

# Unity!



## There is always money for war but not the poor

**NICK WRIGHT**  
**COST OF LIVING CRISIS**

**T**HE WORKING CLASS in Britain is facing the most vicious ruling class offensive in generations, with a huge rise in the cost of living and attacks on democratic rights. Communist Party chair Ruth Styles told the party's April executive committee meeting.

Highlighting the impact of massive energy price hikes which threaten to leave hundreds of thousands of families in the cold or going hungry she said 'the soaring cost of living is prompting outbreaks of industrial action as workers across the public and private sectors demand higher pay to meet rising prices'.

Even big business accounting firm PWC admit British households will be £900 worse off this year in a calamitous fall in living standards. The lowest earners face a £1,300 drop in income which the war in Ukraine could make even worse.

Data from the House of Commons library show rising energy prices as a key driver of inflation with household energy tariffs increasing and petrol costs going up. In the year to January 2022, domestic gas prices increased by 28 per cent and domestic electricity prices by 19 per cent.

This month the energy price cap that Ofgem announced in February came into effect. The domestic energy price cap increased from the annual level of £1,277 per year to £1,970, a 54 per cent increase.

Ruth Styles said the illegal sacking of 800 workers by P&O Ferries is a focal point for solidarity campaigning and condemned 'the fine words from Tory government ministers but no action'.

She contrasted the apparent inability of Chancellor Sunak to find financial assistance for millions of working people and their families to the government's readiness to finance Russia's and NATO's war in Ukraine.



### WAR CRIMES

The Communist Party executive committee called for all alleged war crimes in Ukraine to be fully investigated, but argued that this could only be done in peaceful conditions by a respected international body.

'The United States of America, Israel, Saudi Arabia and other Middle East dictatorships refuse to recognise the International Criminal Court, enabling their political leaders and military personnel to evade investigation into war crimes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Palestine, Serbia and elsewhere' Ruth Styles said.

Britain's Communists pointed out that Russia also does not recognise the ICC.

The party leadership congratulated the work of party candidates and campaigners in the May 5 local elections and urged its members, supporters and allies to support striking workers, the People's Assembly, Stop the War and CND in rallies and protests across Britain.

### ELECTIONS

Britain's communists are to fight the coming May elections under the slogan 'Communities for working class people'. In selected wards the party has set out a challenge to the policies of the main electoral parties in the country including Labour where its candidates fail to represent working class interests.

Only the Communist Party is making a clear link between attacks on working class living standards and public services and Britain's imperialist policies.

The party argues that every opportunity must be taken to challenge the Tory government and Labour's failure to stand up for working people.

Rob Griffiths, Communist Party general secretary said: 'Facing the uncertainty of imperialist adventure and war abroad and economic crisis and a health crisis at home, it may be tempting for voters to turn their back on the booths.'

'We do not pretend for a second that voting will change the capitalist system. But a voting campaign on general and local issues also provides the chance to bring together various struggles and campaigns such as against food poverty, for council home building and municipal control of local.'

The party will stand candidates in wards across Britain. A key policy aim is to return powers to the Scottish and Welsh parliaments so they can rebuild their communities and to fight for devolved powers for the English regions.

By giving effect to the party's innovative programme for progressive federalism its calls for elected regional assemblies in England.

'Workers and families are stronger when we all pull together and put pressure on Westminster' said party chair Ruth Styles.

'We campaign to move ownership and control downwards to local communities and return control of education to local authorities. ★

## War censorship and repression condemned

### UKRAINE WAR

**T**HE PUTIN REGIME'S WAR in Ukraine is strengthening the very forces it claims to be combatting. Firstly, Russia's violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and the unjustified bombardment of civilian areas has enabled NATO to promote its bogus image as the guarantor of peace, freedom and national sovereignty in Europe, while President Zelensky presents himself as the saviour of the Ukrainian people. This is despite the latter's reckless support for NATO expansion and his domestic policy of austerity and privatisation backed by corrupt oligarchs.

Secondly, Moscow's policy has strengthened the position of nationalists, the far-right and fascist forces inside Ukraine itself. Extreme right-wing military formations such as the Right Sector have been promoted within the security apparatus of several major municipalities, while the fascist Azov Battalion has increased in size, influence and prestige.

Thirdly, Russia's invasion has provided the pretext for a substantial extension of censorship and self-censorship in the mass media. Russian state broadcaster RT and its satellite Sputnik channel have been banned from mainstream broadcasting networks across Europe, including Britain, while anti-war and NATO-critical views are now excluded from most media coverage and social media accounts are censored or closed down. This restriction of freedom of expression could have far-reaching consequences for the ability of citizens in Britain and other NATO member states to hold their governments to account in the future.

Thus there has been little or no reporting of President Zelensky's suppression of socialist and progressive organisations in Ukraine that do not share the aggressive nationalist politics of his far-right allies. On March 6, Mikhail and Aleksandr Kononovich, leaders of the Ukrainian Communist Youth Union, were seized by Security Service officers in Kyiv. They were then held in secret, seriously assaulted and now face serious charges relating to espionage (they are of Belorussian origin). Other left-wing activists, trade unionists, journalists and bloggers have since been detained or disappeared.

On March 20, the Ukraine authorities banned 11 parties allegedly linked to Russia, including the main parliamentary opposition. The outlawed organisations also include the Union of Left Forces, the Left Opposition, the Socialist Party and others who are not pro-Moscow but who oppose membership of NATO and the EU. The Communist Party of Ukraine has been illegal since 2015, despite its electoral support and after its leader was physically attacked while addressing the country's parliament.

Continued on page 4



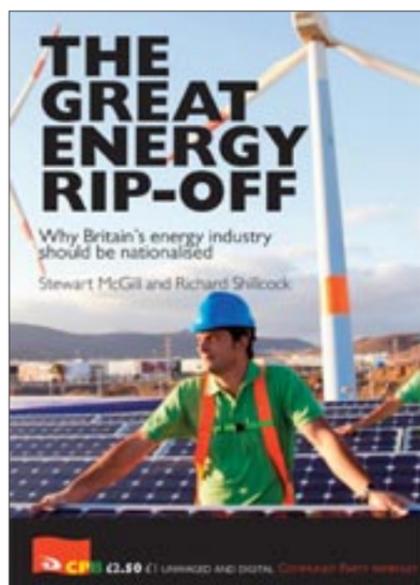
# WORKERS & UNIONS

The chief strength of British capitalism, however, lies not in the amount of gold accumulated, not in the large navy and the tremendous experience in exploiting. Its chief strength lies in that the broad masses of the British working class are still ideologically and politically pinned to the capitalist treadmill

Red International of Labour Unions leader Alexandr Lozovsky on Ten Years of *Labour Monthly* 1930



**Straight left**  
from Stewart McGill



Emmanuel Macron's government has limited gas price increases to 12.6 per cent and promised further help after the cap ends in April; UK households face a 54 per cent rise in energy bills, probably to be followed by much more.

Astonishingly Kwasi Kwarteng, the UK's business secretary, pointed to the impact of the move on the share price of the French power company EDF when stating the dangers of the UK following the French move. Energy price increases will kill people in the UK this year, they will also damage many businesses and will accelerate an already serious cost of living crisis. But the UK government's primary concern was for the wealthy institutional shareholders.

The argument is that such measures will damage investment in the industry. Nonsense

1. The impact of fuel price rises on consumer spending and the cost base of many businesses will have a much broader and debilitating impact on investment.

2. High profits don't mean high investment, the top UK energy utilities companies gave away 82 per cent of their profits over the last five years as dividends.

3. Considerations of private profit should not drive investment or any other set of decisions in this vital industry that impacts on so many others, Macron is now looking at full nationalisation of EDF.

Good to see Macron has caught up with what the Communist Party and others have been saying for decades. See our pamphlet here: ★

<https://shop.comunistparty.org.uk/?q=pamphlets/great-energy-rip>

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## Punish P&O oligarchs

Unity! News team  
**SOLIDARITY**

**S**ACKED WORKERS at P&O Ferries need action not platitudes, Mollie Brown told the Communist Party's late March political committee.

'Yet all the government has proposed so far is to send a stiff letter to the company's owners in Dubai, while most Tory MPs abstained in a House of Commons vote to outlaw no-notice sackings and fire-and-rehire policies', she said.

'Despite its pledge to do so, the government has not ended the exemption of shipping companies from minimum wage legislation, as P&O Ferries bring in cheap labour at £1.80 an hour to replace the 800s. strong work force'.

The Communist Party called for prosecution of the company for breaching employment law, exclusion of owners DP World from its 'freeports' plan and public ownership of P&O Ferries should it refuse to reinstate the sacked workers. 'If the properties in Britain of Russian oligarchs can be seized, why not those of British, Arab and other law-breaking oligarchs?' the party asked.

'These are very dangerous times with direct attacks on employment rights, a worsening cost of living crisis, a new upsurge in Covid deaths and hospitalisations and the tragedy of the Ukraine war' she said.

Communists in Hull, Kent, Liverpool, and London joined pickets on ports and on P&O's London HQ.

In a response from an appeal by Kent communists the Parti Communiste Français in Calais messaged:

'Dear Comrades, we fully share your statement of support to P&O staff.

How can we let a group as powerful as P&O lay off from day to day, 800 sailors, to

replace them with 'low cost' labour, in the name of the sacrosanct profit? We experienced a few years ago the liquidation of Sea France which impacted a considerable number of staff in Calais. Yes, as you suggest, the solution would be to nationalise this business.

More generally, we need to restore the national flags, both to guarantee a decent status to personnel; but also the independence of our nations against the influence of these pirates of the capitalist globalization. These financial predators of DP World are only interested in one indicator: their profit rates, which they always want higher. And for this they are ready to seize every opportunity: buy ports, sell fleets, put workers around the world competing with each other, paying them as little as possible, making them work in unacceptable conditions. with each other, paying them as little as possible, making them work in unacceptable conditions.

The reaction from global maritime unions, ITF and ETF is in the right direction: that of solidarity with the sailors of P&O, and that of the call to action.

The Communists of Pas de Calais reaffirm their support for the P&O unions, but also those of DFDS whose ships serve Dover from Calais.

The communist senator of Pas de Calais, Cathy Apourceau Poly challenges this day the French Minister of Transport, MR Jean Baptiste Djebbari, so that the French government is taking a position on this dossier. And we alert our national secretary and presidential candidate, Fabien Roussel.

The first secretary of our federation, Hervé Poly addresses you, to you and to the comrades of Kent, his fraternal greeting.

I suggest that we keep in touch on this file.

For the secretariat of the Federation: Bertrand Percaud.★

Page Four: RMT president Alex

## Reinstate 800 sacked P&O seafarers now

**National demonstration**  
**Dover Tuesday 19 April 2pm**  
RMT Office, Snargate Street CT19BZ  
With co-ordinated action in Calais  
RMT, Nautilus, Unite, GMB, PCS, NEU, CWU, UCU, Equity, TUC

## Elections 2022 The communists' manifesto

**What's so good about the NHS?**

★ We all get to use it. Just by being citizens. It makes us a community. We don't have to worry★ It's always there for us. We're safe. ★ It's free★ Our taxes pay for it. ★ Good. Doctors look at you not your credit rating.★ It's planned ★ It's the biggest employer in Europe. ★ Based on need. ★ It's inspirational★ NHS staff gave their all on the frontline of the pandemic.

**Think of the other things we really need —**

Food, gas, electricity, housing, social care, education, internet, buses and trains!

**What if they could all be like that?**

**Our NHS** is still our best experience of socialist policies — even though its staff are underpaid and overworked. Socialist policies mean publicly owning the key industries and services. They mean planning the economy democratically for the benefit of all. Socialism means putting the people and our planet first.

**Vote Left.** Put a communist on your local council. They will fight tooth and nail for you. Move ownership and control downwards to local communities. Give councils the funds to invest and create jobs. Reverse the centralisation, outsourcing and privatisation.

**Tax the super-rich!** Invest massively in council housing—'social housing'. A new home now costs £270,000+ on average! We need homes for young people, not a rigged property market.

**Proper pay,** employment rights from Day One, job security and training for the future, in any job a council funds or approves. End precarious work, age discrimination, poverty pay and zero hours contracts.

**Invest** in free council-run leisure, culture and sport, libraries, sports fields, pools, venues, gardens, youth clubs, gyms — these all make communities. Stop closing them. Stop rationing them by price. Let's get out more! And let's make our streets safe.

**Make schools** secular and under elected local authority control. Listen to the teaching profession. Make it an education system not a market. Make our schools safe and a place for ALL to learn. Councils must own and run local buses and city transport networks. All integrated with a publicly-owned national rail system. Connectedness makes communities.

**Learn the lessons of Covid.** Key workers and carers are the frontline. Local services are critical. So many lives lost due to Conservative unpreparedness, cronyism and reliance on the private sector!

**Return powers** to the Scottish and Welsh parliaments so they can rebuild communities. Elect regional assemblies in England to do the same. But workers and families are stronger when we all pull together and put pressure on Westminster.

**These are communist policies**

You heard them straight from us. Communists opposed Putin's invasion of Ukraine from the first hour. Putin and his cronies are opposed to Socialism and Communism. They stole what belonged to the Russian people. We say: **Stop the war, start the peace**

**Communists** stand for transforming parliaments and local councils to meet the needs of the people. We campaign together with activists in the trades unions, in the women's, anti-racism and peace movements. Communists are especially active in community and solidarity campaigns.

**The party the rich cannot buy.** We stand for a society which moves towards Socialism. We stand for peace. We stand for sustainable development. We stand for workers, for those struggling to raise families, for students, for pensioners and for local communities.

**We stand for the working class and all working people!**

We stand against exploitation and austerity. We oppose racism and discrimination. We campaign against militarism and war.

**We are a Communist Party made up of people like you.**

We organise and campaign for people like you. With your vote, Communists will represent you, your community, your class, on the council.

**You can get involved here!**

[www.comunistparty.org.uk](http://www.comunistparty.org.uk)

**If you like what you read, join us.**



# ON ELECTIONS

Now is the moment to set to work. We must scrap old ideas and prejudices, we must help the labour movement to bring about this coordination of the common forces. Our programme must be practical, and related to the realities of the actual situation today. We must attract new blood into our movement, interest the young people, let in fresh air to blow away the fog of doubt and despair.  
**Harry Pollit** General Secretary of the Communist Party

## Make our communities fit for working class people

LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 5TH MAY 2022

# VOTE COMMUNIST

COMMUNITIES FIT FOR WORKING CLASS PEOPLE!

WANTED: candidates who stand for the people not the billionaires

VOTE COMMUNIST  
 @CPBritain  
 communistparty.org.uk



Parliament and a British federal parliament based on STV in multi-member constituencies. These local bodies would have full economic, legislative and financial powers necessary to protect and develop the economic, social and cultural interests of their peoples.

The party's main manifesto looks at the problems facing communities in the context of the NHS. The manifesto says that the NHS is widely popular and considered a 'taste of socialism'. It is free, planned and inspirational. Imagine if these benchmarks were used for ownership and provision of food, gas, electricity, housing, social care, education, the internet and buses and trains!

We are campaigning to move ownership and control downwards to local communities, give councils the funds to invest and create jobs, reverse the centralisation, outsourcing and privatisation and tax the super-rich!

The Communist Party makes the case for massive investment in council housing – 'social housing'. A new home now costs £270,000+ on average! We need homes for young people, not a rigged property market.

Communists support unions fighting for proper pay, employment rights from Day One and job security and training for the future in any job a council funds or approves. We want an end to precarious work, age discrimination, poverty pay and zero hours contracts.

Communist councillors will vote to invest in free council-run leisure, culture and sport, libraries, sports fields, pools, venues, gardens, youth clubs, gyms – these all make communities.

Stop closing such facilities and rationing them by price. Let's get out more! And let's make our streets safe.

Our candidates want to make schools secular and returned to elected local authority control. Councils should listen to the teaching profession and make it an education system not a market. Our schools should be safe and a place for ALL to learn.

Councils must own and run local buses and city transport networks that are integrated with a publicly-owned national rail system: 'Connectedness makes communities.'

The Communist Party denounces the Conservative central government with a call to learn the lessons of Covid. Key workers and carers are the frontline. Local services are critical. So many lives have been lost due to Conservative unpreparedness, cronyism and reliance on the private sector!

The main challenge for the communist

campaign is to gather together local activists and supporters to get the vote out. Local campaigns seek allies and alliances, organising on vital issues like stopping war, local authority ownership of systems of transport and against food poverty.

In Edinburgh communists lead the way, campaigning for safe use of drugs, in Manchester for a freeze of rent rises, using empty buildings for housing and for councils to advance with large scale building of homes. In St Albans in Hertfordshire, **Mark Ewington** is campaigning to replace the council tax with local income, wealth, land and property taxes based clearly on the ability to pay.

As it is, the council tax is stacked against the poorer in our communities.

For the Communist Party every day is election day so we are looking for legacy campaigns that rebuild local labour movements, which in some areas have collapsed and to refocus them on local, winnable issues. All this at a time when in some areas, Labour has abandoned the fight.

In Edinburgh **Richard Shillcock** has a daunting task of reaching into 18,000 homesteads in Leith Walk ward. Richard is being supported by a series of Days of Action with supporters coming *en masse* to join in. He recently demanded that Edinburgh councillors make Edinburgh earn the title 'Living Wage City'.

The Scottish Living Wage is a minimum of £9.90 per hour for 18+ year olds.

Are they having a laugh? A friend's daughter was sacked from her hairdressing job on the last day of her apprenticeship. She was then asked for £600+ back "to pay for her training". The following Monday, another apprentice was taken on."

Richard Shillcock says: "Edinburgh needs an end to drug deaths. One goal – within our grasp – is a Safe Consumption Facility in Edinburgh. Scottish drug deaths are more than three times anywhere in Europe. But drug deaths are just a symptom.

"Poor housing, broken communities, fractured education, no opportunities and poverty. That's the bigger picture we have to change"

In Sheffield, **Carrie Hedderwick** is standing in Shiregreen & Brightside ward. Carrie is a well-known member of Sheffield Trades Council. The ward is the sixth most deprived in the City (out of 28 wards). It has upwards of 8000 households in an area that used to be a communist stronghold of former steel and engineering works. A former British Gas works site is now the base for an AMAZON warehouse - how the economy has changed! It was the birthplace of Communist Party founder members JT Murphy and George Fletcher.

Carrie is campaigning on 'Jobs – better jobs.' A third of the local population is unemployed while an expansion of council apprenticeships leading to secure work, council house building and strict control of the private rented sector are needed. She wants to see a sixth-form college established – as there's insufficient provision for the 16-18 year olds – and for affordable and reliable transport and health services.

As part of the campaign, the party is inaugurating new branches in Burnley on 1 May and in Suffolk on 26 April.

**Dan Ross** is standing in Besses, in the town of Whitefield, a suburb of Bury. It's an area consisting of primarily two residential estates of largely social housing and rented properties. Recently the local MP Christian Wakeford defected from Conservative to Labour. The area has few jobs available and these are in the service sector. It's a historic area, which contains the headstones of two people murdered by soldiers at Peterloo and an International Brigade volunteer. Dan is very much at home in the area and has been a campaigning public figure for some years.

In south London, **Stewart McGill**, co author of recent Communist Party pamphlet on energy policy is on his home turf in Blackheath Westcombe, in south east London. Stewart is well-known for his opposition to the building of the Silvertown Tunnel. He serves as a Krav Maga martial arts instructor. Stewart has helped raise his family in the area and says, "We have to sort out the housing situation in Greenwich. All the issues are down here. New homes are being built but no locals can afford them. The local council needs a massive shift of thinking and resources. It has to insist that private developments provide sufficient homes at locally affordable prices. And it has to build council homes. We need an 'all-in' integrated approach to crime in the area, starting with council coordination of services, but also provision of well resourced youth centres of community focus."

Communist candidates are noticeably younger than in the past. In north London, **Robin Talbot**, chair of the Young Communist League, is contesting the Arsenal Ward in Islington. According to Robin, "It's a diverse inner London community based on key transportation hubs to Central London, with the Emirates Stadium and a small university in the south. An area with a strong community feeling and independent high street shops." The Party has a growing member base in the area, who often distribute leaflets and sell the *Morning Star*. Comrades are supporting his campaign on "the big issues of living standards under threat, debt, equality and safety as the area has a high crime rate. Investment in the community and rebuilding it with a programme of job creation especially for local youth, is our number one issue."

The Party has responded quickly to feed back from voters who have been encouraged to believe that Russia is still socialist and therefore the CP supports Putin! Our literature, including a podcast, make clear "Communists opposed Putin's invasion of Ukraine from the first hour. Putin and his cronies are opposed to Socialism and Communism. They stole what belonged to the Russian people. We say: Stop the war, Start the peace."

The Communist Party "is the party the rich cannot buy." We are standing for a society which can take the road to socialism. We stand for peace. We stand for sustainable development. We stand for workers, for those struggling to raise families, for students, for pensioners and for local communities. ★

PHIL KATZ IS DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY



### PHIL KATZ MAY ELECTIONS

WITH A RENEWED sense of purpose and determination communists are fighting the May council elections with a programme 'Communities fit for working class people', that offers a way out of constant capitalist crisis.

The *Communists' Manifesto* is now circulating on social media, through letter boxes and at high street stalls in thousands of print copies, backed-up by a series of podcasts on housing, education, combating crime and rebuilding communities, facing up to inflation and on 'levelling up'.

As one would expect, the Communist Party puts the case for working class power and socialism, but there is something very interesting happening in the way this is articulated. As a result of its growth since its centenary in 2020, the Party has attracted a new generation of members with backgrounds in community and trade union activism and with knowledge of how the basics of socialism can be argued for, at local level.

It is here, at community level, in 'freebie' journals and on citizen internet radio, that we are starting to break the ban on media coverage. Though in one instance a candidate was impeded from standing by their employer.

Getting rooted in local communities results also from the work of communists activists in the party's 'Progressive Federalism Commission'. Comrades are brought together in commissions to hot-house ideas and advise the leadership on developments in policy. They also influence what is happening on the ground.

The Communist Party has been an advocate of Parliaments for Wales and Scotland since the early 1930s, but this has since been extended to support for regional assemblies in England, an English

### Information for campaigners

The Communist Party Centre is meeting half of the cost so leaflets can be ordered at £65 per thousand, including p&p. RUSH your order to [info@communistparty.org.uk](mailto:info@communistparty.org.uk) marked 'Manifesto Order' and be sure to include the delivery address. Leave five working days for print and delivery

Those new to politics can find out more by reading *Introducing Marxism*, available free for the duration of the campaign and our programme *Britain's Road to Socialism*. If you are younger and want to find out more, you can view the Young Communist League *Youth Charter* here for free too.



# ON NEOLIBERALISATION

The history of maritime employment law in Britain and Europe shows European ferry operators have used EU liberalisation directives and rulings from EU institutions such as the European Court to facilitate 'social dumping' and the race to the bottom in ferry workers' pay, terms and conditions. Alex Gordon, President Rail, Maritime and Transport Union



## All reactionaries are paper tigers

On 17 March 2022 P&O Ferries informed 800 workers their contracts of employment were terminated on grounds of redundancy with immediate effect.

### ALEX GORDON SACKINGS

SINCE P&O'S St Patrick's Day massacre our trade union has mobilised and campaigned in support of our sacked seafarer members from Cairnryan to Dover and from Hull to Liverpool and Larne.

RMT's Scotland regional council mobilised at Cairnryan and at Govan outside the offices of the Clyde Marine Shipping Agency.

Politicians and media accustomed to attacking trade unions, turned their fire for once on P&O's chief executive, Peter Hebblethwaite and his boss, the Sultan of Dubai (owner of DP World) as representatives of 'the unacceptable face of capitalism'.

P&O's grotesque pre-scripted Zoom call to its staff announcing plans to replace trade union organised crews with agency labour attracted public derision and anger.

There is widespread disgust at P&O's business model that aims to replace UK ratings with super-exploited labour from the lowest wage economies in the world.

RMT general secretary, Mick Lynch spoke publicly about the racism inherent in P&O's 'flexible' business model where the further workers are transported from to crew vessels, the less they are paid. In P&O's global value chain, Eastern European workers are used to undercut UK-based ratings and officers, while Filipino and Indian workers are used to undercut them even further.

P&O CEO Peter Hebblethwaite told the House of Commons Transport Select Committee that agency crews would earn 'on average' £5.50/hour. Recruitment

ads from CSM Baltic, a subsidiary of Colombia Shipmanagement read: "No seafarers' documents are needed, just previous experience in hospitality institutions." The ads say that stewards will work eight weeks on (12 hours per day), eight weeks off. One advertisement offered rates of pay of £1.81/hour.

The race to the bottom is real. But what makes the case of P&O so critical is that workers recognise that if Peter Hebblethwaite and the Sultan can flout the laws on redundancy, on statutory consultation, on maritime safety and on the minimum wage without consequence, then P&O's model could be imposed on any factory, depot, or office in this country.

The history of maritime employment law in Britain and Europe shows European ferry operators have used EU liberalisation directives and rulings from EU institutions such as the European Court to facilitate 'social dumping' and the race to the bottom in ferry workers' pay, terms and conditions.

In October 2003, Viking Line, a Finnish ferry company, gave Finnish Seamen's Union (FSU) notice of intention to register The Rosella in Estonia to employ Estonian crew, at a lower pay than in Finland.

In November 2003, FSU requested support from the International Transport Workers' Federation in London. ITF called on affiliates to boycott all Viking Line vessels. FSU called a strike.

In 2004 Estonia joined the EU. Viking Line brought court proceedings in London requiring the ITF to withdraw its boycott and sought an order against FSU not to infringe Viking's 'right of establishment' under EU law (Article 43 EC) – the right of firms to relocate to any EU member state.

The Court of Appeal in London deferred to the European Court on whether EU rules on 'freedom of establishment' applied. The European Court held that Article 43 EC applied to collective action by a trade union against an employer and ruled that registration of vessels must not form an obstacle to 'freedom of establishment'.

And then there was Irish Ferries. In August 2005, Irish union SIPTU discovered agency staff employed on Irish Ferries, MV Normandy - brought in to replace unionised directly employed labour - paid €3.57/hour for 12-hour shifts, 7 days a week, with no holiday pay. A Latvian worker worked 84-hour weeks over a 2-month period earning just over €1/hour - just above the Latvian minimum wage of €0.71/hour, but far below the Irish minimum wage of €7.65/hour. Directly employed unionised crews on MV Normandy previously earned €10-11/hour.

The MV Normandy - sailing between Rosslare and northern France - registered in the Bahamas and flying a 'flag of convenience' was formerly an Irish-registered ship

'Wildcat picketing' took place at French ports such as Cherbourg in protest at the outsourcing of crew on the MV Normandy to the employment agency, Dobson's, based in Limassol, Cyprus.

A stand-off started on 27 November 2005, with security guards bringing agency staff on board vessels. Irish Ferries ships were laid up in Welsh and Irish ports for weeks. A national protest march by Irish trade unions in Dublin on 9 December 2005 saw an estimated turn-out of 100,000.

Ireland's industrial dispute-resolution institution (Labour Relations Commission) drew up proposals following an intervention by the National Implementation Body (a high-level industrial relations 'trouble-shooting' body under Ireland's social partnership arrangements).

Under the imposed settlement, Irish Ferries got permission to outsource crews on its Irish Sea vessels and reflag its vessels to Cyprus. Vessels are managed on a contract basis by Dobson Fleet Management, a shipping agency based in Cyprus. Personnel are Dobson employees.

Irish Ferries secured cost savings of approximately €11.5m/year.

New entrants on Irish Ferries vessels were paid Irish national minimum wage of €7.65/hour, based on a 10-hour day, 2,433.3 hours worked per year giving an annual salary of €18,615. New entrants work two months on and one month off.

The LRC also put pay and conditions on MV Normandy into binding arbitration and gave Irish Ferries a 3-year no-strike clause.

There was a joke that Irish trade unionists used to tell around that time.

**Question.** How do you make a Celtic Tiger run away?

**Answer.** Ask it for a pay rise.

The business model of Viking Line, Irish Ferries and P&O is rejected by the vast majority of people of this country who want to live in a society where maritime safety and decent union negotiated rates of pay and conditions prevail.

All allegedly powerful reactionaries are merely paper tigers because they are divorced from the people. The Sultan of Dubai is a paper tiger. He will be overthrown. ★

ALEX GORDON IS NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE RMT

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

## Ukraine war

Left-wing and communist symbols and publications are also banned under that country's 'de-communisation' laws, as they are in some other east European and Baltic states. The closure of all independent television stations in Ukraine has been condemned by media trade unions across Europe.

Much of this has not been reported in the Western mass media. While Ukrainian state repression does not justify the brutal war unleashed by President Putin and his oligarchs on February 24, the struggle for democratic rights is universal. It must embrace Ukraine and Europe as well as Russia and the Middle East.

The Communist Party of Britain adds its voice to demands that the Kononovich brothers be released, that all Ukraine's political parties and media outlets be permitted to operate freely as long as they do not engage in acts of terrorism or sabotage, and that the criminal actions of far-right and fascist groups are punished rather than tolerated or encouraged. We also reaffirm our call for an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated settlement that respects Ukraine's sovereignty while also recognising Russia's legitimate concerns about NATO's 26-year long military build-up in eastern Europe and parts of the former Soviet Union.

**Stop the war, start the peace**  
Coming up to two months of the war in Ukraine and the British government and its state affiliated and servile media are more interested in talking up tension than in finding ways to end the conflict and the carnage. that all wars bring.

A negotiated peace. is possible based on a guaranteed neutrality for Ukraine based on national unity and respect for its sovereignty with the withdrawal of Russian troops.

But, with Labour's full support, our government calls for an increase in military spending and the export of even more arms and instruments of destruction. At the same time capitalism's enduring crisis and the costs of war means working people face the most calamitous cost of living crisis in our lifetime.

Ukrainians are paying the price in mounting casualties, but rather than push for a compromise solution Johnson and his cabinet join the USA and NATO in pumping in more lethal weapons. This can only prolong the war. Without a negotiated settlement the war could last for years with thousands more lives lost.

Sanctions against Russia are a first world thing with only NATO states and their allies committed to them while Africa, Latina America and most of Asia and the Middle East carry on as usual with Russia.

EU powers, France and Germany a follow their own strategy in engaging with Russia, while Britain parrots US accusations that they are too keen on seeking a deal and urge President Zelensky not to settle. We must put pressure on our government to help end this war.

The Stop the War Coalition has launched a petition calling on the British government to stop talking up war in Ukraine and give its support to a negotiated peace by backing the peace proposals now being discussed by Ukrainian President Zelensky and his Russian counterparts. Sign it here [tinyurl.com/ycnfumx2](https://tinyurl.com/ycnfumx2) ★



# ON SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

*“We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.”*

V. I. Lenin Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution 1920

100 years. 100 more!

**JOE WEAVER**  
**YCL FORWARD**

YOUNG COMMUNISTS from around Britain travelled to Rich Mix in London to end the YCL's 100 year celebrations.

Organised by YCL chair, Robin Talbot, and a team of volunteers, 'FORWARD' featured an art and history exhibit with some new original pieces, from London branch illustrator Oscar S, showing some of our organisations past achievements and struggles.

An awards ceremony, hosted by London branch chair Fredi G, highlighted the exceptional hard work of our leading members over the past year, as nominated by their comrades. This was followed by the reintroduction of YCL Honorary Membership Awards, which was first granted to comrades after the Spanish Civil War, such as Harry Pollitt and Ralph Fox. Awarded were veteran YCLers Steve Marsling (for his work as a London Recruit), Jenny T (for her campaigning and fundraising during the Vietnam War), and late Communist Party historian Graham Stevenson (for his relentless dedication to the YCL and Party over the years). The event culminated with electronic music sets from artists *Visual Memory Unit* and *Danny Styles*'

A huge thank you to the volunteers who stepped up to help make the event run smoothly, and to all the comrades & friends who celebrated with us. ★



Above: YCL chair Robin Talbot opens the YCL Forward event.

Right top: Manchester YCL & central committee member Hannah Phillips accepts an award.

Right centre: Joe Weaver East of England YCL awarding London recruit Steve Marsling.

Right bottom: Odie from Glasgow YCL collecting an award for Jamie from Glasgow.

Cover image: Jodie Welburn for Northern YCL accepts her award.



## Cautiously optimistic: where do we go from here?



Read the full article at <https://challenge-magazine.org/>

**NATHAN CZAPNIK**  
**YCL CENTENARY**

**I**N THE LAST five years, the Young Communist league has experienced rapid expansion, a situation of exponential growth where greater numbers lead to greater ability to be active, leading to greater visibility and relevance – and more applicants. This will reach a natural plateau at some point, but as we are still miles away from even having all the young people who identify as communists in our ranks, that is not expected anytime soon.

The last year is an example of how YCL activity has itself played a key role in our growth. Foodbank collections were rolled out nationwide, giving our presence on the high streets a direct purpose with social good, and providing a jumping-off point to talk about poverty and class. In our Larnarkshire branch, this is developing into a food-growing co-op.

*Challenge*, has been relaunched online and its articles are being picked up by the wider left, an unprecedented rise in its reach, while our social media presence has drastically increased – in its first year our Instagram has gained 10,000 followers.

Our biggest congress since the 1980s was well organised with a high level of discipline

and engagement, with passionate debate and tight votes reflecting a vibrant internal democracy. Considerations around atmosphere and presentation made sure it felt unlike the often slightly-awkward and apologetic meetings typical of the left and reflected the messaging throughout the year – that we were celebrating our 100th anniversary with outward displays of pride.

Our annual summer camp was a similar success, again, record attendance and all sessions and infrastructure confidently organised by the YCL alone. Sessions on workplace organising from our numerous workplace activists, reps and union full-timers reflected both the class make-up of the organisation and its focus on class struggle rather than movementism and fad-chasing.

Developing a visible communist presence on marches and memorials that is open and proud about our politics, both dignified and militant, rolled out nationally as policy, which has led to media attention from the *Sun*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Independent*. Our block in Glasgow during Cop26 [see picture left] was the largest of any political block and when it was attacked by the police the YCL gained national attention and widespread support from the unions, wider left and even those that fervently disagree with our politics. The following week saw a wave of applications.

None of this has been too ambitious or required fanatical dedication and full-time organisers – in fact, it's been quite moderate in terms of the amount of activity we would like to achieve in future. What marks it out is that most of these kinds of activities and especially the style in which they were carried out has been absent from the left for at least a decade, and in some cases, absent from the Marxist left for far longer. There is no reason not to expect this year to be equally dynamic if not more so.

In the last 10 years we have seen numerous new communist groups and initiatives led by young people pop up and burn out, leaving almost nothing behind – we are

deeply aware of those groups' failings and the dangers we must avoid, and this influences our interest in being in a serious party with a long legacy and tradition to defend, rather than letting political, and as is more common in today's left, personal problems define us instead of our commitment to building a unified communist movement.

What the YCL lacks and now needs more of is campaigning targets and plans for longevity, as well a centralised system of ruthlessly evaluating our work. The wider YCL must continue to follow the example of our best branches and become campaigning groups in and of themselves, as well as be active in the existing class struggles.

We need to be ready to take action against social ills caused by capitalism in our areas – against anything from bad landlords, to army recruiters, predatory betting shops and loan shark companies, bailiffs, any new far-right groups, privatisers, exploitative bosses etc. – we will know our own territory best and must assess it properly to take action as part of the class, in its class interests.

At the same time, we must walk the fine line of providing social goods too, without becoming a prop for the system or doing charity work – in this task we should think about establishing institutions, sometimes physically with rented, occupied or even eventually owned spaces to provide facilities for ourselves to meet the demands of our fellow workers. Looking back at the history of the YCL and CPB, this would not be a first.

We have gained a lot of attention, but we must deepen our cultural presence – communism must continue to make headway into the social lives of youth. Given that in the 1967 the YCL's Trend festival had The Kinks headline, notable musicians such as Pete Townshend from The Who became members, and The Beatles were interviewed in *Challenge* magazine – there is no reason why we shouldn't aim beyond local cinema

clubs, gigs, club nights, sports clubs and so on towards an annual music and politics festival, open to all.

### Socialism as a way of life

We have inherited a mighty tradition, and owe it to all the YCL and CP comrades who have come before us to continue to confound the critics and make our work more and more relevant to more and more young people – despite the massively changed political circumstances from the heyday of communism in Britain in the last century, we genuinely believe, given all the factors outlined here, that unapologetic Marxism-Leninism will become the guiding ideology and movement of this and the next generation of those who are ready to reject capitalism and go beyond sporadic rebellions to build strong socialist organisations.

The ideology and collective identity of the current YCL is summed up by our slogan 'conquer your future.' We are not fixated on grievances, wounds, injustice and rebellion, we are focused on power as a goal – empowering each other as comrades and the communist movement itself to take an organic leadership role through its direct and successful intervention in the class struggle, embedded in the daily lives of the masses.

We intend to be involved for life, and the YCL is the first stage – the one that is naturally seen as being more radical. We cannot promise those in or about to join our ranks the fruits of socialism, but we can say that the skills we are learning and the comradeship we are gaining has materially improved our lives and – perhaps most of all – given us meaning and purpose in a world of neoliberal nihilism. We will live once, but our organisation has already lived 100 years: it is with immense pride that we can say, in time for its centenary year, the YCL is seizing its destiny once again. ★

NATHAN CZAPNIK, IS THE EDITOR OF THE YCL ONLINE MAGAZINE CHALLENGE



# EVENTS & IDEAS & ACTION

*I will begin by saying that I call myself a Communist, and have no wish to qualify that word by joining any other to it. The aim of Communism seems to me to be the complete equality of condition for all people; and anything in a Socialist direction which stops short of this is merely a compromise with the present condition of society, a halting-place on the road to the goal.* **William Morris** *Commonweal* 1889

**Communist Women in the Midlands:**  
a Celebration in words and song  
Hosted by the Midlands District CPB in partnership with the Morning Star.

**"Red Lives" presentations;**  
a screening of the Alice Wheeldon story;  
Black Country women's poetry;  
the Birmingham Clarion singers and more.



**Saturday 30th April 2022**  
Doors open from 12 pm for a light lunch  
Friends Meeting House  
Hill Street, Coventry, CV1 4AN.

Everyone welcome!  
Disabled parking  
Bring your own travel mug

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Greater Manchester CPB presents:  
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Motorcycle Legend & War Hero  
A discussion with Rob Hargreaves on the launch of his exciting new book

17 APR 4:00pm



Southampton Readers & Supporters zoom  
**The Ukraine Conflict & NATO**  
Join **Andrew Murray** and the Southampton Morning Star Supporters group for discussion on this very relevant topic  
7pm April 20 fb.me/e/1LhOpYCdW  
All welcome  
mstar.link/3NWKSAQ



**PARTY LITERATURE FOR EVENTS**  
Comrades organising/attending an event can order Communist Party leaflets: on Energy, Stop War, P&O jobs, the Housing Charter and Youth Charter.  
Send requirements to [info@communistparty.org.uk](mailto:info@communistparty.org.uk) marked 'Literature Order'

## Launch of Eastern Rising

Comrades are invited to join the launch of the Communist Party programme for the East of England on Saturday 23rd April from 11 am-12noon. Opened by communist councillor Darren Turner, the programme will serve as a backdrop to the local campaigning of the CP, starting with May Day events in Norfolk and Ipswich.  
To register go to <https://cpb.tiny.us/5vfu9fm>

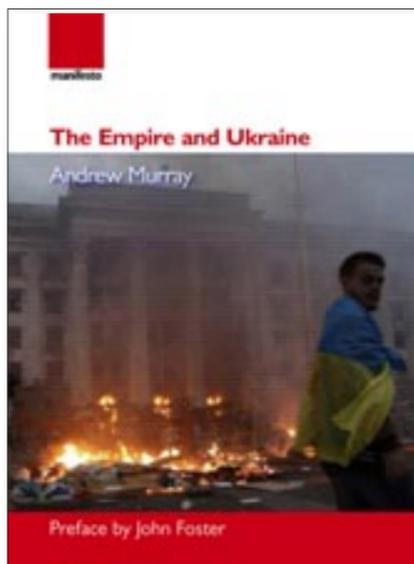
## Book launch - John Ball

Professor James Crossley, a Party member, has invited comrades to the launch of his new book, *Spectres of John Ball: The Peasants' Revolt in English Political History 1381-2020* which examines the story of one of the most famous voices in the lexicon of popular protesters.  
The launch is at Marx Memorial Library & Workers School, Wednesday 20th April at 7 pm. To register go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/book-launch-john-ball-an-english-legend-tickets-271021892777>.



## International Workers Memorial Day

Every year more people are killed at work than in wars. Most don't die of mystery ailments, or in tragic 'accidents'. They die because an employer decided their safety just wasn't that important a priority.  
**International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD) 28 April** commemorates those workers.  
<https://www.tuc.org.uk/iwmd-events>



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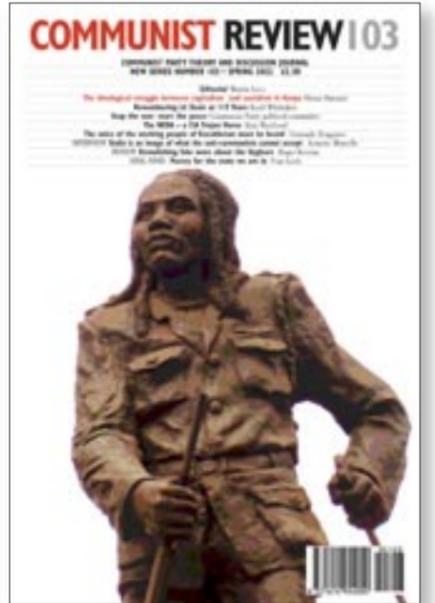
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**Political Education Courses**

**Trade Unions, Class & Power from 6 June**  
This eight-week course seeks to understand trade unions as operating today and does so within a historical perspective of the past century. It examines why people join trade unions, why they become active trade unionists and what determines the effectiveness of trade unions in representing the interests of their members.

The course seeks to answer these questions within the wider context of Britain as a class society and with an understanding of the process by which the exploitation of wage labour takes place.

**Women, Work and Trade Unions**  
This course comprises 4 online sessions taking place weekly on Tuesday evenings, 7-9pm. Course tutors: Mary Davis, Kellie O'Dowd  
The course is rooted in an understanding of women's role in trade union history and the impact on women workers of the enduring conflict between capital and labour. • How do we explain inequality? • What is capitalism and why do Marxists say it's important for understanding of women's oppression? • What can we learn from history? Women in the labour market and labour movement in C19th & C20th. • The issues for women at work & in our unions today & what we can do about them.  
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**INTRODUCING MARXISM WOMEN AND CLASS TAKING THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM**  
At [www.communistparty.org.uk/education](http://www.communistparty.org.uk/education) you will find resources to support the study and application of Marxism-Leninism as a living, developing approach to understanding and changing the world. Details of the party's core course on *Britain's Road to Socialism* and links to additional education materials including for resources aimed specifically at new and prospective members of the party.

**Exciting opportunity - not to be missed**  
Are you wanting to get involved in organising a union at work. Or to refresh and update your approach? We are looking to register a CP/YCL group for the upcoming Organising for Power workplace organising course. The course is run by highly respected Jane McAlevey and a team of international trainers. Jane has played a key role in the new wave of American union organising in fast food, delivery and Amazon workers.  
We are looking for CP and YCL trade union activists, workplace organisers or potential activists who can commit to seven consecutive Tuesday evenings (5pm-7pm) from 3 May to 14 June and to learning and developing new skills alongside their comrades.

If you are interested, please register here: <https://forms.gle/pYzIWetUH8B6MZy68>  
If you have any questions, please contact Gawain Little via text or WhatsApp on