

& Workers' Liberty

Solidarity

For social ownership of the banks and industry

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DEFEND AND EXTEND FREE MOVEMENT!



Butterfly silhouettes
adapted from freepik

- » **Local and migrant, workers unite!**
- » **Join free movement bloc 21/3**
- » **Get Labour on the streets**

See page 5

Climate and class struggle

Day school, Saturday
14 March, 10:30 to 5:30,
Park View School, West
Green Road, London
N15 3QR

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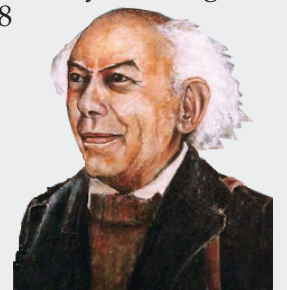
The future of the BBC

John Cunningham
argues that the left
should not be indifferent
on whether public-
service broadcasting
is extinguished by the
Tories

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The last Trotskyist?

Michel Lequenne, who
called himself "the last
Trotskyist", died on 13
February at the age of
98



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Inside Labour

Yes, vote RLB. But keep
pressing for Labour
democracy and to get
Labour on the streets.

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How Sanders wins



Sanders campaign

By Eric Lee

For some time now I've been arguing that Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders is the front-runner in the race to be the Democratic candidate to face off against Donald Trump in November.

A few months ago, and even a few weeks ago, that was a debatable proposition. Today, it is a view shared by nearly everyone paying careful attention to the Democratic primary.

The main competitors to Sanders are falling away one by one, their weaknesses on clear display to all. Biden, once seen as the front-runner, has no base of enthusiastic supporters and very little money left in his coffers. Warren, another early leader in the race, seems a spent force despite her very effective recent debate performance in Las Vegas.

Buttigieg, who polls showed has near-zero support among Black and Latino voters, proved in Nevada that once he leaves behind the largely white, rural states, his run for the presidency has slowed to a crawl.

Former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg was the great hope for the Democratic party's "moderates" – a term the media uses because no one wants to call those who oppose the party's left

wing, well, right-wingers.

But five minutes into Bloomberg's first appearance on the debate stage, his candidacy began to tank. Arrogant, ill-informed and totally unprepared for challenges from candidates who've been campaigning for many months, he completely flopped. From the point of view of the Sanders campaign, that's a pity. A contest between Sanders and Bloomberg, a democratic socialist versus a billionaire, would have been almost ideal.

If Sanders does well in the upcoming South Carolina and Super Tuesday primaries, he has a clear path to winning the Democratic nomination. But can he beat Trump?

Trump has raised more money than any of the Democratic candidates. His rallies are larger than that of most Democrats. Polls continue to show that he commands the support of at least 40% of voters, sometimes more. He can also count on the fact that incumbent presidents running when the country is not in the throes of an economic crisis are rarely defeated.

In other words, it will be a massive challenge to whoever wins the Democratic nomination to defeat Trump. But Bernie Sanders can do it for the same reason why he won Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada.

His victory in Nevada shows what he needs to do to defeat Trump. He did exceptionally well among Latino voters, who comprise a very large part of the Amer-

ican electorate. He is enormously popular among young voters, especially those under the age of 30. Unsurprisingly, he does well among independents and others who do not consider themselves to be loyal members of the Democratic party.

The only demographic where Biden and others still lead Sanders is the over 65s.

If Sanders can pull together the same coalition of forces across the country in November as he just did in Nevada, he will win the election. In fact, he will do more than that.

Some "moderate" Democrats have warned that Sanders is reprising the role of South Dakota Senator George McGovern, who also pulled the party to the left, back in 1972. McGovern went down to a historic defeat at the hands of Richard Nixon. He won only one state to Nixon's 49. It was a catastrophe for the Democrats.

But there's another comparison to be made to an earlier election and it took place a mere eight years before McGovern's defeat. In the 1964 elections, the Republicans ran the most extreme right-wing candidate they could find, Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater. The Democrats had Lyndon Johnson, the former Texas Senator who had been John F. Kennedy's Vice President until Kennedy was assassinated.

Johnson was not a particularly appealing candidate, and was very much a Washington insider. But he had the strong support of Black

communities and trade unions, which at the time were still a force to be reckoned with in American politics.

And he won by a landslide. His administration not only enacted voting rights laws and other civil rights measures, but initiated both a "war on poverty" and Medicare, the first serious attempt by the federal government to make health care a human right, at least for some.

The "moderates" may be right, and maybe Sanders is too left-wing to win. Maybe he is a 21st century version of McGovern, and by choosing him the Democrats are setting up the country for the nightmare of four more years of Donald Trump.

Or maybe Bernie Sanders, with the coalition we just saw in Nevada, will be more like Lyndon Johnson, and will defeat not only Trump, but the Republican party in Congress.

With majorities in the Senate and House of Representatives, and with many Democrats supporting Sanders' progressive agenda, this could be the beginning of a new, radical era in American politics. □

• Eric Lee is the convenor of "London for Bernie", writing here in a personal capacity. For all Eric's columns on Sanders, and other Sanders coverage, see bit.ly/el-bs. Bernie Sanders' speech after his victory in Nevada: page 13.

UVW challenges outsourcing in court

By Ollie Moore

Outsourced security workers in the United Voices of the World union (UVW) at St. George's University in Tooting, south London, are continuing their campaign for equality.

UVW members and supporters recently occupied the lobby of the main St. George's building during a university open day, holding an impromptu rally addressed by St. George's strikers, UVW reps from victorious anti-outsourcing campaigns at LSE and St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington, and an RMT activist.

UVW is also preparing what it describes as a "landmark legal case" to challenging outsourcing in court. The union's lawyers will argue that outsourcing is a form of discrimination under the 2010 Equality Act, as outsourced workers are often black and minority ethnic (BAME) and/or migrant

workers.

UVW organiser Petros Elia said: "An internal report from the university found that in-housing them would not only provide a better service but would also lead to cost savings. The decision of public institutions such as St George's to outsource workers who are migrant and BAME is done for the sole purpose of slashing their pay and terms and conditions".

Kazi Mohammad Oli Ullahwe, a striking worker and Bangladeshi migrant, said: "We've asked for equality and they've refused to negotiate. They say it's not viable to make us university employees, but they have not explained why. They don't treat us as equals. They treat us as second-class workers. All of us are ethnic minorities and we all feel discriminated against and harassed. Between our strike and this lawsuit, we will win justice and equality". □

Huge votes in Tower Hamlets

By Katy Dollar

Amongst core council employees in Tower Hamlets, the public services union Unison has won a yes vote of 89.6% for industrial action, on a turnout of 52.5%.

Amongst UNISON community school staff, there was a yes vote of 98% on a turnout of 51.6%. These are overwhelming votes which beat not only the 50% threshold imposed by the most recent Tory legislation, but also the higher threshold for "essential services" of over 40% of the total membership balloted in each case.

The school workers union, the NEU, has got a similar result, with a 95.4% yes vote on a 51.5% turnout.

These ballots concern changes in terms and conditions which Tower Hamlets, a Labour council, has been trying to push through.

The council even, for a while, sought a court injunction against the NEU's ballot under the anti union laws. That caused a backlash across the labour movement including in Tower Hamlets La-

bour. On the day of the court case, Tower Hamlets Council withdrew, presumably under political pressure both locally and nationally.

It is unclear why the Labour authority has decided to pick such a high profile fight with the unions. Central government's extension of last year's local government settlements means that there are no immediate budget pressures. None of the unions predicted such a serious attack.

Strikes look set to go ahead unless the council backs down completely. The GMB is now balloting, with its ballot due to close on 4 March.

The solidarity Labour Party members showed local trade unionists over the court injunction should continue throughout the dispute. □

• Messages of support to: Unison secretary john.mcloughlin@towerhamlets.gov.uk; GMB secretary kate.jenkins@towerhamlets.gov.uk; NEU secretary alexkenny59@gmail.com.



Agenda

Activity with and to support the UCU strikers will remain the top task for Workers' Liberty activists over the coming week.

A new strike bulletin, writing by Workers' Liberty people in UCU, is being put together, and will be out soon: bit.ly/ucu-b.

We're also continuing distribution of the Workers' Liberty *Postalworker* bulletin (bit.ly/post-b), in the run-up to the new CWU union ballot in Royal Mail, starting 3 March.

Only about two weeks now to our Workers' Liberty day school on "class struggle environmentalism" on 14 March: bit.ly/14-3-20.

We have organised it to educate ourselves and others and debate precise demands: just calling on governments to "take action" is not enough.

The Free Our Unions campaign plans activity in London include rallies in north and south London organised by Islington and Lambeth TCs, and a possible demonstration at BEIS. The campaign is also producing a candidates' pledge for GLA candidates. Watch this space.

Between 11 and 21 February we ran a tour of public meetings to discuss our new book *Solidarnosc: the workers' movement and the rebirth of Poland in 1980-1*. The book cover price is £5: buy online for £6.50 at bit.ly/sol-p.

Dates for your diary (details of all these at workersliberty.org/events):

27 February: Protest at Israeli embassy

28 February: Workers' Liberty London Forum on *Solidarnosc*.

3 March: *Fighting Tories* book launch and fundraiser for FOU

3 March: Protest against visit by Italy's far-right leader Matteo Salvini

5 March: Uyghur solidarity protest at the Chinese Embassy

8 March: International Women's Day. We'll be producing an issue of *Women's Fightback* in time for IWD: see workersliberty.org/wfb23.

14 March: dayschool on class struggle environmentalism

21 March: UN anti-racism day march, and free movement bloc on the march

18-21 June: Workers' Liberty summer school, Ideas for Freedom

22-26 July: Workers' Liberty residential week school on Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*

9-19 November: COP26, Glasgow

At bit.ly/mo-pe, you will find suggested text for motions on:

- "Get Labour on the streets"
- Free movement
- West Bank annexation
- Iran and Iraq
- Free Our Unions
- And
- Downloadable pdf for petition on free movement
- Charter for democracy in the labour movement □

What should be done about floods



By Misha Zubrowski

As I write on 25 February, yet more “severe flood warnings” are being issued — currently in Shrewsbury and Ironbridge — indicating “danger to life” with suggestions that floods could reach “highest ever” levels for that area.

This follows a fortnight of deluges sweeping much of the UK, with exceptional rainfall bought by Storm Dennis and Storm Ciara.

What is causing these floods? Climate change? Bad “land management”? Austerity? Or a mix?

These storms come only three months after similar — record breaking — floods in the Midlands and Yorkshire; and nine months after the Peak Districts and Lincolnshire, too, were hit by dramatic floods.

Records of UK river flow generally date back about half a century, or slightly under. These consistently indicate increased flow, across the UK, and most significantly, increased *peak* flow (see bit.ly/flood-cc). However, the longer term trends, from the few places with longer records, suggest that there had been some decrease of river flow and flooding before then, in largely undocumented decades.

River flow and flooding reflect longer term global and regional weather patterns and fluctuations, in the exact position and travel of storms, for example. Often it is not possible neatly to tag year-on-year changes with precise causes.

That said, a warmer atmosphere can hold (and release) more moisture, and climate change affects the global weather patterns and their variation, increasing climatic instability and storms. Pointing our finger at climate change over this or that flood or local trend may be difficult, and some places around

the world are suffering droughts. But climate change has surely *at least* exacerbated recent increases in flooding.

Other problems figure.

Deforestation leads to soil degradation and erosion, so that soil can hold less water. In a river basin, this means that rainfall runs off and into rivers more quickly. River flow thus varies more sharply, more directly reflecting the rainfall. Degradation of moorland, concreting, compacting grassland with livestock, and draining of floodplains for construction, all have similar effects — on top of damaging biodiversity and other ecological harms.

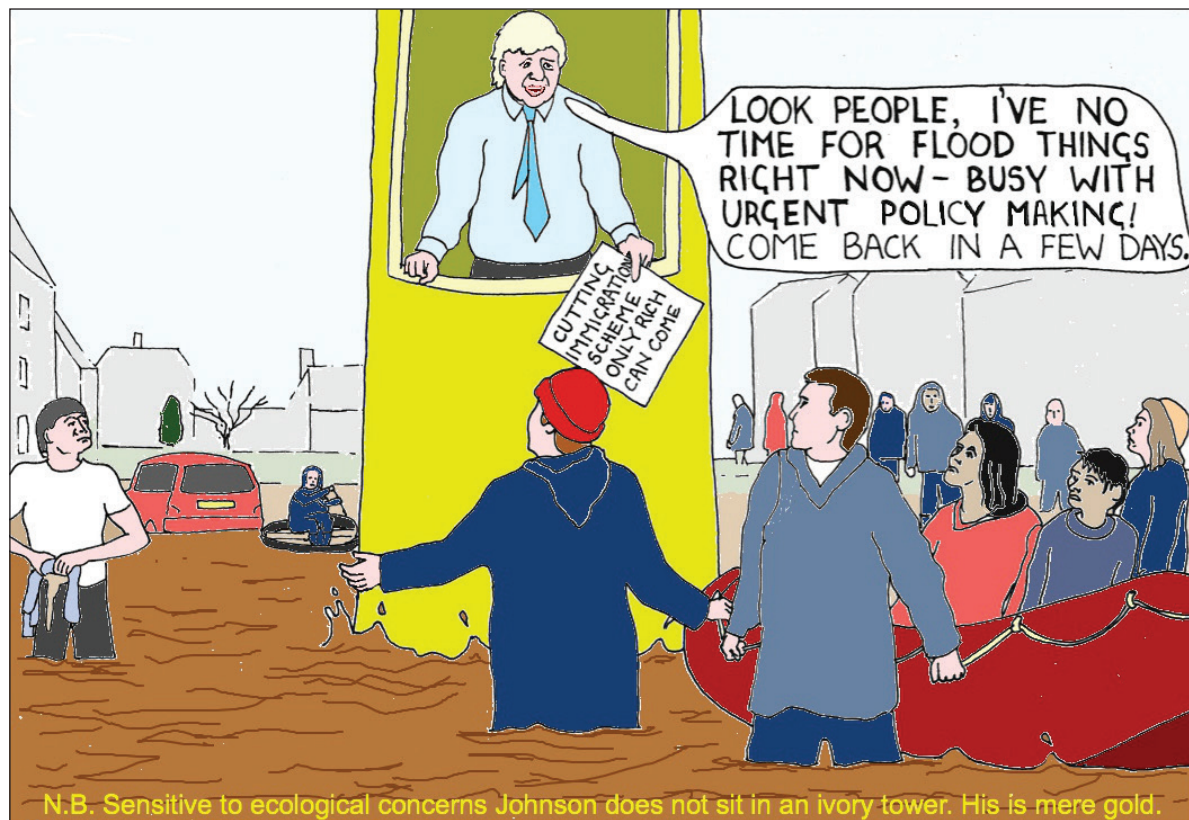
The net result, without adequate planning and other steps taken, is more flooding. That would be true even without greater and more variable rainfall.

The need for better “upstream land management” is greater given that — however much we limit it — the climate emergency is happening, and will continue for some time to come. Steps to mitigate its worst effects are necessary, whilst also tackling its root causes: principally fossil capital.

Austerity, and Conservative pig-headedness, must take a share fair of the blame. The 2008 Pitt review, commissioned following the 2007 floods, stated:

“The scale of the problem is, as we know, likely to get worse. We are not sure whether last summer’s events were a direct result of climate change, but we do know that events of this kind are expected to become more frequent... climate change has the potential to cause even more extreme scenarios than were previously considered possible. The country must adapt to increasing flood risk.”

The New Labour government did act on the recommendations and increase funding on flood defences. That was cut sharply in 2011-13 as part of Tory-Lib Dem austerity.



N.B. Sensitive to ecological concerns Johnson does not sit in an ivory tower. His is mere gold.

We need adequate funding to deal with floods. And for more than just higher flood defences and high-tech systems for predicting where they may next strike. We need constructions of dams, over-flow basins and diversion canals.

Most importantly in the medium term, we need greater collective, democratic planning: upstream land management as part of an integrated ecological rewilding programme. Programmes to plant and replant forests, to rewild land and re-establish flood plains, and even reintroducing dam-building beavers into rivers. These are all known to work. Agriculture should be planned with run-off in mind.

And, as fallback where necessary, we should plan to allow rivers to flood fields (easier to deal with) rather than flooding towns downstream. □

Israel-Palestine Protest — No occupation or annexation: 2 states and equal rights

Thursday, 27 February,
6pm – 7pm

Kensington Court, London,
W8 5DL (on High Street
Kensington near Israeli
Embassy)

Supported by:

• Clive Lewis, Labour MP for
Norwich South

• Nadia Whittome, Labour MP
for Nottingham East
• Barnaby Marder, Socialists
Against Antisemitism
• Dana Naomy Mills, UCU activist
• Daniel Randall, RMT activist
• Seema Syeda, Labour and Momentum activist
• John Moloney, Assistant General Secretary, PCS
• Alex Blenkhorn, Socialists
Against Antisemitism

WORKERSLIBERTY.ORG • 07752379924 • BIT.LY/14-3-20 • AWL@WORKERSLIBERTY.ORG

WORKERS' LIBERTY INVITES YOU TO A DAY OF WORKSHOPS ON...

CLASS STRUGGLE ENVIRONMENTALISM

10:30-17:30, SATURDAY, 14 MARCH 2020

PARK VIEW SCHOOL,
WEST GREEN ROAD (NEAR JUNCTION WITH CLINTON RD), N15 3QR,
LONDON

WORKERSLIBERTY.ORG • 07752379924 • BIT.LY/14-3-20 • AWL@WORKERSLIBERTY.ORG

Workshops:

- Marxist ecology for beginners
- Building local, changing the global (applying Socialist Green New Deals)
- How do we fight the fossil fuel industry?
- Climate struggles in Australia
- Socialist strategy and saving the planet
- Debate: should we phase out all animal products?

Capitalism is the central driver of environmental crises. Workers' Liberty thinks class struggle environmentalism, and the ideas of Marxist ecology, are key to stopping climate catastrophes. Workers' Liberty has been developing and putting into practice these politics. Please join us for this day of discussion and debate.

Free creche available but please book before 1 March.
More info and tickets: bit.ly/14-3-20

Morning Star depicts trans people as predators



By Katy Dollar

The *Morning Star* (linked to the Communist Party of Britain) has been forced to apologise for printing a transphobic cartoon by Stella Perrett, published in the print edition of Tuesday 18 February.

The cartoon depicting a slithering, slithering crocodile ogling terrified and defenceless newts and invading their “safe space” with the excuse that the crocodile is “transitioning to a newt”. The cartoon is grossly offensive, showing trans people as predatory and deceitful and cis women as weak and in need of protection.

As the cartoon circulated online, trade union LGBT+ groups began to organise against the *Star*, calling for withdrawal of union funds. A petition was set up by PCS Rainbow Collective which attracted hundreds of signatures in a few hours. The *Morning Star* was called out on Twitter.

The cartoon was removed from the online version of the paper with an apology claiming it “had not been authorised for publication and its appearance in the print edition represents a failure to follow... procedures for approving submissions.” The apology doesn’t explain how the cartoon was com-

missioned and printed without the editor noticing. The apology also skirts around the fact that the cartoon was not an aberration, but a logical conclusion of a longstanding pattern of the *Morning Star* publishing transphobic articles. The moral panic around “protecting women’s spaces” from trans women stems from seeing trans women as innately dangerous and threatening to cis women.

Much of the *Star*’s transphobic output is less initially horrifying than the crocodile cartoon, more enveloped in obfuscation, but the underlying politics is the same. In 2018 a group of *Morning Star* readers wrote into the paper criticising it for publishing an anti-trans open letter.

This division between a group of mostly younger *Star* readers who see the need to fight transphobia, and the official line of the Communist Party and its paper, will probably have been one reason why the *Morning Star* felt under pressure to issue a mealy-mouthed apology.

The cartoon has shone a light on the official labour movement’s extensive funding and support for the *Morning Star*. According to the *Star*, Community, CWU, FBU, GMB, NUM, POA, RMT, and Unite are represented on its management committee.

It has yet to be seen if the apology is enough to dampen the calls for unions to distance themselves from the paper. I certainly hope not. The *Morning Star* should be made to account for its scapegoating of an oppressed minority, dividing workers against



each other and propagating the myth that our rights run counter to each other.

Though our unions fund the paper, most of us do not regularly read it and would be shocked by the lies that flow readily from its pages. As well as transphobic cartoons, activists in Boycott the *Morning Star* have unearthed cartoons by Stella Perrett containing antisemitic caricatures which were published in 2016.

The paper repeats Chinese state lies to

cover the persecution of the Uyghur people, one of the Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region. It celebrated the “liberation” of Aleppo by Assad. It repeated right wing lies about migrants driving down wages.

Reactionary, conservative politics dressed up as left-wing are the bread and butter of the *Morning Star*. It is about time our unions stopped paying for it. □

• This is a guest Antidoto column by Katy Dollar. Jim Denham will be back next week.

HS2 could lift congestion and allow more local trains



While there is much to agree with in Simon Nelson’s article (*Solidarity* 534) I believe that Simon is wrong in opposing HS2.

If the line was just about allowing Northerners to get to London in a shorter time, maybe he would have a point. However probably the main reason for constructing HS2 is the limited capacity of the existing network.

There is a limit on how many more longer or more frequent services can be carried on the current network. HS2 (should we call

it Congestion Line 1?) will take away large numbers of express trains from the current overcrowded lines, allowing more commuter and regional services to run across the Midlands and North West.

Poor Northern services are no reason to cancel HS2. Our response should be to call for a Congestion Line 2 (HS3) from Liverpool to Hull/ Newcastle, alongside the construction of HS2, and freeing up the existing network for more local services.

That should go along with removing current bottlenecks such as Manchester Piccadilly to Oxford Road, and recreating the broken links in the network like Skipton to Clitheroe, cut in the “Beeching” era.

It will massively help in decarbonising the transport economy and allow workers cut off in transport black spots to commute more

easily to employment.

For many years improvements to railways have been done on a stop-start basis; teams of designers, engineers, and construction workers are brought together, trained and then sacked at the end of the project.

While the cost of HS2 and HS3 and the other necessary rail projects would be large, rolling programs, with skilled teams moving from project to project, would help in reducing costs and keep large numbers of workers in employment.

The inflation in the costs on current rail projects is in large part construction companies being told to include Treasury (government) contingency costs in their budgeting. In the case of HS2 that increased the initial cost of £32 billion to £44 billion. The bill may increase to £106 billion (contingencies on top

of contingencies, and guesses at inflation).

The construction companies have no incentive to reduce costs, but they pocket any savings that come their way. Nationalised Network Rail should control new rail construction, with an incentive to reduce costs.

We need a long-term new railways national rail infrastructure plan for Nationalised Network Rail. This plan would incorporate rolling electrification across the network, linked to massive capacity improvements on the existing network and the reopening of the many closed “Beeching” lines now desperately needed.

Any such plan by necessity needs to link into local and regional transport plans. More Rail: yes! HS2 and HS3: yes! □

Mark Catterall, Todmorden

Labour needs open justice



Mehmood Mirza, front-runner in the nominations for the BAME seat on the National Executive in the Labour Party elections now underway, has been suspended from membership and thus disqualified.

Four other candidates for the BAME or constituency seats on the National Executive have also been suspended since nominations started in January: Jo Bird, Mohammed Azam, Graham Durham, and Keith Hussein. Jo Bird has since been reinstated.

According to the *Skwawkbox* website,

friendly to Mirza: “Mehmood Mirza... would be unable to publicise the nature of the complaint because of Labour’s confidentiality requirements”.

No charges have been made public in any of the other four cases either, whether by the Labour Party machine or by the candidates.

We know of no rule that Labour members who are suspended cannot make public what the charges are against them. If there is one, then it is a scandal. If it has just become customary for those suspended, or expelled, not to reveal the charges, that is wrong too.

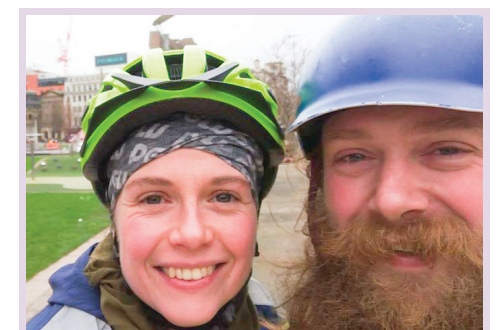
As has in many countries been considered for centuries to be essential to a civilised legal system, justice should be open. Charges, evidence, hearings, and verdicts should all be open to public scrutiny. Exceptions and

protections are required (as in the bourgeois court system) in cases such as sexual misconduct. But there is no reason to suppose that the five suspensions fall in that ambit.

The rumour is that they are all to do with charges of antisemitism. The Labour Party should surely be cleansed of antisemitism. That will involve some expulsions, but is primarily a job of debate and education.

Suspiciously-timed suspensions, with no charges announced, no expeditious procedure, and warping effects on internal elections, are no way to develop a clean, democratic, and prejudice-marginalising party. □

Colin Foster, London



Bike ride raises £1055

Thanks to Steve Chapman for a late £20 sponsorship for Hannah and Dan’s fund-raising bike ride from Sheffield to Manchester, which they did on 14 February.

The total now stands at £1055. Any other late contributions — bit.ly/cycle4socialism.

We’ll be starting a new general fund drive on 14 March, with a target of raising £20,000 between then and 30 September. □

Defend and extend free movement!

6699 Editorial

On 19 February 2020 Johnson's government published more plans for the UK's post-Brexit border regime.

The new policy is a flagrant assault on immigrant workers. We must call for Labour and our unions to comprehensively reject it, and in its place to champion the policy for migrants' rights and free movement approved at Labour conference last year.

The plans will allow "skilled" migrants to apply for a work visa if they speak English and have a job offer from a licensed employer, for a job requiring at least A-Level-equivalent skills and paying at least £25,600. This salary threshold will be reduced slightly for designated "shortage occupations" and, bizarrely, for migrants with relevant PhD qualifications. There are also vague words about a slightly more liberal regime that may come later, for a select few of the "most highly-skilled workers".

For so-called "unskilled" workers the outlook is even worse than under the proposals for highly restrictive 12-month visas made last year by May's government.

There will be no general route in. The government will graciously let them enter if they come as a partner or under-18 child of a "skilled" worker. And Boris Johnson has claimed there will be no "special pleading" for industries left short-handed.

But that statement was immediately contradicted as the government expanded its agricultural guest worker scheme. This will allow 10,000 workers to come pick and process fruit and vegetables for a maximum of six months in a year before kicking them out. And similar schemes are promised "for scientists, graduates, NHS workers".

We can expect that a range of industries will be lobbying hard for deals along these lines. According to the Institute for Govern-

ment's Brexit Director, we can expect that many will be quietly granted, despite what Johnson says for show.

The policy does not just represent a door being slammed in the face of many prospective migrants. Those who it does allow in will be rendered vulnerable to intense exploitation. Fundamentally, this will be a system based not on the rights of working-class migrants, but on their utility to employers.

Under free movement, migrants are (relatively) free to stay. They can put down roots, develop union organisation, and if they lose or quit their job, they can look for another. This makes it easier to push back against low pay and poor conditions.

Under both the "skilled" and "unskilled" routes in this policy, workers will be reliant on employer sponsorship for their right to stay – shifting the worker-boss balance of power even further towards the boss.

Guest workers on six-month and other tightly limited schemes will find it even harder to beat exploitation as they will be kicked out so rapidly: workplace organisation and bonds between workers will be disrupted by constant churn. Meanwhile some will overstay and become undocumented, at the mercy of dodgy bosses threatening to report them.

On top of this, some such schemes house guest workers in employer-owned accommodation, further reinforcing employers' power over them.

Some will see this as something new. But non-EU migrants were subject to policies like this long before Brexit. What is happening now is their expansion to EU citizens. So we must not only resist the extension of the UK's racist border regime, we must fight to roll it back – to free non-European workers as well.

Some Labour politicians and union bureaucrats will want to pander to the idea that immigration is a problem that needs to be curbed, and to go no further than requesting a bit of tinkering or watering-down.

We must demand that Labour and our un-



Photo: Gemma Short

Saturday 21 March, 12 noon from Portland Place, London W1A 1AA: Join the "no borders" bloc on the UN anti-racism day demonstration. Sponsors so far: Labour Campaign for Free Movement, Labour for a Socialist Europe, Mutiny, Red Flag, Socialist Resistance, Workers' Liberty. bit.ly/21-mar

ions oppose the policy wholesale. And that they link this to championing the positive alternative policy of free movement, equality and working-class solidarity that Labour conference overwhelmingly voted to adopt in September.

That means defending and extending free movement; rejecting any system based on caps or on migrants' utility to business; closing all detention centres (not just two); allowing equal access to social security for migrants; making the right to family reunion unconditional; and extending voting rights to everyone who lives here.

The signs so far are not promising. In the leader and deputy candidates' platitude-laden statements to the Labour Cam-

paign for Free Movement, none except Dawn Butler were willing to back all elements of this policy (bit.ly/lcfm-responses).

It will be up to Labour and union members to come out fighting and to drag our leaders behind us. We can begin by building the anti-borders bloc called by Labour for a Socialist Europe on the big 21 March anti-racism demonstration (12 noon from Portland Place, London W1A 1AA), and the national protest at the Heathrow immigration detention centres planned for 16 May. □

• The Labour Campaign for Free Movement will be announcing further actions and initiatives soon. www.labourfreemovement.org.

Parts of "left" link with right on antisemitism

By Mohan Sen

On 24 February anti-far right campaign Hope Not Hate and the Jewish charity Community Security Trust published a report on London-based antisemitic conspiracy group Keep Talking.

Since HnH and the CST secretly infiltrated Keep Talking in early 2017, it has hosted "an array of both left-wing and right-wing speakers, who have discussed a wide variety of conspiracy theories". Particular focuses have included 9/11, terror attacks in London, historical assassinations, the murder of Jo Cox, the Skripal affair and Syria.

In addition "antisemitic conspiracy theories are at the core of the group. Sometimes these are expressed in more overt terms, in the form of Holocaust denial and ideas of Jewish influence. Other times these work as explanations of event-based conspiracy theories."

The report discusses the nature and appeal of conspiracy theories. As it notes, "most worrying... is the use of conspiracy theories as a tool to attack minority groups. Jew-hatred has deep roots within the tradition of alternative conspiracy thinking, and whilst the so-called 'Jewish Question' is hotly debated amongst conspiracy theory communities, antisemitic tropes are rarely far removed

from a diverse array of conspiratorial notions".

Keep Talking involves a number of figures quite straightforwardly linked to the far right. Alongside the report, Hope Not Hate has issued a video clip from a March 2019 meeting at which well-known Holocaust-denier James Thring argues the British state "didn't know that [the murder of Jews in Nazi camps] was going on... because it wasn't."

"These camps were work camps, they were there to help in the war effort, if they wanted to kill the Jews they wouldn't have taken them all the way across Europe and put them in a camp and paid for their food and everything".

Thring was responding to Keep Talking's billed speaker that night, expelled Labour and GMB activist Peter Gregson, who was mocked for suggesting that the Holocaust did happen in some form. Gregson's speech was about "Free speech on Israel", which he claimed is being lost due to "Holocaust guilt".

Gregson is not the only person connected to the Labour left milieu and involved in Keep Talking. Miko Peled, for instance, seems to be more widely accepted on the left as a legitimate figure than Gregson.

Peled spoke at the Free Speech on Israel

fringe meeting at the 2017 Labour Party conference, and was publicly defended by FSol after demanding "the freedom to criticise and to discuss every issue, whether it's the Holocaust: yes or no..." Last year he spoke at a fringe meeting on "BDS, antisemitism and a free Palestine". As the report makes clear, he used his appearance at Keep Talking to promote antisemitic conspiracy theory.

Two days before the report came out ex-Labour MP Chris Williamson tweeted an article by Peled, immediately afterwards tweeting him specifically with a salute.

Chris Williamson has had connections with a number of those discussed in the report, including Keep Talking speakers Elleanne Green and Vanessa Beeley.

In Keep Talking far right and what the report calls "far left" rub shoulders and discuss in a friendly manner. Perhaps even more concerning is the way the "left" participants participate in and in some cases seem quite at home in a much wider left-wing Labour Party milieu, one that reaches far into the Corbynite mainstream.

The way promoters of antisemitism are to one extent or another accepted, excused and even defended shows the logic of "absolute anti-Zionist" politics. □

• Read the report (27 pages) at bit.ly/hnhreport

Democracy in the labour movement

Policy-making in the labour movement should be the property of conference and duly-elected committees, not of a designated "Leader" and their "Leader's Office" handing down announcements.

To push back the Tories week-by-week, and to build a movement which can get the Tories voted out, we need to get a real democracy-from-below in the labour movement, and to clear away the very large Blair-era elements still in Labour Party and union structures. See bit.ly/d-l-m for our proposals. □

Get Labour on the streets

Solidarity is campaigning in the labour movement for Labour to launch a concerted on-the-streets drive of demonstrations and mobilisations to demand: rebuild the NHS, save our schools, end austerity. Text to adapt for a motion to your CLP or union branch: bit.ly/1-o-s □

Labour leader: a blurred election

By Mohan Sen

Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign has something of Jeremy Corbyn 2015 about it (and then some). Unfortunately for Rebecca Long-Bailey, the same cannot be said of her Labour leadership campaign.

She has had some large-ish (stress *ish*) rallies, but many have been flops. In general her campaign is lacklustre. Politically poor videos seem to be taking the place of public mobilisations.

We have gone from the situation of 2015, where a scattering of left-wingers quickly cohered into a dynamic, enthusiastic, organised campaign, to one where the left is transformed back into a (now bigger) scattering of sometimes demoralised individuals. That is perhaps to do with the way things were shaped and reshaped by an increasingly top-down, conservative Corbyn leadership and a top-down, conservative left (in particular, Momentum).

This is reflected in the political murkiness of the leadership contest.

Keir Starmer has reversed his position and said that if elected he'll offer Lisa Nandy and Rebecca Long-Bailey "top jobs" in his shadow cabinet. It should be remembered that when he originally refused to commit, prominent Starmer supporters briefed the press they wanted a cabinet dominated by right-wingers, including Rachel Reeves as Shadow Chancellor.

Both Starmer and Nandy have key organ-

isers around them who see their campaigns as mechanisms to undermine and neutralise the left. They have pitched to that right-wing constituency, and will empower it. That, plus Long-Bailey's distancing from the Milne-Murphy "Leader's Office" axis and her better support for workers' struggles like the UCU strike, makes the case for voting for her, very critically.

Beyond that, however, things are not at all clear.

All three candidates have advocated left-wing policies in a general sense.

All have backed an "anti-austerity" stance and more public ownership, RLB most strongly. Even Nandy, who criticised Labour's manifesto positions on tuition fees and broadband, then backed those policies.

Despite voting for Boris Johnson's Brexit deal on its second reading, she has also continued to defend free movement at least on paper. So has Starmer, but not RLB. All have provided low-key pro-migrant "mood music", but Long-Bailey's concrete policies and commitments are the least solid.

Asked about the monarchy, Nandy was the most critical, followed by Starmer, and RLB the least. Asked about pressing the button to use nuclear weapons as Prime Minister, it was about the same!

The Fire Brigades Union, which is backing Long-Bailey and Richard Burgon, has publicly attacked Starmer for committing only to repealing the 2016 Trade Union Act – not all anti-union laws, as Labour and TUC policy



demands. But none of the candidates, not RLB, not Burgon, none has committed on this. None, so far, has even responded to the Free Our Unions pledge on these issues.

We must keep pushing on that and many other issues.

Discussions among Workers' Liberty activists have produced a majority for voting for Long-Bailey, though we didn't support nominating her.

For deputy leader, some advocate a critical vote for Dawn Butler. She has pretty

straightforwardly endorsed the Labour Campaign for Free Movement's policies; she has offered warmer words on trade union rights than most; she is not identified with the Milne "Leader's Office"; and, as between candidates with not much to choose politically, better vote for a black woman.

Others argue that her record as an obedient junior minister under New Labour, and her blurred campaign, rule out that recommendation. □

Murray goes, but who instead?

By Gerry Bates

Andrew Murray, former Communist Party leader and prominent Stalinist, has resigned from his job in the Labour Party Leader's Office.

His associate Karie Murphy has already been lined up to go to the House of Lords. What will happen to their associate Seamus Milne we don't yet know.

Good riddance. The 3Ms axis played a big part in:

- Labour's fumbling and evasive policy on Brexit. Murray and Milne were keen Brexiters well before 2016, and retreated only step-by-step before the overwhelming rank-and-file Labour push against Brexit.

- Labour's antisemitism fiasco: Murray and Milne are long-time hate-Israel campaigners.

- The bureaucratic and manipulative mode of Labour politics between 2017 and 2019.

The 2017 manifesto's anti-cuts policies

were shelved, for practical purposes, for over two years. Labour abandoned street campaigning. Instead we had a platform of opposing *police* cuts and claiming to offer defter Brexit-negotiation than the Tories. Numerous left-wing policies were agreed by conference were ignored and the party continued to be run undemocratically. Then suddenly a shower of leftish policies were "announced" from on high just days or weeks before the 2019 election.

But even if all three Ms go, it doesn't fol-

low their replacements will be good.

Keir Starmer has, as his "deputy head of field", Matt Pound, the national organiser of right-wing faction Labour First, who is as bureaucratic, manipulative and hostile to anti-Stalinist socialist politics (in his own way) as Milne and Murray ever were.

We need a Labour Party where decision-making power is in the hands of the members and the conference, not the apparatchiks. □

Assange: don't extradite, don't glorify

By Sacha Ismail

We should oppose the extradition to the USA of Wikileaks publisher Julian Assange, whose court battle against extradition has just started.

Those on the left who hail him as a political hero are wrong. But we should still oppose extradition.

Assange's politics are a confused and noxious mix of "libertarian", left-wing and right-wing. Moreover, credible charges of sexual assaults have been made against him in Sweden.

After a Swedish court blocked extradition in May 2019, the Swedish authorities announced in November 2019 that they had dropped their investigation.

But now, if extradited to the US, Assange faces one count of computer hacking and 17 allegations of violating their 1917 Espio-

nage Act; he could face up to 175 years in an American prison.

The reason is Wikileaks' release of hundreds of thousands of classified military documents and diplomatic cables, particularly concerning the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many show the US government, politicians and military in a very bad light, and some reveal brutal crimes.

Former US soldier Chelsea Manning, who obtained many of the documents, spent seven years in prison and has been jailed again for refusing to name those who helped her. The charge against Assange, is that by encouraging a then-serving US soldier to covertly obtain classified documents he acted in the manner of a foreign spy.

This is the first time a publisher or journalist has been prosecuted under the Espionage Act. No public interest defence is allowed, and Trump officials have argued

that Assange should not be allowed to claim First Amendment rights to free speech and free press because he is a foreign national.

During his 2016 election campaign, Trump praised Wikileaks (which in recent years has continued to operate, from Iceland). "I love Wikileaks... It's been amazing what's coming out on Wikileaks... This Wikileaks is like a treasure trove... Boy, I love reading those Wikileaks".

But Trump doesn't do consistency, or gratitude. Now he says "I know nothing about Wikileaks". On 23 May 2019 the US Department of Justice had a federal grand jury approve an indictment of Assange.

Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, believes Assange has already suffered mistreatment in the British prison system. You can imagine what is waiting for him in the US.

Most fundamentally, what Assange is accused of in this case is no crime from a socialist point of view. A workers' government would do the same on a bigger scale. □



Corrections

The "5 February" quote from Lisa Nandy (*Solidarity* 534), saying that Labour should not "pick sides", was in fact from 5 February 2017, not 2020.

Nandy has however repeated the thought recently, telling Labour List (21 February 2020) that Labour has gone wrong because on "nearly every important or contentious issue in recent years... we've started the conversation with a view that you have to pick a side. One side wins". □

Uni strikes going into third week

By Chris Reynolds

The strikes by university workers in the UCU union over their “four fights” go into their third week on 2-5 March, and their fourth on 9-13 March.

The “four fights” are pay, equality, workload, and decasualisation. While vice-chancellors and celebrity professors enjoy high pay, junior university workers often have casual and insecure conditions, and low pay.

The Cambridge branch of the UCU, for example, points out that the university vice-chancellor is on £492,000 a year, while a library assistant is on £20,130, an IT technician on £23,067, and a research assistant on £26,715.

A reader reports from Cambridge: “On Friday 21st, we had a lively march and rally after picketing along with the local Extinction Rebellion (XR) group, who had been running a roadblock and various direct actions all week, and the university’s Zero Carbon group.

“On Monday 24th, we had a rally themed around inequality, which focussed on the disparities in salary between our Vice-Chancellor Stephen Toope and those of the university staff. We represented these pay disparities with fake banknotes bearing the Vice-Chancellor’s face.

“The pickets themselves have been strong in places, but worryingly the after-strike rally had lower attendance than in 2018 and at the start of the November/December round of strike action”.

From Bristol: “Twenty-plus students and supporters on a ‘flying picket’ on 21 February. Less staff picketing than the last round of strikes, but still quite a few at many locations across the university.

“Bulletins went very quickly. Bristol Student-Staff Solidarity Group is planning

around 12 teach-outs”.

From Sheffield Hallam: “One picket explained that in her department alone, four members of staff who left were not replaced and their classes are taken by postgraduate students or part-time staff. Casualisation of teaching staff is growing”.

From Sheffield university: “Lively and chatty picket, earlier than the publicised time of 8am. A well-organised department with 100% membership. All support staff [members of Unison or Unite rather than UCU] stopped for a chat on the way in and took leaflets and stickers in with them.

“One picket told me how the lowest paid and least secure staff get the lowest awards, especially support staff such as canteen workers and cleaner whose jobs get contracted out.

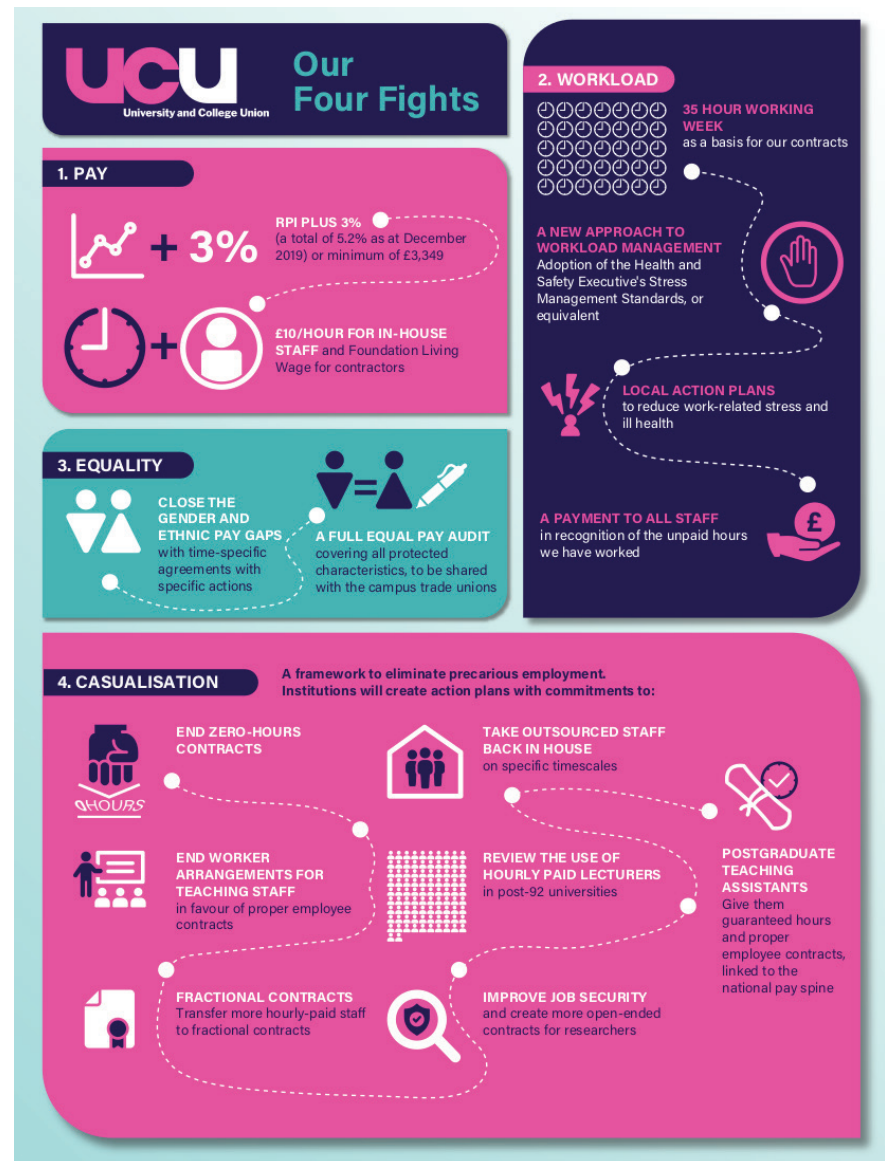
HIGHEST

“The highest pay awards go to those who are already very highly paid, secure and do the least hands-on work, people in figurehead roles who have a team of staff behind them to do the actual work”.

From Newcastle: “Lively picket lines from 9am on 20 February, perhaps up to ten of them across the campus.

“Postgraduate students [who also work for the university part-time] were disappointed that there weren’t more senior lecturers on strike in their departments. But I talked with a senior lecturer, who said they were striking mainly over the terrible contracts and conditions for newer staff and postgrads. Some postgrads have had teaching hours massively cut this term.

“There are teach-outs at a local pub every lunch time”. □



Solidarity, not fee refunds

By Sacha Marten

Demands for compensation from universities has taken root during recent UCU struggles, driven by strikebreaking right-wing students, one of which tried to disrupt a trade union branch meeting at my university (Birkbeck University of London).

Increasingly, however, demands for compensation have also been adopted by students on the left trying to support the strikes. The argument goes that with higher education being a marketised system, we students should act as consumers would, and demand a refund on the lectures missed during the strikes.

It can be an act of solidarity, because it'll be costly for the university and lead to one in the eye for the managers.

The issue with this logic is that students should not be paying customers, and academic staff should not be commercial service providers. Education and academia should operate for their own intrinsic benefits rather than as some financial transaction.

The “demand compensation” argument comes dangerously close to buying into the logic that first saw public services privatised, that the individual will have greater power and rights with a market system than a state-

funded one. The interference of the market in education is not to place universities within the reach of consumer rights law and the “invisible hand”, but to extort learners with ridiculous loans and to extract profit from academic research.

The university workers’ union UCU advises that rather than claim compensation, students should use their Student Union to pressure their university to put money saved in the strike through docked wages, unused utilities, etc., toward student services, programmes and bursaries.

In the context of marketised education, demanding refunds is rather like telling a mugger they’re welcome to your wallet and can beat you up, but would they kindly lend you the change for the bus home?

Compensation campaigns do nothing to form solidarity with striking staff and ensure the success of their struggle. They could lend weight to an anti-union argument, empowering managers to point to compensation paid to students as “proof” of an adverse impact of the strikes, and giving the media the ability to claim student anger at losing out.

Already, the BBC is interviewing a student anti-strike campaign consisting of two members and 300 Twitter followers as a representative voice. They won’t be hard pushed to find a right-wing student demanding a



refund because they dislike trade unions.

We have an option open that will unambiguously help staff and students in their struggle against marketised education, whilst building solidarity and an effective

political movement for the future.

Join your university picket line, support your striking staff and land a blow against university bosses and the government! □

Save BBC from the Tories

By John Cunningham

The recent resignation of BBC director Tony Hall has once again thrust the question of the role and the future of the BBC into the spotlight.

Hall's resignation comes at a time when redundancies, cuts and reorganisations are being announced, along with calls for a re-thinking about what the BBC does and how it does it.

On 29 January it was announced that 250 jobs were to go among journalists and production staff. The scrapping of the popular *Victoria Derbyshire Show*, announced a few days previous, is indicative of what this will mean for the programme schedule. Although the reasoning behind these cutbacks is usually couched in terms of "making savings", "reorganisation" and "bringing the BBC into the 21st century" (etc.) the real reason is the continuing hostility of neoliberal free marketeers and the government, particularly of Boris Johnson and his principal adviser – Dominic Cummings – to the whole idea of public service broadcasting.

The left shouldn't stand aside from all this. Whatever its faults (and they are numerous) the BBC is still a major player in TV and radio broadcasting in the UK and has done more than any other media organisation to set a "cultural agenda" in the UK.

It also has an undoubted international reputation. Once in Romania I was the guest of a family in the city of Timișoara who told me how, during the dark days of the Ceaușescu dictatorship, they hid in their cellar to listen to the BBC World Service, a "crime" for which they would have served a lengthy prison sentence if caught.

Today the BBC stands accused of liberal bias or right wing bias. It has the Jimmy Savile scandal still hanging over it. With its vastly overpaid executives, its female staff discriminated against and a growing threat from new forms of electronic media and streaming services such as Netflix and Ama-

BBC statistics

- BBC's global audience in 2019: 426 million per week.
- Annual income of BBC in UK (2019): £4.71 billion (of which £3.69 billion comes from the licence fee).
- In the 3rd quarter of 2019 BBC1 reached 55 million viewers. Its nearest challenger was C4 with a reach of 51.1 million, in third position was BBC2 with 49.6 million.
- On average it is estimated that UK audiences spend 2 hours 45 minutes with the BBC every day. □

zon, it has its back against the wall.

The BBC was denounced in Robin Aitken's book *The Noble Liar* published last year – spoiler alert, it is utter tosh. It is also defended by such as Will Hutton and Polly Toynbee, who called (rather feebly) "...for this national treasure to be saved" (*Guardian* 17 December 2019).

Once the future of the BBC and television in general evoked considerable interest and debate on the Left. In 1962 Raymond Williams wrote a Penguin Special *Britain in the Sixties: Communications*, and in 1972 Brian Groombridge, *Television and the People: A Programme for Democratic Participation*. Both argued for a radical re-thinking of television to make the medium more democratic and more participatory and, in the process, diminish the power of those in control.

None of that happened, but in the 1960s and 70s the BBC shed many of its "Auntie" connotations (patronising, strait-laced and boringly middle-brow) and introduced new, challenging dramas by writers like Trevor Griffiths.

There appear to be three alternatives for the BBC today:

1. To carry on in the same way, albeit with a trimmed down staff and service (probably favoured by BBC execs, if no-one else)

2. Deregulation (favoured by Johnson, Cummings, Michael Gove, Rupert Murdoch etc.)

3. To stand firmly with the idea of public service broadcasting while reinvigorating these ideals and redefining and discussing what they mean.

Option 1 might work at some rudimentary level, but would almost certainly some kind of truncated "mini" service, with limited programme-making capacity and a reliance on a predictable menu of game shows, cookery programmes and soap operas and not much else.

Deregulation would be a disaster in terms of diversity, choice, quality, impartiality and the ability and inclination to inform.

Scrapping the licence fee has been a favoured hobby-horse of many conservatives for years. Back in 1982, Douglas Hurd, later to be Home Secretary, said that the licence was not "eternal". On Wednesday 5 February Culture Secretary Nicky Morgan said that the licence could be scrapped in 2027.

The Tories like to promote the idea that no-one in the UK supports the licence fee. But on the evidence, opinion seems divided. In Switzerland a referendum in 2018 rejected a proposal to scrap their licence fee by a crushing 72%.

LICENCE FEE

If the fee is scrapped, then the BBC would likely follow what happened to Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the USA when government support for public broadcasting – never very great – was substantially reduced during the Nixon era. US broadcasters were then forced to rely on public donations, subscriptions and grants (often from small businesses) to maintain their reduced services.

Nixon loathed PBS with a vengeance and, according to witnesses who worked in the White House, he would frequently become apoplectic when confronted with the "liberal" bias of the public broadcaster.

Nixon wasn't called "Tricky Dicky" for nothing, so one of his tactics was to make a lot of noise about the need for "localism" in public service broadcasting. That sounds very democratic and caring. In fact it meant that the often small PBS stations had to work with smaller budgets and could not put out the programmes they wished.

Nixon also strengthened the role of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB – a body which was originally created to advise, co-ordinate and oversee public service broadcasting). Putting his own appointees in key positions, the role of the CPB shifted to one of supervision and control.

PBS never really fought its corner, but instead made numerous concessions to Nixon. It ended up broadcasting programmes such as the dreadful "topical affairs" show *The McLaughlin Group*, in which four white middle class male suits (including right-winger Pat Buchanan) shouted at each other for an hour.

It refused to broadcast a Woody Allen TV comedy, *The Politics and Comedy of Woody*

Allen, presumably because he took the piss out of Nixon. It also declined to broadcast certain current affairs programmes and documentaries, including one in which banks were criticised by an unemployed man, on the grounds that this was biased against "finance" (I kid you not!).

The capitulation by PBS before Nixon's onslaught was almost total. In this respect the record of the BBC is not dissimilar.

The BBC could also respond by introducing advertising to make up for the loss of revenue from scrapping the TV licence.

That would bring in such problems advertisers influencing programming decisions by refusing advertising on specialised or minority programmes on the grounds that the limited audience doesn't warrant it.

In any case, who in their right mind wants to be interrupted every ten or fifteen minutes with a "word from our sponsors"?

As things stand at the moment, the scrapping of the licence fee would result either in the death of the BBC or its drastic reshaping into a form which would satisfy no-one except neoliberals.

Other "solutions" such as a "voluntary" licence fee, proposed by the BBC's £1.5m-salary-earning Gary Lineker, are non-starters – just shut-up Gary!

A pay-per-view solution would be too complex and probably wouldn't provide the regular income stream that a national broadcaster needs in order to plan ahead.

There has been some talk of a "subscription system" (something like the method used by Netflix) with one estimate suggesting this would cost a subscribing household about £20 a month, just over £8.00 more than the licence fee (currently £154.50 per annum). It is likely that administration costs would also be higher.

The Media Reform Coalition has made a series of proposals about reforming the BBC (see box for summary). They include the replacement of the licence fee with a digital license fee based on access to the internet rather than possession of TV receiving equipment.

However, for the Tory right and neoliberal free marketeers much of this is by the way. They really only have one aim: to destroy the BBC and thereby kill the whole idea that television and radio broadcasting should be a public service.

The crunch is due to come in December 2027, when the BBC's Charter is up for renewal. There is also a mid-term review in 2022.

The old idea, beloved of the BBC hierarchy for so long, that public service broadcasting needs to be uplifting, entertaining and educative – the ethos of its founder, the fundamentalist Presbyterian John Reith — is now outdated. For too long the heads of the BBC (and/or their one-time supremo, the Postmaster General) have decided what is good for us, often in a middle-class patronising manner sometimes insulting and discriminatory against women and minorities.

An example was the appallingly racist *Black and White Minstrel Show*, broadcast

MRC proposals for the BBC

• Rather than consisting of government and board appointed 'establishment' figures, the BBC should be managed by a board consisting of executive directors elected by staff and non-executive directors elected by licence fee payers.

• The licence fee system should be maintained but radically reformed, with the rate set by an independent, non-market, regulator.

• Regulation of the BBC must move away from a 'market failure' model in which the BBC is expected to provide what the market will not, to a model in which public and democratic programme making, and rigorous professional standards, positively shape the broader media ecology.

• To make the BBC more accountable to the public it serves, programme making and editorial functions should be devolved to

the nations and regions. • The BBC should develop the capacity for user-to-user interactions, providing a shared space free from the commercial imperatives to fuel controversy where plural world-views can be articulated and brought into dialogue

• All BBC content should be made available to licence fee payers in perpetuity. Internationally, the BBC's radio programmes and podcasts should be made freely available on BBC digital platforms, as should the majority of television news and current affairs programming.

• In-house production guarantees should be restored to ensure the BBC remains a public source of independent programme making and a provider of training and expertise. □

• Abridged

s? But what BBC?



from 1958 to 1978, where white singers “blackened up” to perform gospel and minstrel type songs usually associated with the American South.

For years the BBC resisted calls to scrap the show, even responding to a letter from the now-defunct Race Relations Board with the comment that black people should stop moaning and “just shut up”.

I remember as a child and into my teens that you stopped watching TV after about 1700 on Sundays. The great and the good at the BBC had decreed that this time was reserved for religious programmes. Despite

abundant evidence that society was moving away from religion and becoming more and more agnostic or atheist, they persisted in boring us to death with *Songs of Praise* (from 1961 to the present day), *The Sunday Half Hour* (on BBC Radio 2 — scrapped in 2018) and self-righteous homilies from Thora Hird (on *Praise Be!*).

Even today, despite a name change (the “Religious Affairs Department” is now “BBC Religion and Ethics”), the BBC refuses to countenance inviting an occasional secular voice on to their regular religious slot *Thought for the Day*, despite complaints and

requests from the National Secular Society and others.

During the 1984-85 miners’ strike the BBC manipulated footage of the Orgreave confrontation to show that the miners instigated a charge by mounted police by throwing stones at the police ranks. In fact the opposite happened.

It took the BBC 25 years to apologise, using the standard – but very lame excuse – that there had been errors in the editing process.

Distortion and manipulation of this kind, especially on trade union activities such as strikes, and a general hostility to the left, is well-documented. The academic studies of misrepresentation of strikes and left politics by the BBC and other media are matched in their rigorous detail and damning conclusions only by the obdurate refusal of the BBC to discuss or even acknowledge them.

Yet if Johnson, Murdoch and the rest are allowed to destroy everything that is even halfway decent in the BBC, then our media landscape will truly be a “wasteland”.

I think we should argue that the BBC is worth defending *while at the same time* calling for radical changes. The Media Reform Coalition’s “Draft Proposals for the Future of the BBC” (originally drawn up in March 2018) provide an excellent basis for discussion about what these changes should be. □

• Thanks to the MRC for allowing us to reprint extracts from their proposals.

The problem with advertising

PBS in the USA used to broadcast a regular TV series called *Rights and Wrongs* which focussed on human rights issues around the world, precisely the kind of programme a public service broadcaster should be engaged with.

In the spring of 1996, in its fourth season, the *Rights and Wrongs* production team made a programme in the series, *Snakeheads and Slaves*, in which two US journalists (one of whom was Chinese-American) examined the role of the notorious Snakehead gangs in China and elsewhere in procuring slaves to work in the west, usually as prostitutes. In an astonishing coup for the programme they secretly taped high-ranking Chinese government officials offering to introduce the

journalists to a team of slaves. However, it became almost impossible to find commercial funding for the programme. China was just opening up to foreign investment and potential backers shied away not wishing to jeopardize their chances in this lucrative market. The production team approached 40 potential corporate sponsors but none were interested. Even the PBS vice-president of programming, Jenifer Lawson, ran scared, saying that human rights is an “insufficient organising principle” for a series (whatever that’s supposed to mean). The programme was eventually aired after some money was scraped together from various foundation grants but, it seems, with a limited distribution. □



A patronising appeal to the “poor”

By Ann Field

“Why did Labour lose so badly (in the 2019 general election)? Because there was one central issue in the election campaign: Brexit. In that context, a party that could provide only a hesitant and ambiguous answer because of its internal divisions had no chance.”

“If Corbyn had been able to counterpose a resolute Left Brexit to Johnson’s plans – that is to say: using the end of the neoliberal EU treaties for the purpose of a social restructuring of British society – then a different result would have been very possible.”

“There is nothing irrational about the fact that the upper middle classes and the educated inhabitants of the big cities were against Brexit whereas the former industrial workers and poorer people voted for Brexit.”

“What is irrational is the fact that the latter had to vote for a neoliberal Tory to put an end to the unending Brexit impasse.”

This is the explanation for Labour’s election defeat provided by Sahra Wagenknecht, a leading figure in the German political party Die Linke (The Left).

In 2018 Wagenknecht launched “Arise!” as a populist German equivalent of Momentum. It quickly collapsed and now leads only a shadow existence in cyberspace. In 2019 ill health led Wagenknecht to stand down from the posts she held in Die Linke and Arise!

But in recent months Wagenknecht’s political profile has undergone a revival. Recent opinion polls have repeatedly found her to be one of Germany’s most popular politicians.

Wagenknecht’s health may have recovered. But as her analysis of Labour’s defeat demonstrates, her politics continue to suffer from a virulent strain of Blue-Labour-style pseudo-left populism.

In explaining the current electoral stagnation of Die Linke, Wagenknecht has resurrected the argument used to justify the creation of Arise! – that Die Linke had lost touch with the concerns of ‘ordinary working people’.

In 2018 the argument focused on the concerns of “ordinary working people” about refugees and immigration, with vaguely left-sounding reasons covering up for right-

wing politics.

According to Arise! theorist Wolfgang Streek, for example: “Would you want Nelson Mandela to be a refugee in Germany? No! He’d be a mail-carrier bringing Amazon parcels to your house. He was needed somewhere else.”

And Wagenknecht herself attacked the far-right AfD for being too open to immigration: Allowing in skilled workers, as advocated by the AfD, would, she argued, rob poorer countries of a skilled labour force.

Today, that argument has a broader focus. In her latest contribution to the “Die Linke Strategy Debate 2020” Wagenknecht argues:

“Many people feel patronised by the moralistic finger-wagging of Die Linke. They don’t want to have to justify what they eat, how they live, or how they travel. They don’t want to be lectured by students about how they should speak and think.”

“They are repelled by academised (sic – the German word is an invention as well) debates far-removed from the reality of their lives and conducted in a language which excludes them.”

LITTLE

“They feel ignored when other social groups are strikingly higher up in the hierarchy of left empathies. If we want to reach out to the so-called ‘little people’ again, then we must place their interests centre-stage.”

Some of the interests cited by Wagenknecht are not controversial, such as more public investment in education, health and social care, and the defence and improvement of conditions at work.

But other interests include: “The restoration of a strong performance-based welfare state; a clear rejection of new consumer taxes such as the CO2 tax; stringent criticism of elitist lifestyle debates, which are nothing to do with the climate but a denigration of poorer people and their consumer habits.”

These interests are to be promoted and met by a state which “takes on responsibility for people, protects them from the competition of global dumping, and socially bonds society together.”

Wagenknecht’s call for a proactive welfare state is linked to her entrenched hostility to immigration and the EU: Only a nation-state

can provide an effective welfare state. In an interview late last year Wagenknecht argued:

“You cannot simultaneously declare the nation-state to be out of date and demand a strong welfare state. At a transnational level there are not the institutional prerequisites – nor even any acceptance – of the idea of a large-scale redistribution and social safety nets.”

In the same interview Wagenknecht explained how Die Linke had come to abandon traditional left-wing policies and lose voters to the far right:

“We cannot become a green-liberal lifestyle-party, with themes and a language which, at best, allow us to advance in the milieu of the academically educated urban middle class. The task of a left-wing party is to represent the victims of neoliberal globalisation, not its beneficiaries.”

“It is the outlook and lifestyles of the urban better-paid, their view of globalisation, immigration, the EU and the national state, which today count as ‘left-wing’. View which were previously mainstream social-democratic are suddenly suspected of nationalism or even racism.”

“As a result, most workers and poorer people today regard ‘left-wing’ as an ideology of those who rule, and of those who have profited from neoliberal globalisation. And they are not entirely wrong to do so.”

Wagenknecht is no lone voice in advancing such arguments and seeking to rally support for them in, and beyond, Die Linke. Another contribution to the “Die Linke Strategy Debate 2020”, by the chair of one of its Berlin branches, argues:

“Germany needs a left people’s party which takes up the struggle to achieve domination of the centre-left camp. Die Linke should be that left people’s party, or pave the way for it.”

“The welfare state programme of a left people’s party cannot just be a watering can which sprinkles benefits. It must above all strengthen the entitlements earned by people through work. In that sense, it must again pay to work.”

“The demand for open borders for all – instrumentalised by the Die Linke chairperson [Katja Kipping] in a long struggle for power against the parliamentary fraction chairperson [Wagenknecht] – has not fea-

tured publicly since its Pyrrhic victory. But voters remember it.”

“Die Linke was willing to sacrifice its most popular politician [Wagenknecht] for a sur-realistic dogma. Die Linke should adopt a realistic standpoint, name the concrete interests now in play (in the debate about labour shortages), and put forward proposals for controlled immigration.”

“Many Germans want a good-neighbours relationship with Russia. Even if they do not unconditionally trust the Russian President, they trust the US President a lot less. Germany and Europe must take their affairs into their own hands.”

“Take (German) affairs into (German) hands” is code for the left-right-populist idea that Germany does not enjoy genuine sovereignty. According to Wagenknecht’s political and personal partner, Oskar Lafontaine: “We have never been a sovereign country because we have US military establishments here.”

Unfortunately, there is a real risk that Wagenknecht’s populism, if not adequately combatted, will gain ground in the course of 2020.

Because those who challenge “fashionable identity-politics themes” do not have “many friends in the media, especially supposedly left-wing media”, Wagenknecht is launching her own YouTube channel.

And she is writing another book: “I’ll be writing a book about the mistakes which, in my opinion, are being made by the left and are a substantial reason for the European-wide shift to the right, for the fact that in almost all countries most workers and poorer people vote for the right.” □

Audio of Solidarity

Many thanks to the volunteers who have enabled us to produce an audio version of the paper.

Links to the audio version are at workersliberty.org/audio, and can be found through many podcast providers: search “Workers’ Liberty” or “Solidarity & More”. Email awl@workersliberty.org for e-reader versions of Solidarity.

Simple, but potent



Book review

By Dan Rawnsley

I continue to enjoy Janine Booth’s poetry for its humanity. Her latest collection *Fighting Tories: The Force Awakens* (order online, £5, bit.ly/jb-ft) develops compelling political ideas out of personal experiences and observations.

Janine is good at moving from the specific to the abstract and can make a political point without losing her audience or becoming too didactic.

This Place is a great example. Drawing on Janine’s visits to one of her sons in hospital, it is both moving on a personal level and an un-

derstated but blistering attack on the lack of support over-stretched councils and the NHS are providing. A couple of lines towards the end put the point plainly and personally in a way that seems absolutely withering to me.

Other poems draw out discussions and arguments on the left. *Rootless Cosmopolitan* begins with the life of Janine’s great grandfather Edward, “stitching boots / digging roots” and rises to a defence of all who have “travelled...can’t be trusted”, who “don’t count as a native / mixed-up, exotic / not so patriotic”.

Again, by rooting the poem in personal experience, this writing brings lofty and evasive arguments about who belongs back to the lives of real people. *Labour Heartlands* follows some of the same concerns about our labour movement developing a false opposition between progressive politics and working-class votes.

A Tale of Two Cities, written in response to the Grenfell Tower fire, exemplifies one of the themes running through the book. Several poems are concerned with the victims and survivors of austerity. Simple, but potent, lines like “People die like this / when people live like this” pull a long poem, covering many examples of inhumanity, greed and inequality, into sharp political focus.

Hackney Gardens mourns the cutting of public services in a similar vein and *Unlucky Number* rages against the increasingly small number of rich people whose wealth is greater than the poorest half of the population. I really enjoyed *Not OK*, taking to task a poster that reads “It’s OK to not be OK” and arguing that lots of people not being OK is symptomatic of a much wider problem with “those who rule us and could not care less”.

Janine seems to enjoy exploring quite rigid forms and seeing what she can get

out of them. *Fighting Tories* features several pantoums, where some lines are repeated in subsequent verses, but in different orders. Janine manages to create different effects out of this repetitive device.

Planet Pantoum evokes feelings of repeating slogans in the climate movement that fall on the deaf ears of politicians and capitalists whose short-term interests don’t align with saving the planet. The poem resolves itself in a final, angry “We need a revolution / Bring the City to a standstill”.

This Place uses the form to create a feeling of wistfulness, even a hint of mourning and a sense of family life having been paused in a way that is cruel and preventable.

Fighting Tories is touching, funny and stokes a feeling of justified rage at the government, the rich, and their assault on our society. □

What's in the bag?

By Martin Thomas

In Eric Ambler's novel about the consolidation of Stalinist control in Eastern Europe in the 1940s, *Judgement on Deltchev*, the narrator says: "I know a lot about Pashik now. I know, for instance, that the black dispatch case that he carried so importantly rarely contained anything but a stale meat sandwich and a revolver".

We are outside the time and period when the dispatch case was a symbol of status. And not at that pitch of political conflict in which, so memoirs tell us, the learned Russian Marxist Georgi Plekhanov always, when still in Russia and not yet in exile, carried brass knuckles and a revolver.

But most of us take a backpack or shoulder-bag to work or campus each day. What do revolutionary socialists need to carry in those bags?

Chatting with my daughters some years

back, when they were pre-teen, I asked what they always carried with them.

My older daughter replied: "Hair-ties, bobby pins, and lip gloss". This was in Australia: high temperatures make hair-ties a must if you wear your hair long. Her younger sister: "A notebook and a pen".

The pen and the notebook, I think, are essentials for revolutionary socialists as they are for keen students. And a book or pamphlet to read whenever time allows, on bus or train or wherever.

What else? A Workers' Liberty sign-up sheet, and a petition form for whatever petition we're working with that month.

My way of doing that is to have a clipboard always in my bag. I have my to-do lists and other notes as well as the sign-up sheets and petition forms, so when occasion arises I can remove the other paper and use the clipboard for the petitions and sign-ups.

Copies of *Solidarity*. Set-piece public paper

sales, on the streets, on campuses, and door-to-door, are important to make us publicly accessible and visible, but the average activist can sell a lot more papers as follow-ons from individual conversations (at and around work, around meetings, or just in everyday life).

Pamphlets, books, leaflets. My bag has a plastic envelope with one copy each of our most recent pamphlets and books (currently: *Solidarnosc*, *Arabs Jews and Socialism*, *Climate, Luxemburg*) and a few copies each of our latest leaflets (currently: Uyghurs, climate day school, Ideas for Freedom, upcoming London forums, Free Our Unions).

Keeping that envelope up to date requires care, but it's necessary equipment if we are to be "permanent persuaders" wherever we go.

I've sold far more Workers' Liberty books as outcomes of conversations in everyday life than I have, more formally, on stalls set up on the streets or at meetings or demonstra-



tions. The stalls are important too, for our accessibility and visibility. □

Michel Lequenne, 1921-2020

By Martin Thomas

"The last Trotskyist" — so Michel Lequenne, who died on 13 February 2020 aged 98, sometimes described himself, according to a tribute by Antoine Artous and Francis Sittel.

Arguably he was indeed the last surviving Orthodox Trotskyist with an unbroken political thread from the early 1940s. There are other Orthodox Trotskyists — the more-or-less theory-free network around Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party, the "Morenist" diaspora, those post-Mandelites who still call themselves "Trotskyist" — but they scarcely attempt to offer a systematically-developed ideological tradition.

In the introduction to the 2018 edition of his book on the history of Trotskyism, Lequenne wrote that the "Mandelite" Fourth International, in or around which he had been active almost all his adult life, had bio-degraded into general "anticapitalism" so far that it no longer existed.

He had long been a nonconformist in those circles. In fact, he formally quit the LCR (the French Mandelite organisation) in 1988, though he remained "around" it long after.

In 1968 a big influx of new young revolutionaries had launched the LCR as the continuation of the older (tiny) French Orthodox Trotskyist group, the PCI. Lequenne had been a leader of the PCI, but for a few years at that pivotal time, apparently because of domestic-life troubles, he stepped down his activity.

From the time he returned to full activity, he was a dissident on many issues.

He was initially the only member of the "Mandelite" international leadership to support USSR withdrawal from its war in Afghanistan from 1979. He had almost a majority (from the start), and soon a clear majority, of the LCR with him.

Impelled, perhaps, by that political battle, over the 1980s he came to argue that what the Orthodox Trotskyists had called "degenerated and deformed workers' states" should be considered just "bureaucratic states", and not "defended". As far as I can see, the later version of the argument by LCR leader Dan-



iel Bensaïd (who would die in 2010) was pretty much a philosophical elaboration of Lequenne's.

It was, I think, an attempt to adjust Orthodox Trotskyism to the collapse of its sustaining illusion of an already-ongoing "world revolution" (not as Stalinist as it looked, they claimed, and anyway requiring only some further push to become fully socialist).

BENSAÏD

But I wrote of Bensaïd that "having by 'methodological' argument removed the sails, masts, and rudder of the 'degenerated and deformed workers' states' account, [he] still sits on the hulk, rather than launching a new vessel" (bit.ly/3-trad).

Even in Lequenne's last writings he vehemently rejected the idea that the Stalinist states were worse (from a working-class point of view) than bourgeois-democratic capitalism. He continued to see Tito's rise to power in Yugoslavia, for example, as a genuine socialist revolution.

The only viable way to develop a continuing Trotskyist tradition, I think, was to rediscover the tradition of the "Heterodox

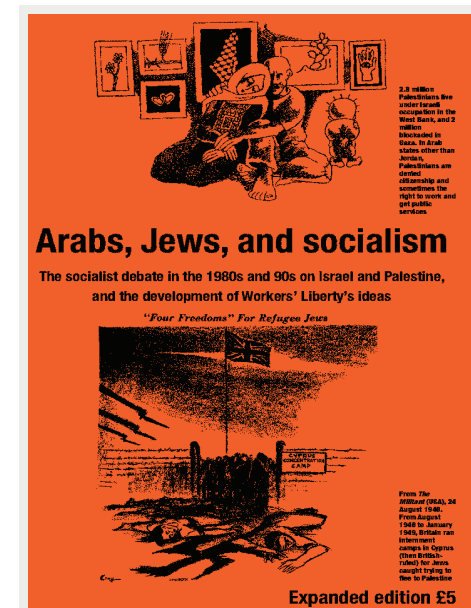
Trotskyists", who developed a more illusion-free alternative to the "Orthodox" from 1940 onwards.

Lequenne came from a white-collar working-class family, and worked most of his life as a proof-reader. He joined the Trotskyist movement in 1943.

He stuck to it through the decline and dispersion of the Trotskyists in 1948-52. In 1952 he was, with Marcel Bleibtreu, the ideological leader of the PCI majority which split from the Fourth International led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel because they considered it too complaisant towards Stalinism.

The "practical" leader of the "anti-Pablo" PCI, Pierre Lambert, soon marginalised Bleibtreu and Lequenne, and in 1955 found a pretext to expel them. After a period in the left social-democratic PSU, Lequenne joined the "Pablo-Mandel" PCI in 1961, and soon became a leader in it.

The magazine *Contretemps* has put together some tributes to Lequenne, and selected writings, at bit.ly/ctps-ml. □



Arabs Jews, and Socialism

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Socialists and Israel-Palestine

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Israel, 1948, and the truth

By Martin Thomas

Socialist Worker has denounced all the Labour leader candidates over their agreement that it is antisemitic to describe the *very existence of Israel* (as distinct from particular policies) as racist.

This means, says *SW*, "to deny Palestinians the right to describe their oppression by Israel, or to explain their own history. Some 850,000 Palestinians were systematically expelled from their homes when Israel was established in 1948 to ensure that Israel has a Jewish majority".

SW's answer is somehow to re-run the 1948 war with a reversed outcome, which, they claim, would lead to a harmonious multinational Arab-Jewish state.

Both history and policy are added.

The Palestinian Jewish community fought a guerrilla war for independence and against British rule in 1945-8 for the usual reasons that small nations fight such wars. And for an extra reason. Not that they were exceptionally hostile to other peoples; but because they wanted freedom for Jews to flee to Palestine.

Jews in Britain and the USA, where antisemitism, though influential, was less than murderous, had (and have now) little desire to move to Israel. But the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust were interned in camps across Europe; or, if they had been caught while trying to break the almost-total British-imposed ban on Jewish migration to Palestine, in British-ruled Cyprus. Jews had been refused refuge almost everywhere in the run-up to and during the Holocaust.

By late 1947 Britain gave up on Palestine and starting withdrawing its troops. It would complete withdrawal in May 1948. The United Nations had voted for a partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Jews of Palestine had accepted it. But the Arabs had rejected it. And neither Britain nor any outside force was willing to try to implement the partition.

From late 1947 a new guerrilla war developed between Arab "irregulars", notably the Arab Liberation Army, set up by the Arab League and Syria — supported by some of the Palestinian Arabs — and the Jewish community.

The aim of the ALA, and of the Arab states in the full-scale war which would come after British withdrawal in May 1948, was to stop a Jewish state coming into existence, at least to stop more Jewish refugees coming, maximally to "drive the Jews into the sea".

Jordan (which, like Iraq and Egypt, was heavily under British hegemony at the time: it had British commanders in its armed forces) privately calculated it could not stop a Jewish state, but wanted to take control of as much of Palestine as it could for itself.

The Palestinian Arabs had little autonomous voice. Their leadership was demoralised after collaboration with the Nazis in World War 2. They would be unable to raise significant protest when after the 1948-9 war Egypt and Jordan extinguished the Palestinian state proposed by the UN and took the West Bank under Jordan's rule, Gaza under Egypt's.

Obviously the Palestinian Arabs tended to side with the ALA and the Arab states. Many of them also resented the ALA. Above all they were fearful. Autonomous and vigorous Palestinian nationalism was still something for the future.

There was no Arab-Jewish workers' mili-



Rouse-al-Yusuf, 20/10/48, shows Arab armies stamping down "the Jew"

tia to combat the nationalists on both sides. No external big power was willing or able to hold the ring. In the run-up to 1947-8, various left-wing groups among the Jews had advocated various formulas for a "binational state". One of them even briefly won official US-UK support for its formula (April 1946). But few Jews backed those formulas, because they offered no solid guarantee for admitting the Jewish refugees. No Arabs backed them.

DRIVE

In the conflict which ran from December 1947 to March 1949, each of the heavily intermingled "sides" tended to drive people from the "other side" out of their area. (There were ceasefires in the war between Israel and the sometimes British-officered regular Arab armies in June-July 1948 and July-October 1948, and only relatively localised fighting after early January 1949).

Jews were driven out of areas which ended under Arab control (East Jerusalem, the Etzion Bloc, etc.) more thoroughly than Arabs out of areas which ended under Jewish control. Many more Arabs were driven out than Jews. That was because the Jews won the war (though the odds looked much against them, and the USA and UK imposed an arms embargo on them). It was not because the Jews had special exclusivist urges unknown to other peoples.

Some tens of thousands of city-dwelling Arabs fled in a first wave in late 1947 and early 1948. Almost all the better-off fled. They had the means to re-establish themselves in other Arab countries, if it came to it. In any case they hoped to avoid the risks of war and return to better conditions after an Arab victory.

That initial flight conditioned many of the later ones. The Palestinian Arabs knew, when their "community leaders" called on them to stay put (as sometimes they did), that those leaders had themselves already gone.

Some 20,000 fled from Haifa (then, and now once again, a "mixed" city) in December-January. The decision for flight was taken by the Arab notables of the city, in consultation with the British forces, whom they relied on to protect them as they moved out. It was opposed by the city's Jewish mayor, but tacitly welcomed (and facilitated, with rough handling of Arab areas) by the Jewish military, the Haganah.

Tens of thousands also fled from Jaffa, following an attack on the municipal buildings by dissident Jewish forces, the "Stern gang", later banned as a "terrorist organisation" by Israel. Besides general fear of war, a motive there was local economic collapse. Arabs also

fled from West to East in Jerusalem, which at the start of the war was a heavily Jewish city.

The second wave of Arab flight, and now expulsion, was in April-June 1948, in the later period of the guerrilla war and the run-up to the invasion by Arab regular forces.

The main driver there was an effort by the Haganah to secure their battle-lines and lines of communication. They systematically cleared and destroyed Arab villages on the route connecting to the two main Jewish cities, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

In late April 1948 the Haganah took the strategic town of Tiberias. The local Arab notables decided, with British cooperation and perhaps prompting, on mass exodus. The local Jewish community put out a leaflet calling for the Arabs' houses to be kept safe for them to return. But the Haganah was glad to see them gone.

Soon the Israeli state would be resisting demands that it allow the return of those who had fled. Those demands came mostly, at that time, from the USA, not the Arab states or the Palestinians.

At the end of April most of the remaining Arabs in Haifa and in Jaffa fled. In Jaffa the flight was heavily prompted by terrorist attacks by another dissident Jewish force, the Irgun. The Irgun and the Stern gang had massacred 100 to 120 villagers at Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem, on 9 April 1948. Although it was condemned by the official Jewish forces, reports of the massacre increased the flight.

SYSTEMATIC

The Haganah systematically drove out the Arab population from the town of Safad and others judged to be strategic.

Once the full-scale war had started, the Haganah began systematically evicting Arab populations in strategic areas, in an extension of the effort to secure lines of communication and borders. The Haganah evicted the towns of Lydda and Ramla, the biggest concentrations of Arab population between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, in July 1948.

As the war proceeded, the Haganah carried out more systematic expulsions in the south to secure (as they saw it) Israel's claim to the Negev. Fewer in the north, which remains the biggest concentration of Arab population in Israel to this day.

Socialist Worker's figure is 850,000 Palestinians driven out. Or: almost a million. The UN agency for aid to the refugees counted those fleeing or driven out at 726,000.

After the war, Israel imposed "military government" on the Arab areas, confiscated much Arab land, and tried to prevent the return of Palestinians who had fled or been

730,000 Palestinian Arabs fled or were driven out in 1947-9



driven out. (Some tens of thousands got back nevertheless).

The Arab states drove out almost all their Jewish populations. The driving-out had started before 1948, and sent populations long-established in their countries, and among whom Zionist ideology had had little grip, to live initially in refugee camps in a hard-pressed Israel. In Israel now the descendants of those refugees outnumber the descendants of refugees or settlers from Europe.

At the time those horrors of war seemed (to all sides) more run-of-the-mill than they do now. In 1923 a treaty sponsored by the big powers had provided for the forcible transfer of maybe two million Greeks and Turks between the two countries. Many Greeks had been massacred or had fled Turkey before that.

In the 1940s, the USSR (with the co-operation of the USA and the UK) expelled some 13 million Germans from Eastern Europe. The USSR forcibly transferred some 1.6 million Poles and Ukrainians across the new Poland-Ukraine border. The USSR, China, Taiwan, both Koreas, and other countries expelled a total of seven million Japanese. All that was done "cold", by victors after the end of war, not in the heat of war itself.

In 1947-9 the Palestinian Arabs suffered badly; and the Israeli state behaved brutally as states at war usually do. Left-wingers in the Jewish community in Palestine, and internationally, condemned the brutalities and fought for a different policy. But none of the Trotskyists supported the Arab states. None thought victory for the Arab states was the answer.

The only way forward now is for the Palestinians to gain the right to a genuine independent state of their own, alongside Israel, and an international agreement for redress and help for today's generation, the grandchildren of the 1947-9 refugees. □



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Health, education, Green New Deal



Sanders campaign

By Bernie Sanders

We are bringing our people together around an agenda that works for the working people of this country, not the one per cent.

All over this country, workers are sick and tired of earning starvation wages. You can't make it on 9 bucks an hour or 11 bucks an hour or 12 bucks an hour. We are going to raise the federal minimum wage to 15 bucks an hour. We are going to provide equal pay for equal work for women. We are going to make it easier for workers to join unions. We are going to create millions of good-paying, union jobs by rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and building the ten million units of low-income and affordable housing this country desperately needs.

We are going to win this election because we believe in education. We are going to have high-quality, affordable, universal childcare. We are going to triple funding for low income Title 1 schools. And we need great teachers in this country. We need more Latino teachers. We need more African-American teachers. And because we know the vitally important work that teachers do, we are going to fight to ensure that no teacher in America earns less than \$60,000 a year.

And because we believe in education, we believe that all of our people, regardless of their income, are entitled to a higher education; and that is why we're going to make public colleges and universities tuition free — and we're going to cancel all student debt in this country, by imposing a modest tax on Wall Street speculation. Twelve years ago we bailed out the crooks on Wall Street — now it's their turn to help out the working families of this country.

And together we're going to end the international embarrassment of the United States of America, our great country, being the only major country on earth not to guarantee healthcare to all people. So let me be as clear as I can be: healthcare is a human right, not a privilege. We are going to end the absurd situation in which we now are spending twice as much per person as any other country, yet 87 million of us are uninsured or under-insured. 30,000 die each year and 500,000 people go bankrupt because of medically-related debt.

CANCER

In America you should not go bankrupt because you're struggling with cancer.

The function of a rational and humane healthcare system is to guarantee healthcare to all, not to make \$100 billion in profit for the drug companies and the insurance companies. And we are going to take on the greed and corruption of the pharmaceutical industry. Under our administration, the American people will not pay, in some cases, ten times more for the same prescription drugs sold in Mexico, in Canada and in Europe.

And when we talk about the major crises facing this country, it is a sad state of affairs when we have a President of the United States who believes that climate change is a hoax. Well, the scientific community has a



Sanders made this speech after winning the Nevada caucus in the Democratic primary for US President

slight disagreement with Mr Trump. They think that climate change is an existential threat to this planet; and our administration believes in science, not right-wing extremism. That is why together we are going to adopt the principles of the Green New Deal — which creates up to 20 million good-paying jobs as we transform our energy system away from fossil fuels and towards energy efficiency.

Brothers and sisters, this is a moral issue. We must make sure that the planet we leave our children and grandchildren is a planet that is healthy and habitable.

And when we talk about issues that must be dealt with, we in fact are going to reform a broken and racist criminal justice system. We do not want to continue a situation where we have more people in jail than any other country, including China, four times our size. And the people in jail are disproportionately African American, Latino and Native American. And that is why we are going to invest in our young people, in jobs, in education, not more jails and incarceration. That is why we are going to end private prisons and detention centres. That is why we are going to end the "war on drugs" and legalise marijuana in every state of this country.

Let me ask you all a question — let me ask you a serious question. How many people in this room tonight know somebody who was arrested in possession of marijuana? We are going to move forward to expunge the records of those arrested for possession of marijuana.

And when we talk about broken and racist systems, we're going to bring about fundamental reform to our immigration system. I am the son of an immigrant. My father to came to this country from Poland without a nickel in his pocket, couldn't speak a word of English, had very little education. I know something about the immigrant experience. Together we are going to end the demonisation of the undocumented in this country.

On our first day in office, through Executive Order, we rescind all of Trump's racist immigration Executive Orders.

On our first day in office, through Executive Order, we restore the legal status of the 1.8 million young people and their parents eligible for DACA. On our first day in office,

we end a border policy which allows federal agents to grab babies from the arms of their mothers and throw children into cages. That is not what America is about.

And together we will do what the American people have wanted to do for years — and that is pass comprehensive immigration reform and a path on citizenship.

Earlier today Jane and I were in El Paso at the memorial for that terrible shooting in El Paso at the Walmart store there. And this my promise to you: the gun safety legislation which the American people want because they are disgusted by the amount of gun violence and killing in this country — our gun safety legislation will be written by the American people, not the NRA. We will have universal background checks. We will end the gunshow loophole. And we will do what the American people want, and that is end the sale and distribution of assault weapons in this country.

CORPORATE

You know I am a United States Senator, and I'm on the floor of the United States Senate very often listening to speeches from Republican Conservatives. And as you know their mantra, what they talk about all the time, is they believe in small government, they believe in getting government off the back of the American people. What I say tonight to those hypocrites: if you believe in getting the government off the backs of the American people, understand, it is women who have the right to control their own bodies, not the government.

And my promise to you is I will never nominate anyone for the Supreme Court or the federal bench who is not 100% pro-Roe v Wade. We will codify Roe v Wade and put it into law; and we will significantly expand funding for Planned Parenthood.

As a United States Senator, I do understand the power of the corporate elite and the one per cent. They have literally unlimited amounts of money, they have significant control of the media, over our economy, and over the political life of this country. But at the end of the day the one per cent is one per cent. I don't have a PhD in mathematics, but I do know that 99% is a heck of a lot bigger number than one per cent.

So what this campaign is about is understanding that if we do not allow Trump to

divide us up by the colour of our skin, or where we were born, or our religion, or our sexual orientation — if we stand together; if we fight for an agenda that works for working families and the middle class; if we get involved in the political process; if we stand for justice; if we stand for compassion; if we understand that we are all in this together — then my family has to care about my family, your family cares about my family.

Brother and sisters, if we stand together, we will not only defeat Trump — we will transform this country and create a government and an economy that works for all of us, not wealthy campaign contributors. Thank you all very much. □



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Where we stand

Today one class, the working class, lives by selling its labour power to another, the capitalist class, which owns the means of production. The capitalists' control over the economy and their relentless drive to increase their wealth causes poverty, unemployment, the blighting of lives by overwork, imperialism, the destruction of the environment and much else.

Against the accumulated wealth and power of the capitalists, the working class must unite to struggle against capitalist power in the workplace and in wider society.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty wants socialist revolution: collective ownership of industry and services, workers' control, and a democracy much fuller than the present system, with elected representatives recallable at any time and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

We fight for trade unions and the Labour Party to break with "social partnership" with the bosses and to militantly assert working-class interests.

In workplaces, trade unions, and Labour organisations; among students; in local campaigns; on the left and in wider political alliances we stand for:

- Independent working-class representation in politics.
- A workers' government, based on and accountable to the labour movement.
- A workers' charter of trade union rights — to organise, to strike, to picket effectively, and to take solidarity action.
- Taxation of the rich to fund decent public services, homes, education and jobs for all.
- A workers' movement that fights all forms of oppression. Full equality for women, and social provision to free women from domestic labour. For reproductive justice: free abortion on demand; the right to choose when and whether to have children. Full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Black and white workers' unity against racism.
- Open borders.
- Global solidarity against global capital — workers everywhere have more in common with each other than with their capitalist or Stalinist rulers.
- Democracy at every level of society, from the smallest workplace or community to global social organisation.
- Equal rights for all nations, against imperialists and predators big and small.
- Maximum left unity in action, and openness in debate.

If you agree with us, please take some copies of *Solidarity* to sell — and join us! □

My Grab



Diary

By Emma Rickman

There are two cranes at work which are used to continuously load waste from the pit into the furnace. Each crane grab looks like a bit like a fuchsia flower suspended from the roof, with four "petals" that carry the rubbish in 40 tonne hauls.

D, the fitter I have been having arguments with, has just moved from a contracted company that Veolia hired to service the crane grabs. His speciality is hydraulic systems. We both put on white disposable overalls over our usual overalls; plus dust masks, hoods, disposable gloves and the usual head and eye protection, then switch the crane into "Remote". I pocket the key to make sure no-one tries to operate it while we're working on it.

D handles the grab carefully, but he knows how it'll behave. To me the grab is a huge and heavy piece of machinery that could easily maim us. Each petal is three times my height and ends in a sharp point; the surface has been cross-hatch welded to strengthen it and encourage the waste to run off. As I tentatively push buttons on the crane remote D says gently "Hit the other direction slightly, that'll stop it swinging" — it does.

First D and I rest the grab fully-open. As the tips of the first petals hit the concrete, D explains how the hydraulic oil inside will take the path of least resistance. Once the weight is off the first petals, the

others will collapse so that there is no stored force in any of the petals, and the grab will rest flat on the concrete.

We step underneath the petal arches with a torch. "I'm looking for wear here," D explains, indicating the central body of the grab where the oil is stored "There's a leak I know on this side — just wants a small patch weld — but it's manageable for now, we can still run with a leak as long as it doesn't get worse." He lifts the torch to show me the thin a sheen of oil around the leak.

Each petal has a pair of stops which prevent them opening too wide; just steel triangles but they take a battering. D looks carefully for wear and cracks. I push grease into each of the petal hinges with a grease gun, then we pull back and D lifts the grab, closes the petals slightly, and rests it back down.

"You wouldn't believe it, but these grabs are designed never to fall over — even when fully closed." He smiles and raises his eyebrows. "I know but I've seen it — it's true — it's unreal. But then I've also seen men nearly crushed by this grab — you've got to be careful"

"Shit, what happened?"

"They were on some steps in between the petals, trying to operate a dodgy solenoid. Suddenly the solenoid engaged and the grabs closed — they managed to get free, like, but the steps were crushed."

I grease the lower hinges and D explains how to check the hydraulic rods are working; each needs to look clean with a thin oil sheen; not too wet, no cracks or corrosion. D tightens the taper lock bushings that secure the petal hinges.

"If you have to tighten these it's



not a simple fix — it means they're loosening themselves. If they fail, the petal will hang slack and the grab'll need thousands of pounds of work. These hinges really need replacing — but until they can be serviced I've been packing these with shims — I'll make some more shims today..."

When D is happy with the grab we return it to service and throw away the paper overalls (we stink anyway). I notice that the workshop floor is covered with metal bushings for the petal hinges, ready for when they're needed. I've learned a lot about the crane today. D is thorough and dedicated, clearly understanding the look and feel of a problem, but unlike the other experienced engineers he's very conscientious about safety.

"I'm not very intelligent," he said to the apprentices once "I've not been to university or 'owt like that, but I got very good at what I do and made myself very valuable. It's not hard, anyone can do it..."

A week after my argument with D, me and the younger fitter — J — are sitting in the workshop and he says to me quietly "I don't think D

gets that he's not in a place where everyone knows him really well. Like I've known him for years, he can say things about me and I know it's a joke because we work alright together, see — but you can't just walk into a place and go saying the things he's saying — he's been pissing off a lot of people."

We've had a slow day and we turn on the radio. I can't believe it, but these blokes in their twenties want to listen to Smooth. Mary Wells "My Guy" comes on, and J starts singing

"Nothing you can say, can tear me away, from my Graaab..."

"Ha!"

We crack up. I realise I haven't laughed genuinely and heartily at work in several weeks — it feels fantastic.

"D's song innit — I'm stickin to my graaab..."

It sticks in my head on the way home, and I imagine the grabs doing a kind of synchronous dance. □

• Emma Rickman is an engineering apprentice at a Combined Heat and Power plant in Sheffield.

Mr Jones and Stalinism



Film review

By Justine Canady

Agneska Holland's *Mr. Jones* is a film with a clear political message: the crimes of Stalinism must not be neglected and forgotten.

It's based on a real story. Welsh journalist Gareth Jones travels to the Soviet Union in the early 1930s to investigate the success of Stalin's five-year plan. Instead, he uncovers a mass operation of fake news generated by journalists and finds his way to Ukraine, to be witness to the man-made famine of Holodomor, which killed millions.

The film is heavy on contrasts between prosperity and hellish destitution. Upon his arrival in Moscow, Jones meets Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Walter Duranty,

the *New York Times* Russian correspondent, whom Jones finds living a frivolous and extravagant life in Moscow, bank-rolled by the Stalinist government.

The limited tour of the USSR Jones is given with the bureaucrat class is one of comfort and leisure. In one scene Jones, in a plush train, gets his guiding Soviet official drunk off an endless supply of vodka. After the official falls asleep, he jumps on a nearby train. The film immediately turns to monochrome as he finds himself in a bare wooden train filled with emaciated Ukrainian peasants. As he peels an orange all eyes turn to him before people dive to the floor when he throws his scraps.

Jones wanders into a devastated village and discovers the reality of Stalinism and the extreme survival practices that people in the countryside were driven to. He sees bodies of those starved to death on the streets, and passers-by walk-

ing on to fight over the meagre aid brought in by the government. The camera then fans up to reveal a mural of Stalin heroically holding bounds of wheat, the only burst of colour for ages.

I thought the film made the mistake of relying too heavily on melodrama and sensationalism. Especially so with the secondary story about George Orwell writing *Animal Farm*, a staunchly anti-Stalinist allegory about the Russian Revolution and Stalinism.

The film suggests Orwell named the character Mr. Jones, the abusive human farmer who represents Czar Nicholas II, after Gareth Jones. It's strange that a biopic meant to create a positive legacy for Gareth Jones would draw a connection towards such a nasty character. Perhaps this is wilful ignorance for dramatic effect, perhaps a total misunderstanding of *Animal Farm*.

The film is sprinkled with these on-the-nose depictions of the

USSR as Orwellian, like a western journalist calling a Stalinist official watching her "big brother".

Perhaps the most frustrating scene for Orwell fans is when the film imagines a lunch with Jones and Orwell where Jones's findings from the Ukraine seem to shatter all of Orwell's socialist ideals and leave him upset and confused.

In fact Jones and Orwell never met, although Jones's work must have had some impact on Orwell, it was when fighting in the Spanish Civil War a few years later that he would form seriously anti-Stalinist politics.

Gareth Jones's story and the horrors faced by the victims of Holodomor were unimaginable enough that they need no exaggeration or dramatic frame with *Animal Farm*.

The film as such is not outstanding, but it's important that filmmakers delve more into these less explored tragedies of Stalinism. □

CWU: still up for the fight

The Communication Workers Union (CWU) is balloting members in Royal Mail for strikes to resist their employer's plans to restructure its business, threatening as many as 20,000 jobs.

The dispute also demands a reduction in the working week, which was agreed in a previous settlement but has not been implemented, and an end to a culture of management bullying. The ballot runs from 3 March to 17 March. A postal worker in west London spoke to *Solidarity* about the dispute.

"People are definitely still up for the fight. There was a strong enthusiasm for striking over Christmas, which we weren't able to do due to the injunction of the previous ballot.

"People were disappointed about that, but the will for a fight is still very much there. Some people are nervous about potentially losing money due to striking. But there's also a strong culture of loyalty to the union.

"I work between two offices — one feels very machine-like, like a large factory or warehouse. The other is a smaller, more traditional delivery office.

There, I was casually chatting with a workmate with whom I usually find it difficult to get to talk about politics, and they initiated a conversation about the dispute and how up for striking they are. The question of working hours is central. People know the bosses could come for our time off and leave entitlements as the business restructures and jobs are cut.

"The union's centralised messaging and social media campaigning is really good. The CWU has a really slick social media operation. Lots of meetings and press conferences are live-streamed, and the Deputy General Secretary for the CWU's postal section, Terry Pullinger, uses social media to communicate with members.

"In workplaces, the basic work of getting the vote out in the ballot will fall to the reps. They've started

putting up posters round the office, but face-to-face conversations that are key to ensuring people vote. We have some rep vacancies in our office, which might hinder the campaign to get the vote out."

"It's telling that the larger, more factory-like of the two offices I work in has the less militant culture. Royal Mail's plan is to make that type of office the norm, closing down smaller offices and consolidating them into big warehouse-style depots. They can be really depressing, bleak places to work; they're isolated from local communities, there's not much social life in and around the workplace. You really feel like you're working in a factory.

"Of course, that could all backfire on the employer if we're able to organise effectively. If you concentrate large numbers of workers in a single workplace, those workers have immense potential power. We could knock out postal deliveries in half of west London if we strike, whereas strikes in smaller

offices might only effect a handful of neighbourhoods.

"Gate meetings', where workers gather outside the workplace to discuss the dispute, are taking place across the country, we have one planned for 25 February. That's a collective space where workers can discuss.

"Currently, though, they're mainly used as a mechanism for reps and full-time officials to convey information to the members. That's useful and worthwhile, but it's missing an opportunity not to make those meetings forums for more participatory, democratic discussion about where to go with the campaign.

"At one gate meeting at one of my offices, someone just shouted out after the full-time official's report, 'we should strike for longer this time, one-day strikes aren't enough.' The official wasn't having it.

"If we had a network of rank-and-file reps and activists, we could coordinate intervention into



those gate meetings to articulate a more militant strategy than the one the leadership might be inclined to propose.

"In my workplaces, there's yet to be any meaningful discussion about what to do if our ballot is injunctioned again. The union will probably proceed more cautiously this time, and really do everything by the book, to try to minimise the risk of a second injunction.

"The risk is that this will lead to a lower turnout in the ballot." □

Tube pay: better late than never



Negotiations with London Underground over pay and conditions have taken us as far as we can go. To win a deal that brings us closer to our demands, we need industrial action.

Aslef has already committed to ballot its members. Its ballot begins on 28 February and closes on 9 March. Tubeworker encourages all readers who are Aslef members to vote yes for action.

RMT reps from across LU are meeting on 26 February to discuss next steps. RMT has chosen not to ballot up to now. We think that has been a mistake. The delay has allowed momentum to slip. But late is better than never, and if RMT now launched a vibrant, assertive campaign around an immediate ballot, that momentum could be rebuilt.

Some have argued that LU's latest offer, for an RPI+0.2% pay increase for four years, is adequate. We disagree. A 0.2% increase (the "RPI" element only keeps our pay in line with inflation) is hardly anything to get excited about, and the offer includes no concessions of any of our other demands, including a reduction in working hours.

It's regrettable that the talks have dragged on for as long as they have, but simply wanting to get them done is not a good reason to accept an inadequate offer. LU's narrative is that we have a choice between two offers — the one it made in October, with 1.4% pay increases plus three additional banked rest days in years two and four of the deal, and the more recent "money only" offer. We say: we can win

something better than both. How many times have we heard LU say something is "full and final", or absolutely set in stone, only to find that industrial action, or the threat of it, pushes them back? The threat of action by drivers over excessive track noise led to the discovery of an additional £10 million for track work; the threat of strikes by fleet workers forces LU to scrap a "full and final" plan to cut train maintenance; and a 2017 strike by station staff forced the reversal of 325 job cuts.

With GLA and Mayoral elections due on 7 May, we have some additional leverage. Mayor Khan will not want Tube strikes in the run up to this election, especially as he's boasting about having reduced them!

For RMT to hit the thresholds required by the anti-union laws in a combine-wide ballot of its entire membership will be a challenge, but it can be done. In 2015, the last time RMT balloted combine-wide, both a 50%+ turnout and a 40%+ yes vote were achieved. Had the thresholds been imposed at that time, we would've cleared them. □

TUBE REVENUE WORKERS VOTE FOR ACTION

Revenue Control Inspectors (RCIs) in the RMT union on London Underground have voted to take industrial action to resist the imposition of a two-tier workforce in the revenue department. There was a 100% vote for action short of a strike, and a 92% vote for strikes, on a 75% turnout.

LU wants to create a new grade of revenue worker, "Revenue Control Officer", paid nearly £20,000 less than existing RCIs. They also

plan to have additional revenue staff, employed by TfL rather than LU, working on LU stations, paid even less.

RCI reps will now meet to discuss exactly what action to take and when. One possibility could be a joint strike alongside existing TfL revenue staff, who are members of Unite and who are striking on the last Friday of every month until April, in their own dispute over pay. □

DRIVERS' STRIKE SHUTS DOWN BAKERLOO

Strikes by train drivers on London Underground's Bakerloo Line across 21-24 February completely shut the service down for lengthy periods.

Drivers were striking to win a workable timetable; the current timetable has led to such short turnaround times between trips that workers often do not have time for a toilet break. The RMT says a small increase in the staffing level could facilitate significant improvements.

RMT organised lively pickets at Queen's Park and Elephant and Castle, with an impromptu joint strike rally being held at the latter location when striking university workers from the London College of Communication across the road, along with their student supporters, joined striking LU workers.

As the tweet from the official Bakerloo Line account showed... "no service on the entire line, due to strike action", confirming the words of the old labour movement hymn *Solidarity Forever* that "without our brain and muscle, not a single wheel can turn." □

SWR guards out on 9 March

By Ollie Moore

RMT guards on South Western Railway (SWR) will strike again to resist the imposition of "Driver Only Operation" (DOO).

They struck for a month in December, the longest single strike in British railway history. This time, only two strikes have been named, but spread across four days — from 10:00 on 9 March to 09:59 on 10 March, and from 10:00 on 12 March to 09:59 on 13 March.

A similar model of industrial

was used in the RMT drivers' strike on London Underground's Bakerloo Line recently (see separate article). There, the format was effective in maximising disruption over several days, with only two days' "cost" to the workers. Attempting to replicate this on the mainline is a gamble, and risks being seen as a de-escalation from the previous month-long strike.

Nevertheless, it is positive that RMT has called further strikes rather than allowing a stalemate to continue. □

FCO strike in 4th week

By Ollie Moore

Outsourced workers in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are on a month-long strike from 3 to 28 February, for demands including company sick pay, reversal to cuts in hours, and recognition of their union, the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS).

On 19 February, PCS activists and supporters held a flash demonstration outside the Waterloo of-

fices of Interserve, the outsourced contractor which employs the FCO workers. Daily pickets have been held at the FCO's Whitehall headquarters, with solidarity delegations from other unions attending.

PCS members working as outsourced cleaners in HMRC, employed by the contractor ISS, are also planning further action, with an existing dispute involving cleaners in Merseyside expanding to include ISS HMRC cleaners in Birmingham. The new strike ballot concludes on 2 March. □

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Students support UCU strike

By Maisie Sanders

Students have been joining the University workers' union UCU on picket lines, organising stalls, leafletting, banner drops, joint rallies, teach-outs and fundraising gigs, and taking part in direct action.

Through the Student Strike Solidarity group, students across the country are discussing demands, tactics and sharing resources. In the

run up to the strike, Student Strike Solidarity held days of action to start building student support and regular online meetings. Next, we are planning a national meeting after the strikes to discuss how we can build on the momentum and rebuild the student movement.

On our campuses we have been mobilising students to join picket lines, organising joint rallies, teach-outs and fundraising gigs, and taking part in direct action. We are

demanding our Vice Chancellors publicly call on the employers' organisations, UUK and UCEA, to meet the UCU's demands, guarantee no victimisation of striking staff or students protesting, and cancel all attendance monitoring during the strikes.

This last demand is particularly important for international students on Tier 4 visas, whose immigration status is dependent on attendance.

Students at Cambridge have shut down the Old Schools building, and Glasgow School of Art students disrupted a meeting of all Scottish Vice Chancellors in support of these demands. Brighton students have held regular sit ins, and Exeter activists used tents to blockade a road into the university.

The day before the strike started, Stirling University suspended thirteen students for taking part in last term's occupation in support of the strike. Management are claiming the occupation of management

offices was a "level two offence" which "put lives at risk".

Other level two offences are possession of firearms and sexual assault. The students report that public support from students and UCU activists around the country is helping to mount up the pressure on their university management. Last term, support from UCU and a demonstration helped to reverse the suspension of a Reading student for an attempted occupation.

The student left needs to launch a campaign around the right to protest, and throw all its weight behind defending victimised students. □

- Petition for Stirling students: bit.ly/pt-stirling
- Interview with a Loughborough uni student on right to protest: bit.ly/1-bro
- studentstrikesolidarity.com
- fb.com/studentstrikesolidarity
- fb.com/SuspendedSoS
- More on the dispute: page 7



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