ◆ EZAYDI**

TARIQ ● ALI ◆◆◆◆◆
ILAN ★ PAPPE

ANDREW ◆◆◆◆◆
◆ **FEINSTEIN** ◆◆◆◆◆

◆ **REBECCA** ●●●●●
◆ **JANE ◆ MORGAN**

◆ **MV ◆ RAMANA**

◆ **MICHAEL** ◆◆◆◆◆
◆ **ROBERTS** ◆◆◆◆◆

◆ **SAMIRA ● ALI** ◆

JOHN ◆ BELLAMY
◆ **FOSTER** ◆◆◆◆◆

JAMES ◆ MEADWAY

ALYSSA ●●●●●
◆ **BATTISTONI** ◆◆

EARLY BIRD TICKETS: BOOK BY 17 APRIL



TINYURL.COM/MARXFEST26

BOOKMARKS the socialist bookshop



Revolutions Thwarted: Poland, South Africa, Iran, Brazil
by John Rose, £12



Revisiting the General Strike of 1926
by Charlie Kimber and Judy Cox, £11



Palestine, Imperialism, and the Struggle for Freedom
by Philip Marfleet, £10



Breaking Our Chains: Women, Marxism and the Path to Liberation
by Sally Campbell, Sarah Bates and Judy Cox, £10



A People's History of the Anti Nazi League
by Geoff Brown, £12

PHONE 020 7637 1848 WEB bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



Gripping drama a timely reminder to fight back

by NEIL DHANDA

RUSSELL T Davies's *Tip Toe* is superb.

Combining outstanding performances with sharp, intelligent writing, it confronts the growing hostility faced by LGBT+ people while asking questions about the society that produces such hatred.

At the centre of the story are neighbours Leo and Clive, played superbly by Alan Cumming and David Morrissey.

Leo is warm, charismatic and at times frustratingly naïve, while Clive is never reduced to a simple villain, as chilling as Morrissey's portrayal of him is.

Instead, we see a man consumed by insecurity, resentment and fear, overwhelmed by contradictions he is unable to resolve.

Morrissey's performance is particularly impressive, showing how prejudice can grow not through monstrous intent but through bitterness, frustration and a desperate search for someone else to blame.

Pressure

The writing is strongest when it explores how wider social pressures shape individual lives. Social isolation, toxic masculinity, online radicalisation and family tensions all play important roles in the drama.

Tip Toe suggests that when people struggle to cope with lives shaped by insecurity and uncertainty, reactionary ideas can take root.

The targets are often those who are seen as different, visible or vulnerable.

What makes the series so effective, however, is its insistence that this hatred does not emerge from nowhere. Casual prejudice, culture war rhetoric and political attacks on LGBT+ rights accumulate until discrimination begins to feel normal.

Davies asks us to consider what happens when politicians, the media and world leaders spend years questioning the legitimacy of LGBT+ lives.

The consequences, he suggests, are not confined to newspaper columns or social media debates. They find their way into homes, workplaces and communities.

I found the final episode

NEIGHBOURS LEO and Clive refuse to be singly defined as villain or victim

almost impossible to watch without anger. Its violence is shocking and graphic.

Tragedy

But what lingers afterwards is the realisation that the forces driving the tragedy are all too recognisable.

Across Britain and beyond, LGBT+ people, and other oppressed groups, are increasingly being turned into political footballs by governments and opportunistic politicians looking for scapegoats.

We have seen this very recently with Reform UK removing Pride flags in Gateshead and whipping up hatred towards minority groups in Southampton.

Yet *Tip Toe* is not a counsel of despair.

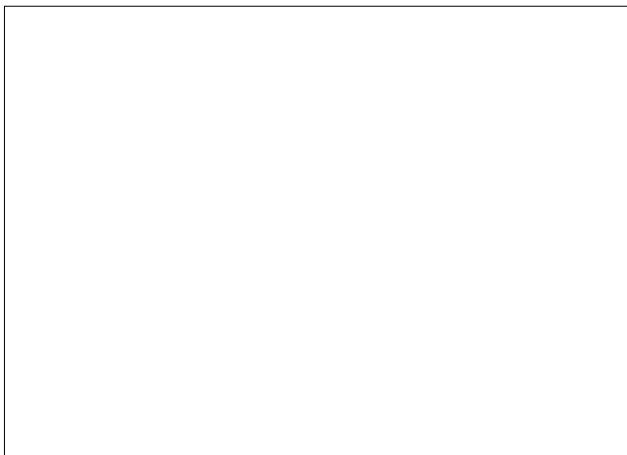
The anger it generates should not lead to hopelessness but to action.

Every right won by LGBT+ people was achieved through struggle, solidarity and resistance.

Davies has created a drama that points a finger at what is going wrong in our world, but also reminds us that we have a responsibility to challenge it.

Tip Toe is gripping, devastating television—and a timely call to fight back.

Tip Toe is available on the Channel 4 On Demand



“
The forces driving this tragedy are all too recognisable

REVIEW

MATT FOOT

Catalogue of errors now set straight

NEARLY 34 years after her horrific killing, Netflix has released a documentary, *The Murder of Rachel Nickell*, alongside a three-part drama on the case, *The Witness*.

In 1992, Nickell was walking on Wimbledon Common, in south London, with her son, Alex, when she was stabbed to death. Alex, at just two years old, was the only witness.

These programmes complement each other, with their sensitive portrayal of the hideous ordeal Alex and Nickell's partner, André, endured following her death.

Their suffering was prolonged by over a decade due to the completely inept police investigation. Under pressure to stop a psychopathic killer repeating his crime, the police fixed all their efforts on the wrong man, Colin Stagg.

The real killer—Robert Napper—struck again the following year, killing Samantha Bisset and her four year old daughter, Jazmine, in Plumstead, south London when Stagg was in custody.

In contrast to the appalling police operation against Stagg, a different police force managed to carry out careful fingerprint work which linked and ultimately convicted Napper of the killing of Bisset and her daughter.

Despite the similarities to the murder, the police who investigated Stagg still maintained they had the right man.

In the wake of the subpostmasters drama and the exposure of wrongful convictions like that of Andrew Malkinson, cases like Nickell's are now being given the airtime they should always have been afforded.

This allows an exploration of the protracted failures involved in a miscarriage of justice—the misery caused to the victim's family and the wrongly accused. And the lack of any proper accountability of the police.

Evidence

Stagg's case collapsed. In throwing out the case, the judge condemned the use of a criminal psychologist, Paul Britton, who had worked with the police to devise a “honeytrap” operation against Stagg.

The police subsequently abandoned the use of such controversial psychological profiling “evidence,” but the Metropolitan Police Commissioner initially refused apologise.

The Stagg case was another miscarriage of justice that piqued the interest of my dad Paul Foot. He wrote many articles in *Private Eye* magazine protesting Stagg's innocence.

Following the collapsed trial and Stagg's release, much of the press continued to promote the police narrative that he was still guilty. Paul wrote in November 1996—“The case against Stagg was a disgrace even the legal establishment want to forget. The police responsible were replaced by a new team which has been trying to follow up the many genuine leads abandoned by their predecessors.”

The Netflix programmes show how ten years later in 2008—four years after Paul's death—the real murderer was convicted at the Old Bailey for the manslaughter by diminished responsibility of Nickell.

DNA methods were improved and the renowned expert Angela Gallop had managed to find a profile from Nickell, which matched that of Napper.

Last year, Jim Sturman, who had been junior counsel defending Stagg at his collapsed trial, commented that Paul Foot's articles on Napper “had been instrumental in shifting public opinion in favour of the innocent Stagg.

“It was a privilege to know Paul, a genuine legend with an eye for injustice,” he added.

The Home Office eventually awarded Stagg £706,000 in damages. No officer was disciplined for the Stagg fiasco.

Nickell's partner André said of the case, “a catalogue of errors and then cover-up by police meant an innocent man, Stagg, was arrested while Rachel's killer, Napper, who was later linked with 106 rapes and other sexual offences, killed another mother and child.”

A word for the zealots like Priti Patel who have continued to argue for the death penalty as a deterrent. This is yet another case that shows that a man we know categorically to be innocent could have been hanged. Not only would this have been state murder, it would have added an intolerable burden on Nickell's family, while leaving the real killer free.

Don't miss out on this documentary and drama.

The Murder of Rachel Nickell and *The Witness* are both available on Netflix.

CLEANING WORKERS

Strike threat forces U-turn

OFFICE CLEANERS in the Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union (Caiwu) won a major victory.

The cleaners work in London offices run by Argyll Club. Bosses at Sustainable Business Facility Management tried to cut their hours while expecting them to do the same amount of work.

But management agreed to reverse their plans ahead of a planned strike and protest through central London that would have taken place last Thursday.

THEATRE ASSISTANTS

Fair pay now

OPERATING THEATRE workers in Bedford are set to strike for 48 hours from this Thursday in a dispute about overtime payments.

The Unite union members are angry that bosses have scrapped a payment worth up to £120 per shift for those overtime hours.

Mark Williams, a senior operating department practitioner at Luton and Dunstable Hospital, said, "Taking away overtime pay shows a complete lack of respect for hospital workers."

Theatre assistants in Leeds are also striking.

The Unison union members walked out on Monday and plan to stay out for two weeks in a dispute over low pay and back pay.

There will be picket lines at the Leeds General Infirmary this Friday and further pickets at St James's University Hospital on Monday 29 June and Friday 3 July.

MIDWIVES

Protect our rest days

MIDWIVES AT the South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Trust have voted to strike to prevent being rostered as "on call" on their days off.

Royal College of Midwives (RCM) members voted by 92 percent to walk out. The union has not yet issued any strike dates. It says any initial industrial action will be limited to midwives refusing to cooperate with the disputed new arrangements.

But the RCM rightly says, "Rest days must be protected. Rostering midwives to work on call on their much needed days off is unsafe, unsustainable and totally unacceptable."

"Safe staffing is the foundation of safe care and that means ensuring the midwives looking after women and babies are properly rested and supported."

HIGHER EDUCATION

UCU UNION members at Sheffield Hallam won a victory after 13 days of strikes

Bosses under fire as strike wave grows

by CAMILLA ROYLE

UNIVERSITY workers in the UCU union are taking hard hitting action to fight back against the decimation of the sector.

The latest university to join the strike wave is London South Bank University (LSBU). UCU members are on strike on Monday and Thursday this week.

Bosses are trying to implement changes to the university that will create a two-tier workforce.

All academic members of staff will see their contracts terminated and will have to compete for jobs in a drastic fire and rehire process.

Some of those rehired will be on teaching and research contracts with research responsibilities. But others will be hired on "teaching and scholarship" contracts without the same career opportunities.

Bosses want to hire teaching and scholarship workers via a subsidiary company. It cuts them out of access to the TPS pension scheme.

There are also concerns about the equality impact of bosses' plans. Academics in the male-dominated

engineering school will most likely be on the research contract. In nursing and midwifery, the largely female workforce will be on the inferior contract.

Branch secretary Federica Rossi said, "It is frankly scandalous that the university's leaders are showing such callous disregard for the gender equality implication of the cuts."

"LSBU educates a quarter of London's nurses, yet senior management thinks we don't deserve the same pay and pensions we can get at other universities across the country."

"These cuts could have profound implications on the NHS and the capital's health."

Encouraged

UCU members at LSBU should feel encouraged by the victory last week at Sheffield Hallam University where bosses backed down on plans to employ workers through a subsidiary company.

At Goldsmiths in London, UCU members are now in their third week of indefinite strike over plans to cut millions from the budget and make up to 269 workers redundant.

It is the third round of job

cuts in just five years. On the picket line, one striker told Socialist Worker, "This is the third round of cuts since I started here as a student, and the deficit is still the same. It feels like circling the drain rather than resolving anything."

UCU officials at the University of Nottingham met with bosses last week. They put forward a proposal to avoid 600 redundancies and end the dispute. But they say management refused to help find a resolution.

Branch president Lopa Leach said, "Considering management's disinterest, we are now left with no alternative but to consider escalating the dispute."

"Disrupting graduation celebrations, targeting open days, strike action at the beginning of the new academic year, nothing is off the table."

This round of strikes is set to continue to the end of July.

And at the University of Lincoln, a whopping 97 percent of UCU members surveyed by the branch said they had lost confidence in management. The workforce has already been slashed yet bosses are refusing to rule out more redundancies.

SCHOOLS

'Without the support of TAs—schools would not run'

NEU UNION members at Woodfield, a special educational needs and disabilities (Send) school in west London, are set to strike on 25, 26 and 29 June.

The strike was called after Compass Learning Partnership, the trust that runs the school, sent "fire and rehire" letters to 47 teaching assistants (TAs).

The controversial practice will soon be outlawed, but the trust is threatening workers with it in an attempt to force them to accept a £4,000 pay cut.

But the workers aren't budging.

Workers first walked out for 13 days last December in a dispute with management over pay and conditions.

Since the start of June, they've been out for another ten days, with a further ten already announced.

"Our members out on strike are 100 percent solid," Lucy, joint branch secretary of Brent NEU, told Socialist Worker on the picket line last week.

They were joined by reps from branches of the RMT, Unison and Unite.

Education

Workers lobbied the Department for Education—and marched to Downing Street after a morning mega picket last Wednesday.

"The trust's not talking to us. That's why we took our dispute to the Department for Education," Lucy said.

A rep from Camden NEU union brought solidarity from striking workers at the Great Ormond Street and University College London Hospital School.

"Reps from Brent have been down to our picket line, so I'm here today to bring solidarity," she said.

She slammed management's move to fire and rehire workers.

Appalling

"It's an absolutely appalling move. The idea that it's appropriate for committed educators who are working with incredibly vulnerable children in such a complex setting to do their work for less money at any time is appalling."

"But in the current climate where people are dealing with a cost of living crisis, it is just unjustifiable."

One parent on the picket line pointed out how crucial the role that TAs play is.

"I'm here as a parent, because I understand what it is that teaching assistants do."

"Without their support, schools would not run. And teachers wouldn't be able to do their work," she said.

The trust has tried to keep the school open by bringing in play-scheme workers to supervise the students.

This has raised serious concerns for the children's wellbeing.

And rightly so. The week before last, an unsupervised student was able to run out of the school and on to the street.

Luckily, the pupil was looked after by workers out on strike.

The workers will be out on strike again on 2-3, 6-9, 13-14 and 16-17 July.

■Join the picket lines this week from 7.30am at Woodfield School, Glenwood Ave, London NW9 7LY.

Striking delivers big victory

EDUCATION WORKERS at the Haberdashers' schools, in Hertfordshire have won a victory after striking.

The NEU union members walked out in a dispute over their pension plans. Management had threatened to use fire and rehire.

But after striking for four days the threat of fire and rehire has now been taken off the table.

Workers have secured a higher contribution from the employer, shared responsibility for future pension changes and protections to ensure that workers benefit from future reductions in contribution rates.

■MEMBERS OF the NEU union at the Connaught School for Girls, in east London, are set to strike from 25 June to 10 July in a long running dispute with management over pay and conditions.



Connaught school strike

The workers have been out on strike for several days since 21 April.

Management have now made three workers at the school redundant.

And bosses continue to victimise members of the union.

But workers have defeated attempts by management to break the strike by sending in agency workers as scabs.

■Shower them with solidarity on their picket line from 7am at the Connaught School for Girls, Dyers Hall Road, London, E11 4AE.

UNITE CRAFTWORKERS

Over 1,000 council workers strike for pay

OVER 100 strikers joined a picket line in Newham, east London, on Tuesday. The Unite union members carry out repair work for the local authority and were on their third of four days of strikes.

Workers also struck in Bristol, Stoke-on-Trent, Leeds and Suffolk in a dispute that involves over 1,000 workers nationwide.

Union branch co-convenor Martin said the workers had

been offered a 3.2 percent pay rise that is not good enough.

"We've had years of low pay offers," he told Socialist Worker. "The other thing we are striking over is an attack on our terms and conditions."

"We worked all the way through the Covid-19 pandemic—every single day. Everyone here put their life and their family's life at risk but they still showed up because people had emergency repairs."

The workers' pay and conditions are agreed nationally. Bosses want to move towards a job evaluation process that would mean a massive pay cut.

The union says that the workers are fighting for their survival as skilled craftspeople. It says that job evaluation will mean deskilling.

The workers are prepared to take more action if bosses don't start listening.

UNISON UNION CONFERENCE

'Workers join trade union when we lead fightbacks'

by JUDE MCKECHNIE

DELEGATES AT the Unison union conference in Brighton last week heard inspiring stories about how striking builds the union and gets results.

General secretary Andrea Egan said the union had already seen the fruits of "Organising To Win" in industrial disputes. She was elected in December last year on a promise to extend the strategy.

Masha, a teaching assistant (TA) in Camden in north London, told conference how her branch is leading the fight over pay.

There are currently two schools in the borough that are on strike demanding the regrading of TAs across Camden.

"Fair pay is more important than ever," said Masha. "Low pay means that a lot of us have second jobs. Our pay doesn't reflect the work we do."

"We make sure that children are safe and help them learn. But we are not passive either. We fight for improvements in our pay," she said.

"We know we're going to win increased pay for hundreds more. Fighting back like this is how we are going to build this union."

The NHS Pay Fair for Patient Care campaign has delivered more than £300 million in back pay and over £100 million in annual pay increases for



TEACHING ASSISTANTS strike in Camden, north London

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

workers. Winning campaigns creates new activists, stronger branches and greater confidence in what workers can achieve when they fight back.

Health worker Carrie told conference about the inspiring campaign to prevent workers being outsourced to a subsidiary company (SubCo) in Dorset.

Stability

"The trust was attempting to move 1,700 staff into a SubCo."

"It meant that they would no longer be working for the NHS, but for a private company."

She explained that the trust told workers outsourcing some of the lowest paid

workers. Winning campaigns creates new activists, stronger branches and greater confidence in what workers can achieve when they fight back.

"The threat of strikes alone was enough to force bosses to abandon their plans."

Carrie told Socialist Worker that the union recruited around 900 new members because of the dispute.

"The lesson from Dorset is simple," she said. "Workers will join unions when unions are prepared to fight. They become activists when they see that they do have a choice."

"We need to build a union that employers will fear."

"A union that proves through action that, when low paid workers are attacked, it will stand with them every single time."

But victories, though significant, still remain uneven and localised.

The challenge now is to apply the same methods to the fight over local government and school workers' pay.

Unison is set to launch a ballot of local government and school support workers on 9 July in England and Wales after it rejected Labour's paltry pay offer of 3.3 percent.

The union is balloting members in strategically targeted employers.

The victories won so far show what is possible.

VICTIMISATIONS

Officials try to stop activists speaking over victimisations

UNISON union members vowed at their national conference in Brighton last week to support activists facing victimisation from bosses.

The union bureaucracy tried to stop delegates speaking up over individual cases—but many were undeterred.

The debate on the motion Oppose and Fight Trade Union Victimisation, highlighted how bosses are targeting reps.

Speakers for a motion on fighting trade union victimisation highlighted how bosses are targeting trade union reps.

They described how reps are often subjected to bullying, disciplinary procedures, excessive workloads and attempts to undermine their authority.

Attack

Jon Woods, a delegate from Portsmouth City Union, called for Unison to stand with those under attack.

He explained that this was exactly what had happened to lifelong trade unionist and anti-racist Ameen Hadi.

Ameen's employer, Salford City Council in Greater Manchester, suspended him after a malicious campaign pushed by the far right.

Delegates argued that victimisations are not accidental.

But the conference chair refused to allow any of the speakers to mention those fighting trade union victimisation, claiming it would "jeopardise their cases".

Ameen's campaign had a huge wave of support at the conference, including from

Green Party leader Zack Polanski who spoke on a panel.

Natasha from Leicester City branch was cut off at the mic for speaking about the campaign against the victimisation of Tom Barker.

Tom is a teaching assistant (TA) and Unison steward at Ash Field Academy, a school operated by Discovery Schools Academies Trust. He was suspended in October 2025 after workers voted for strikes.

Natasha told Socialist Worker, "It's really significant that the debate was stifled around trade union victimisation at conference."

"It's very ironic given that the whole purpose of what we were there to talk about was that we don't want to be quiet about trade union victimisation. I think we need to be really loud about that—be loud about fighting back against victimisation."

At Soas university in central London, management is attempting to remove leading Unison reps to weaken the power of local organising.

Unison rep and cleaner Lenin has been dismissed, while Consuelo, another rep, has been suspended pending an investigation.

A delegate was also muted at the rostrum for trying to raise solidarity for them.

Soas branch secretary Antonia told Socialist Worker, "We have to be able to say the names of victimised reps."

"What message does it send if we don't stand up for our activists when they are targeted by bosses for standing up for workers' rights and conditions and fighting for pay?"

TRANS+ RIGHTS MOTIONS

Unison union members back trans+ rights—but officials rule a motion out of order

DELEGATES AT the Unison union's national conference last week voted resoundingly to defend trans+ rights.

The Supreme Court's transphobic ruling on the definition of sex under the Equality Act and subsequent Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance is attempting to restrict trans+ rights.

The motion Organise for Legal Protection for Gender Identity and Trans Rights argued that the Equality Act 2010 was outdated on gender identity.

The motion called on the National Executive Committee to campaign for better legislation to protect



A trans+ rights protest in London

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

trans+ members and lobby the government to introduce self-identification for trans+ people.

Despite hundreds of delegates supporting the motion, there were six speeches against it.

Their speeches included

the use of transphobic tropes to vilify trans+ people, particularly trans women.

The chair made one speaker apologise to the conference for saying, "I do like the idea of women only spaces, it feels like a bloke's

taken over being a woman now."

Laura, from Unison AQA exam board branch, rejected the arguments made by speakers against the motion.

"The point of the so-called EHRC guidance and the Supreme Court ruling last year was to be cruel and to make the lives of trans+, gender diverse and non-binary people a living hell," she said.

"There is no reality in which this judgement upholds the dignity and the rights of trans+, gender diverse and non-binary people at work."

Laura took apart the lie that there is a conflict between women's liberation

and trans+ liberation.

And she argued that attacks on trans+ people would reinforce sexism too.

■ TWO LAMBETH Unison branch activists from south London were removed by the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) and the president last Friday,

Ruth Cashman and Simon Hannah were removed for challenging a decision to rule out of order their emergency motion on trans+ liberation and fighting the transphobic EHRC guidance.

Ruth and Simon were removed on Rule P, which gives the president the power to remove delegates for causing a disturbance in

the conference hall. Neither delegate did this.

They were told that the SOC had received legal advice about the contents of the motion, which it refused to share.

The motion urged the Unison conference to launch a campaign against the new EHRC guidelines which discriminates against trans+ people.

It said Unison should lobby parliament to amend the law to explicitly state that trans women are women and trans men are men, with protections for non-binary identities.

Some 80 delegates joined a rally outside the conference in solidarity last Friday.