



Fightback against austerity and unemployment

FIGHTBACK

MOLLY BROWN AND ANDY BAIN

THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY against Austerity has stood down its weekend of activity due to the risks associated with the rising level of Covid-19 infections.

In a statement the Assembly said it would not go ahead with its street-based demonstrations on Saturday 17 October because of the rapid spread of the virus, made worse by the government's failing test and trace system, haphazard unlocking and working conditions that allow its spread.

The original plan was for people across the country to assemble online, physically and safely (where possible) to hold rallies, marches and public meetings to demand decent health; homes; jobs and education.

The Communist Party mobilised to support the actions and urged people to join in and make it very clear to those in government that working people won't pay for the crisis!

The lack of effective action by the government to control Covid-19 has already drastically harmed our health and the NHS is at breaking point.

There is a jobs crisis across all sectors of employment: from manufacturing to hospitality, from transport to the thousands of self-employed people working in arts and culture who have been told their jobs are not viable. With hundreds of thousands facing unemployment as furlough ends, leading to millions as the inadequate 'rescue' packages become a reality. The Universal Credit extra 'Covid' payment is being cut and sanctions reapplied, with many facing the real possibility of being evicted in the run up to Christmas. Now they are telling us that 'rescue' package comes at a cost and

we will all have to share the burden.

The Communist Party has produced an *unemployment fightback* pamphlet, highlighting the many issues facing working class people under the neo-liberal pro-monopoly alliance of the Tory government and big business.

Communists recognise that unemployment is part of the capitalist system. That the real-life game 'State Monopoly Capitalism' is being played out with the State and the powerful elite bonded together in an anti-working-class alliance, causing a systemic fault line in capitalism – mass unemployment.

Communists urge that the fightback must now advance from the issue of austerity policies of Tory governments to date, to identifying the source of the problems workers face – the giant monopoly corporations – and building a real anti-monopoly alliance

Moving forward with the unemployment fightback the Communist Party is involved and working closely with others to produce plans for the trade unions 'Building a movement against unemployment'. Although, still being developed, the paper discusses the right to work and how current conditions are allowing the rich and powerful to use the Covid crisis as a power grab which will inevitably cause more poverty and anger on the streets.

The plan recognises the urgent need for a movement of organised workers which encompasses the anti-racist struggle into the class struggle that calls for the unity of men and women.

There is a response building within the working-class movement with campaigns such as An Alliance for Full Employment, headed by Gordon Brown, metro mayors and Labour Party leaders in Scotland and Wales supported by various unions and

community organisations; the No Holding Back Campaign, led by Ian Lavery MP, Laura Smith and John Trickett MP and supported by Unite, and SOS For Jobs, led by Unite as well as many more unions.

Although all these campaigns lead in the right direction they are limited to demands on the Labour Party, government and employers. Communists argue that the campaign will need to be much bigger. The Communist Party calls for all trade unions and community campaigning organisations to join forces, to build an Unemployed Workers Movement for Full Employment.

There is also a model motion to be circulated to union branches supporting a set of demands including lobbying the government to extend furlough and prolong the period of no-evictions and also to allow all members made redundant/or unemployed guaranteed access to union services and organising for the next 12 months. Most importantly urging the union to work collaboratively with sister unions and within the People's Assembly and alongside other campaign organisations

The Communist Party is working positively with other organisations calling for a Covid-secure People's March For Jobs coordinated across the country to the Tory Spring conference due to be held in Newport on 20 March next year where they will assemble with a large demonstration organised by the People's Assembly and others. We urge all involved in the working-class movement to be active in this initiative. ★

MOLLIE BROWN IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, ANDY BAIN IS THE PARTY'S INDUSTRIAL ORGANISER

Young people in revolt

AMY FIELD

A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, and now the second recession within 11 years is the reality for a generation that has grown up in a decade defined by austerity. While the physical effects of Covid-19 may have hit older people the hardest, it is young people who have been hit hardest by the social and economic consequences laid on us by our incompetent Tory government.

Perhaps the most blatant demonstration of the Tory governments complete disregard for young working class people can be found in its shambolic handling of A Level results. The use of an algorithm that actively discriminated against those from disadvantaged areas was characteristic of a government in which two thirds of Cabinet members went to fee-paying schools, it is no wonder why such 'independent' schools saw a 4.7% rise in top grades. It is to the credit of this generation that this blatant display of class interest did not go unchallenged. Young people across the country, turned out in mass protests and forcing a government U-turn. It was an inspiring display of the genuine class consciousness by today's young people.

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, it has been predominately young people who have been active in demanding an end to police brutality and institutionalised racism. Not confined to the US, protests in Britain attended by mostly young people demonstrated this generation's clear recognition of capitalism's role in upholding racist power structures, and our desire to bring them down. Furthermore, efforts by young people in fighting for climate justice continue to inspire, however, it's clear that in the shadow of the upcoming wave of austerity measures we must go further.

The recession following Covid-19 encapsulates the contradictions of the capitalist system. While socialist nations such as China, Cuba and Vietnam were able to successfully combat the virus our government's shambolic response has left over 40,000 dead but more so, will leave millions unemployed and potentially homeless. Young people face moving into a world that has become incredibly hostile to working class people. A world in which job opportunities are scarce, housing unaffordable and public services almost non-existent. Having grown up in a post 2009 world however, this is not new, we are a generation that has been defined by austerity.

Young people must now act to combat the inevitable austerity measures that will be pushed upon us by the Tory Government. Initiatives such as the YCL's housing campaign look to highlight the issue of unaffordable housing and the prospect of mass eviction. The need to build a united front against austerity is more necessary than ever, and as a generation that has lived through it our entire lives, its time to have our voices heard. ★

AMY FIELD IS A MEMBER OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

A new situation in Venezuela

Read up on the developments in Venezuela and how the communists are combatting the counter-revolution.

These briefings include an analysis translated into English from the PCV and a complementary analysis from the Americas Workgroup of the International Committee of the Communist Party.

www.comunistparty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20SeptemberCPCVenezuela.pdf

FUTURE OF WORK CONFERENCE

On 5 December the Communist Party hosts a path-breaking conference online, bringing together union activists, those leading the struggle for jobs, researchers and professionals working at the cutting edge of technology, including Artificial Intelligence.

How do Marxists view the development of work? Get answers and take part. Registration opens on 1 November.



Tributes to the volunteers for liberty

Tributes took place throughout over the weekend 17-18 October to commemorate the International Brigade volunteers, 2,500 went from Britain and Ireland went to Spain as part of the International Brigades to fight fascism and defend Spanish democracy. 526 did not return. October 17 1938 was the day the International Brigades left Spain, after being honoured in Barcelona by the Spanish people alongside whom they fought. The commemorations were organised by the Communist Party, and supported by the International Brigades Memorial Trust (IBMT).



